

Wanderers director says keep defeat in perspective

I TOO witnessed something of a shambles on the pitch at Chesterfield.

I also had to suffer the embarrassing handshakes in the boardroom with jubilant Chesterfield directors who had barely recovered their composure following a 4-0 drubbing at home to Colchester.

With some three hours to reflect upon the manner of the defeat during the journey back the question was what went wrong?

Well, a lot went wrong on the pitch. Our players, to a man, were lethargic. They seemed five yards off the pace and passes were telegraphed in such a way that most of them were intercepted by the opposition.

Granted our failings were more exposed because the Chesterfield team were still smarting from the Colchester defeat and determined to make amends.

Since last Saturday I have tried to interpret Lawrie Sanchez' mood swings. Yes he was upset and rightly so about a number of things.

But he is a brilliant coach and is steadfast in his belief that we can continue the good showing which we have put on since Christmas and build a strong platform for an assault on Division One next season.

He was a bit despondent but who wouldn't be after the charges in whom you had put all your faith and energies had failed to perform in such a dismal fashion.

This was a bad defeat but we all have to be positive about the future and support the manager and the squad at a time when they still have work to do because the season is not dead.

Yes, I would say that wouldn't I from where I sit?

However, I am as passionate as most about Wanderers and I want to see success. One poor showing like this is not an omen.

Think of all the positives from a season during which we have not had many good breaks.

The club is working unbelievably hard for next season in terms of raising sponsorship and offering an attractive deal for supporters.

We need to put a positive spin on everything and the fans need to be on board. We are having a Fans Forum on April 17 and we aim to send out a message which will generate the right feel good factor and get fans in the mood to want to be here with us right through next season.

There was an impromptu pitchside fans forum on Saturday. Do we need another one?

Lawrie sat in the stand on Saturday for large parts of the game. He was just in front of me. His seat was in fairly close proximity to pitchside. He constantly shouted instructions and urged his players on from that position. It annoyed some of the Chesterfield fans who were sitting near us.

The home dug-out at Chesterfield straddles the half-way line whereas the away dug-out is positioned some way along the touch line towards the away terracing.

Lawrie chose the position he felt it was best for him on the day and I have no problem with that.

It is a moot point whether talking to the fans across the fence for five minutes after the game was the right thing to do. We probably all have our own views about that.

Roger Johnson was choked and, unusually for him, did not acknowledge the sympathy I extended. Most of his colleagues were gutted too.

They realised they had not prepared themselves properly to match the attitude and approach from the opposition.

I say again, there has to be a positive spin on everything. You will come across it at the fans forum on 17th April and you will see it on the face of our new season ticket brochure.

There is strong emphasis on grass roots development and we are excited about the emergence of young talent in the form of Johnson, Jonny Dixon, Lewis Cook and one or two others.

I would expect the manager to be chastised every time we turn in a poor performance – he knows he has to take the brick bats and respond by inspiring the team to bounce back.

Judging from some of the messages I have read a certain section of the fan base may not see it quite this way.

But it is imperative we are all singing off the same hymn sheet when we go into the close season because we are so serious about galvanising a very big raft of support for 2003/04.

Rod Tomlin
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