

Blues boss blasts cup draw moaners

WANDERERS boss Paul Lambert has blasted the moaners who are unhappy with the club's Carling Cup quarter-final draw.

He says the whingers who are disappointed that the club did not get a big pay-day glamour tie against Chelsea, Liverpool or Arsenal have really got his goat.

He said: "People are grumping and groaning because it is only Charlton. I can't understand it. Charlton are a Premiership side with top class players. I think it is a brilliant draw for us but I have heard people moaning, don't worry about that."

Lambert refused to identify who the whingers are but they have clearly got to him.

He said: "Some of the comments have riled me a bit. To reach the quarter-finals is nothing short of miraculous, it didn't matter who we got."

Charlton are sitting bottom of the Premiership and sacked boss Iain Dowie after just 15 games this week. And Wanderers will travel to The Valley on December 19 trying to heap more misery on them.

Captain Tommy Mooney said: "If you are going to play a Premiership team you fancy yourself against the one that is bottom more than you do against a Liverpool, Chelsea or an Arsenal."

"The draw gives us a chance of making it through to the quarter-finals of the Carling Cup although it is still a mammoth task."

We have got into a winning habit and we believe that can

Wanderers by Dave Peters

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continue although we are sensible enough to know it is going to be harder to do it at Charlton away than it would be Boston away."

"The ideal draw would have been Southend at home but you would have to say we have got the second best draw, or perhaps the third best because getting them at home would have been better."

On loan Chelsea midfielder Anthony Grant is also happy with the pairing.

He said: "If you are looking to get through Southend or Charlton were the teams that you would want."

"The club reached the FA Cup semi-final five years ago and I think this draw has given us a chance of making the Carling Cup semi-finals."

Wanderers have already knocked one Premiership club out of this year's competition, but Will Antwi says he will treat it like any other game.

He said: "Playing against Darren Bent, Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and Dennis Rommedahl will be no different from playing against Jamie Forrester. They will all try to do the same thing and will try to stop them."

"It doesn't matter whether you are playing against Thierry Henry or whoever. I won't have nightmares. I give every striker I play against respect."

'Players haven't been given the praise they deserve'

PAUL Lambert has criticized the national media for not giving his side the credit they deserve this season.

Southend received all the attention for beating Manchester United, and Lambert believes Blues' magnificent achievements have been overlooked.

He said: "The players have raised the bar - and I'm sure they will again - but I just don't feel they've been given the praise they deserve."

"We've surprised people; being the

first team from League Two in the quarter-finals of the Carling Cup for 30 years is an incredible statistic."

"You try and help the players a little smudge of the way but it's all their work and I feel for them because they've turned out some incredible results and sometimes it doesn't look like they're getting noticed."

"They deserve a lot for what they've done in the cup and more than what they are getting."

"It's been a monumental effort from the lads which if we keep up we'll have an incredible season."

And at this stage of the season, Lambert said his side were progressing as planned.

He said: "We're coming close to Christmas and you could say we're on track for the end of season."

"We're in a good position but I know there is more to come from this team, especially in the league."

VIEW FROM THE STAND

WITH RON BARNETT

On our current form we can beat anyone

Back to back cup wins over Notts County and Oxford in the same week, no wonder Wanderers fans cup continues to runneth over. We can now look forward to trips to Stockport and Charlton as Wanderers aim to make the magical third round of the FA Cup and the semi-final of the Carling Cup.

With most of the leading Premiership sides still left in the hat for the Carling Cup draw, I was originally disappointed to be paired with Charlton.

However, given their current position at the bottom of the table and the recent sacking of Iain Dowie, this is a very winnable match. After all, we have already disposed of Fulham and on our current form we are capable of beating anyone.

This cup run brings back memories of the games leading up to the Villa Park semi-final in 2001. The Charlton clash at The Valley could well be this year's version of our quarter-final victory over Leicester at Filbert Street.

Wanderers certainly had to work hard to beat a dogged Oxford side on Saturday. It was a typical local derby with the added spice of a successful Football League club playing a small, rural non-league outfit! (That should start some interesting debates in my local).

Oxford hustled and hustled us out of our normal passing game and we consequently gave the ball away too often and too cheaply.

However, class told in the end and how sweet was that winning goal from Stefan Oakes. Coming less than a minute after their equaliser, it quickly turned the Dreams stand into a nightmare for all Oxford fans.

The extra security needed because Oxford fans were trying to get in the home stands made life difficult for neutral and occasional visitors.

A work colleague, who used to follow Wanderers until he moved from the area, was refused entry because he didn't live in a local postcode and had not been to Adams Park in the last two years.

Only after complaining to a member of the club management was he allowed to buy a ticket. Mind you he lives in Ascot, is five foot four and aged sixty-two, hardly the profile for an Oxford football hooligan.



FA Cup tie rescheduled

WANDERERS' FA Cup tie at Stockport County has been moved to Friday, December 1.

The game has been switched because Sale Sharks, who County groundshare with, have a home game on the Saturday.

After comments by Luton boss Mike Newell at the weekend, Blues manager Paul Lambert has said he has no problems with female officials.

He said: "I don't think I've ever been involved in a game with a woman official, I probably have but haven't noticed."

"I wouldn't have a problem if I did and they certainly haven't annoyed me."

"To be fair to Mike he came out and apologised. No doubt

it was said in the heat of the moment but in the 21st century you don't expect to hear about that."

Wanderers football in the community officer Ashley Smith could still get his dream FA Cup tie against Wanderers.

Smith plays for Maidenhead United who earned themselves a replay against Conference side Stafford Rangers.

The former Flackwell Heath player missed that game through suspension but will be back for next week's replay at Maidenhead.

Maidenhead will be away to Brighton, 8-0 conquerors of Northwich in the previous round, if they win that one.

Golbourne: I would love to come back to Wycombe

SCOTT Golbourne will return to Reading after tomorrow's match against Grimsby - but he is hoping that won't be his final appearance in a Wycombe shirt.

His three month loan expires after the game but the Blues could try and re-sign him on loan for a second period when the transfer window reopens in January.

And the attacking right back is hoping they do after falling in love with Adams Park.

He said: "I am disappointed that it has come to an end. Wycombe have said that might want to have me again in January."

"I would love to come back but I will have to wait and see what happens at Reading."

Golbourne joined Reading from Bristol City last year and the teenager is hoping that being on loan will help his career at the Madejski.

He has been one of the stars of Blues' sprint start to the season helping them to third spot in the league and into the quarter-finals of the Carling Cup.

It was his cross that led to Jermaine Easter's winning goal in the last-16 clash at Notts County but he won't be able to play in the quarter-final at The Valley.

Golbourne said: "It is a massive disappointment that I can't play in the quarter-final but hopefully if the boys get through that game, I will be back for the semi-final."

Boss Paul Lambert said: "It is a killer for me and a killer for him because he has been excellent for this club. Naturally we'd like him to bring him back."

"The squad's small but we can cope, we've players available who can take his place and have already filled in when needed."

"It's a chance for them but we are looking at alternatives as I've always said this squad isn't big enough."

Lambert will now monitor the form of on-loan Aston Villa full back Steve O'Halloran before deciding which one to plump for when the transfer window reopens.

MR INDIA

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