

Winger gets six months to fill Betsy's shoes

Johnson's U-turn gives McParland a chance to shine

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk

ANTHONY McParland has been given six months to prove that he can be the next Kevin Betsy.

Wanderers turned the former Celtic and Barnsley winger's loan into a six-month deal this week as they hunt a successor to Betsy who joined Bristol City in a £150,000 switch last week.

Wycombe thought they had a ready-made replacement in the bag when they bought Darlington's former England U20 international Simon Johnson last week.

But four days after agreeing to sign and posing with a Wanderers shirt for the Wycombe website, Johnson changed his mind and decided to stay in the north east.

His U-turn prompted manager Paul Lambert to offer McParland a six-month trial.

The 24-year-old sparkled as a kid at Celtic and Lambert, a former Celtic hero, is hoping the wideman can rediscover the form that caught his eye then and earned McParland a handful of first team appearances for the Bhoys.

McParland seemed to have a bright future then as he was a regular in the Scotland U21 side but a serious ankle injury and a loss of form saw him move to Barnsley where he failed to make an impact.

But the Scot has not lost any faith in his ability.

McParland said: "I can understand why the manager has only given me six months. He has not seen me play for a while and obviously I wasn't getting a regular game at Barnsley.

"I have got to prove to him that I am worthy of a place in his side and a longer deal.

"I have got to get back to the way I know. The manager knows what I can do and I am sure it won't take me long to show him.

"I am hungrier than ever to play. I can play anywhere in the front six but I have played wide right most of my career.



Mac attack: Anthony McParland in action for Blues against Hereford last month and inset U-turn boy Simon Johnson posing with the Wycombe shirt before changing his mind about a move to Adams Park

"I am frustrated that I haven't played that many games. There are boys that I played with who are household names now so I have got a bit of catching up to do. I just want to be back up there and I know I can be.

"I've got a lot of belief in my ability and I think I can step into Kevin Betsy's shoes.

"I just need to get a bit of sharpness back and then I'm sure I can fill his boots."



Onibuje's first goal sends Blues through

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FOLA Onibuje scored his first Wycombe goal to send the Chairboys through to the semi-finals of the Berks and Bucks Cup on Tuesday night.

The former Great Britain sprinter struck in the final minute to end Aylesbury's brave resistance and send the holders through to a home last four clash against Maidenhead United.

He wrapped home the rebound to save the Blues the ignominy of being taken to extra time by their part-time visitors after Chris Palmer's long shot had bounced off the keeper Tim Vincent.

Onibuje, who was suspended for last weekend's 2-0 defeat at Stockport County was delighted to open his Wanderers account in front of boss Paul Lambert as competition for a striking place heats up.

He faces stiff competition from Jermaine Easter, Tommy Mooney, Scott McGleish and Ian



Fola Onibuje

Stonebridge, when he returns from injury, for the goalscoring positions.

He said: "I'm glad to get off the mark. It is always good for your confidence to get your first goal when you come to a new club no matter who it is against."

And he was just happy to get a game under his belt after being ruled out of action last week.

He didn't know that he was suspended and was on his way to the ground last Friday to catch the team bus to Stockport when assistant manager Steve Brown phoned him to tell him he was banned.

Onibuje said: "I didn't realise. I was coming in to meet the bus but had to train with the kids instead."

And he is hoping his midweek goal will push him straight back into the squad for tomorrow's trip to Wrexham.

The 6ft 6ins former Swindon striker, who has joined the Blues on an 18-month contract, said: "It's been a bit stop-start for me since I signed. I was ruled out of the Carling Cup games and suspended last week but now hopefully this can be the start of my season."

Onibuje who used to run the 100m in 10.9 seconds could have chosen a career in athletics when he left school but he opted for a scholarship at Charlton Athletic instead.

And the former right winger

reckons his speed, allied to his heading, can help him challenge for a starting berth at Wycombe.

He said: "There's a few good strikers at the club so I know I have got to work hard to make sure I'm involved. There's good competition so I've got to get my head down and make sure my name is on the teamsheet."

Onibuje's late winner at Adams Park in midweek was a welcome relief to Blues fans who had seen a strong Wycombe side fail to impose themselves on the non-league Ducks in a game short on entertainment and goalmouth action.

First team squad members Jamie Young, Sergio Torres, Ikechi Anya, Leon Crooks, Anthony McParland, Stephen Gregory and Palmer all joined Onibuje in the starting line-up but they failed to impose themselves in an uninspiring contest.

And it was centre back Lewis Christon who did the most to catch the eye as Wycombe struggled to make it through against their Southern League Division One opponents.

**BAKER'S
BLUES**
WITH IAN BAKER

We can't take league failure

ONLY time will tell just how much of an interference the Carling Cup has been. For all the amazing results and experiences the cup run gave us, it has already been a hindrance to the league form.

Kevin Betsy has left, possibly on the back of national exposure, and Jermaine Easter may well have gone by the time you read this.

On the pitch things seem to be getting worse. We have scored two or more goals only once in the last 17 matches. It is six points from the last seven games, relegation form.

On paper Paul Lambert seems to have a relatively strong squad with Scott McGleish, Fola Onibuje, Tony McParland and Leon Crooks added. This was a side that earlier in the season looked unstoppable and had that lovely habit of not being able to stop winning.

Then there was the disgraceful Simon Johnson saga. You can't parade in a Wycombe shirt and come out with all the rubbish about what you will bring to the team after completing a move and then decide to return to your old club!

It's been a bit of a sorry fortnight for Wycombe and Lambert must be tearing his hair out.

There are 16 games left and plenty of points to play for. After last year's lottery, we cannot accept a place in the play offs. They need to go out in every game, all guns blazing.

There must be no excuses. The players proved they are good enough earlier in the season and during the cup run. They have very few games left in a longish space of time. The fatigue argument is no longer valid.

Another season in League Two will prove very costly to Wycombe. Everyone at the club is geared to winning promotion this season.

Anything less, and despite our cup run, and season 2006-07 will have been a failure. I hope that this comes as a wake up call.

Ian Baker is on the Board of the Supporters Trust. For details and how to join please see www.wvst.org.



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