

Plenty of positives in defeat



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VIEW FROM THE STAND

DESPITE dropping three points and not scoring for the second successive home game, against Wigan last Saturday was a very promising day for most Wanderers fans.

Our second half performance against the best side in the division was extremely encouraging. We've certainly played much worse than that and won. We also welcomed Jocky back and he looked sharp considering he's been out of action for so long. However, the best news of the day was the signing of six players contracts.

Frank Talia has put in some great performances between the sticks and thoroughly deserves his two-year deal. He had a tough act to follow when he took over the gloves from the injured Martin Taylor but he's managed to keep an impressive seven clean sheets in his 21 league games.

Club loyalty got its reward when The Big Chief offered extended contracts to Rhino and Brownie. At 32, and probably playing as well as ever, Rhino deserves his two-year deal whilst golden oldie Brownie must be delighted to get another year.

Meanwhile at the other end of the career path, it was great to see three youngsters putting pen to paper to join the new Sanchez Creche. Jonny Dixon, Lewis Cook and Luke Oliver look like being regular first team squad members next season alongside their former youth team mates Danny Senda and Roger Johnson.

That's providing the club don't receive an attractive transfer bid over the summer for Danny or Roger.

Whilst I'm sure none of us, including The Big Chief, would want to see our best youngsters leaving they could well command a sizeable transfer fee.

That would be difficult to refuse, especially as it seems we are going to get little or nothing from Exeter for Sean Devine. After five straight defeats and their second managerial sacking of the season, they look on a fast-track to the Conference.

Talking of past players, congratulations to Wanderers Old Boys better known as Windsor & Eton. They've enjoyed a great run in the FA Trophy, including sending Vauxhall Motors crashing out, before losing to Aylesbury on penalties after a replay. As well as Dave "Jesus" Carroll, their Old Blues line-up includes Matt Brady and Trevor Bunting, and they're also managed by Dennis Greene and Simon Stapleton.

Now young Ryan Parsons has joined them on work experience. Whenever Wanderers don't have a match we at least know where we can see some familiar faces to support.

Life doesn't get any easier. After Wigan we now have to travel to Blackpool and Crewe to take on two more promotion contenders. Then, thanks to his starring role in a video nasty, we lose the services of Simmo for three games.

With seven games in four weeks, March is going to a tough month for both the players and the fans' pockets.

HOW THEY STAND

Teams	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wigan	33	10	5	1	27	12	13	2	2	26	7	76
Crewe	33	9	2	5	21	12	10	5	2	36	17	64
Cardiff	32	10	5	2	29	12	8	3	4	21	14	62
Oldham	33	7	4	6	26	16	9	7	0	23	13	59
Bristol City	33	8	5	3	26	12	8	3	6	30	25	56
QPR	33	10	3	4	29	17	5	6	5	19	20	54
Luton	33	7	4	6	26	21	8	4	4	23	22	53
Blackpool	33	9	5	2	27	14	5	4	8	17	27	51
Tranmere	33	9	4	4	23	17	6	2	8	21	30	51
Plymouth	33	7	4	5	23	17	5	6	6	17	18	46
Brentford	32	7	5	3	18	9	5	4	8	17	24	45
Swindon	33	6	4	6	21	20	5	6	6	22	27	43
Wycombe	33	7	4	6	31	27	4	5	7	15	15	42
Chesterfield	33	8	4	5	20	17	3	2	11	9	28	39
Barnsley	33	5	6	6	21	25	4	3	9	17	24	36
Notts County	33	5	6	5	26	26	2	8	7	22	27	35
Peterborough	32	5	4	7	18	16	3	7	6	15	23	35
Colchester	32	4	6	6	14	16	4	5	7	19	28	35
Port Vale	33	5	4	8	22	25	4	4	8	16	27	35
Stockport	33	5	5	6	27	28	4	1	12	16	27	33
Huddersfield	33	5	6	5	18	17	3	3	11	7	22	33
Mansfield	33	6	2	8	30	33	3	4	10	20	36	33
Northampton	33	5	3	9	18	22	3	4	9	13	31	31
Cheltenham	33	4	5	8	15	25	2	7	7	17	25	30