

Simmo's axed in the big cull

Blues skipper joins host of stars in leaving the club

WANDERERS skipper Michael Simpson is the latest big name player to be axed in manager Tony Adams' summer clearout.

Simpson, along with Dannie Bulman, Chris Vinnicombe, Steve Brown and Scott Marshall, all follow Darren Currie out of the door.

Currie left on Monday by mutual consent.

But Adams has offered new deals to Republic of Ireland U21 international Ian Simpimba, goalkeeper Steve Williams and veteran former Millwall and Tottenham defender Stuart Nethercott.

The trio are currently considering the new offers, which are on significantly less money than the players were on this season.

Nethercott is believed to

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have already rejected Blues' first offer. But the jury is still out on Charlie Mapes.

Adams has told the midfielder he is free to hunt new employers, but told him that if he can't fix himself up, to come back at the end of June for more talks.

Mapes said: "I will try and find somewhere else, but it's good to know I might still have something here, but I don't even know about that."

It is the departure of Simpson that will cause most shockwaves though.

He has been at the club for seven years and worked his way up from boo-boys target to fans' favourite and the team captain.

He won the club's Player of the Year in the 2002/2003 season by a record margin but, while previous managers John Gregory and Lawrie Sanchez hung their hats on him, he was never a favourite of Adams.

He told Simpson he should be 'very afraid' for his future within weeks of coming into the job and also dropped the previously undroppable Simmo from the side.

Simpson said: "It hurts to be released but to be honest I was expecting it."

"I don't think I should have been released and he said he did it for financial reasons. He said it had been a hard decision but that he couldn't offer me what I am on at the minute and that he couldn't offer me anything."

"It's sad walking out after seven years. I have really enjoyed my time here."

"But when he said what he said about me in the paper when he first came in I knew that it was maybe my last season here."

Simpson, 30, is now hoping to bounce back with another club.

He said: "I would hope to get a second division club at least but I know there are a lot of good players who are being released this summer, but I'm confident in my ability and I know there are a couple of clubs who are interested already."

Currie has also created some early interest with second division Blackpool, Oldham and Barnsley all showing interest.

But as Adams clears the decks, his rebuilding plans have suffered a setback with transfer target Sam Stockley deciding

to stay at Colchester United instead of moving west.

Stockley agreed a new contract with Wanderers' biggest rivals yesterday.

He said: "It is true that there was some interest from Wycombe and I could have secured a deal there but the only reason I would have followed that path would be because of my personal situation with my little boy but I don't want to go into that."

"I went to speak to the gaffer (Phil Parkinson) and he has been very good with me and has worked hard to sort out this contract with the chief executive."

"The gaffer has brought my game on a lot and after a couple of months' rest I am looking forward to getting back to Colchester for next season."

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