

FA to decide skipper's fate

Wanderers appeal against Johnson's three-game ban

SKIPPER Roger Johnson will find out today whether his appeal against his sending off in Tuesday's 2-1 win over Scunthorpe has been successful.

The 21-year-old defender was red-carded for apparently elbowing striker Steve Torpey in the face, but Wanderers insist video evidence proves he is innocent.

Torpey went down clutching his face following the 75th minute incident, prompting referee Steve Tanner to send Johnson off.

But Johnson - who was only given the captain's armband this week - immediately protested his innocence and Blues have

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appealed against the decision and the resultant three match ban, which would start with tomorrow's home game against play-off rivals Darlington.

Blues boss John Gorman accused Torpey of conning the referee and branded him a disgrace.

Wanderers have sent a video of the incident to the FA's headquarters in Soho Square and are convinced that the tape will clear Johnson of any wrongdoing at today's 11.30am disciplinary committee meeting.

Gorman is so confident the decision will be overturned that he is including Johnson in all his

plans for tomorrow's showdown. And Johnson is in no doubt he will be cleared.

He said: "It was a disgrace. The ball went off for a throw-in and as we were backing off together he came really close. I brushed my arm against the top of his chest and he's gone down clutching his face.

"I couldn't believe he was serious. It was my first home game as captain and he made me look like the villain."

Blues were 2-0 up at the time and Johnson had to watch from the sidelines as Scunthorpe made the most of their numerical advantage to pull it back to 2-1 in the 15 minutes when Johnson was off and they came close to a late equaliser.

Johnson said: "It was terrible watching it. We had murdered Scunthorpe before that but the referee's decision could have turned the game. If I'd elbowed him I would have been disgusted with myself because I would have let everyone down, but I didn't.

"I was worried that the video might not have shown the incident but luckily it has.

"Torpey has cheated and the video has shown the facts."

Now Johnson is turning his attention to tomorrow and the last 14 games of the season.

He said: "I'm assuming I will be playing tomorrow and at Mansfield on Tuesday. I'm that confident that it will be taken away."

And he added: "It wasn't the start I wanted to being made captain again. I had it for a while under Lawrie Sanchez and then Tony Adams took it off me.

"I've got it back now and it means everything. It doesn't seem real that I'm 21 and bossing people like Steve Claridge, Steve Guppy and Keith Ryan about. I'm following some great people who have had that armband and it's a huge honour."

But he is now eyeing an even bigger honour.

He said: "I want to be the captain in the play-off final at Cardiff. That is what dreams are made of and if we can kick on there's no reason why we can't do it."

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