

Board pledge extra cash for play-off bid

BLUES bid to reach the play-offs has received a huge boost with a cash injection from the board, the Free Press can reveal.

The club's directors have dug deep into their personal pockets in a bid to tip the scales in the race to reach the end of season play-offs.

They made the generous pledge after being impressed by Blues' recent run which has catapulted them back into the shake-up.

Director Steve Hayes refused to specify how much money will be made available to boss John Gorman for team strengthening, but insisted it is not peanuts.

He said "We recognise as a board that we have to invest if we are going to build up this club both, as a football club and as a business".

"This will require more imag-

inative thinking and a more dynamic approach. The manager can now plan ahead confident that he has the financial backing of the board and that he has got a significant amount of money for next season."

"We are playing good football and John Gorman has brought a period of success which we need to capitalise on. The fans have been very loyal and they deserve success for their support of the club."

"If he can identify a player or players who could make a difference and help push us into the play-offs we will have no hesitation in going for it."

"As a club we have got to set out goals higher and we believe we are being totally realistic about our ambitions to reach the play-offs.

But we have a contingency

plan if we don't make it."

The money will come as a welcome surprise to Blues' fans who were warned at a recent fans forum that the club which already has debts of £2.2million is on course to lose another £300,000 this year.

But the board have decided that it is time to speculate to accumulate as the club looks to bounce back to League One at the first attempt following its relegation last season.

Wanderers' board members have given the club a substantial six-figure interest free loan and they are confident that more shareholders are about to come on board following the club's conversion to a plc.

The club have also received £50,000 from the Supporters Trust this week with the promise of a further £50,000 to come

from them over the next 12 months.

The club are going all out in their play-off push both on and off the field and they want the whole town to get behind them.

To demonstrate their ambition for success they are breaking new ground by organising a 'free for fans' day for the home match against Chester City on March 12, when they hope to attract a full house for the first time this season.

Hayes said: "The Wanderers are part of the community and have an integral part to play with everyone who lives or works nearby and a strong fan base can make all the difference to a team.

"They respond better to an enthusiastic and supportive crowd and we hope that the Free for Fans day will attract

potential new fans and followers who will then want to come to matches regularly."

Blues are even making it free for Chester fans because they want to create a big match atmosphere.

Hayes said "We want to use this match as the catalyst to move the club forward"

Brentford are the only other team to have let fans in for nothing. They did it against Peterborough in October 2001 and were rewarded with a full house and a win.

The Chester match is all ticket. Fans must get their tickets in advance from the Stadium or Wanderers in Town.

The match will be like none other this season with pre-match and half-time entertainment. There will also be a live band and free giveaways.