

Blues blast cup cash as 'derisory'

Two FA Cup wins worth more than run to Carling semi-final

WANDERERS have slammed the £25,000 they received in prize money for reaching the Carling Cup semi-final as laughable.

Blues MD Steve Hayes said: "Twenty-five thousand to get to the semi-final is derisory."

Wanderers, who knocked out Premiership duo Fulham and Charlton before holding Premiership Champions Chelsea to a draw in the semi-final first leg, did not receive a penny in prize money until they reached the last four.

Had they made the same progress in the FA Cup they would have pocketed £560,000.

Indeed, if Wycombe had won just two FA Cup matches this season they would have earned more in prize money than they got for becoming the first basement side in more than 30 years to reach the business end of the Carling Cup.

Managing Director Steve Hayes says the lack of prize money is the key reason why many clubs don't treat the Carling Cup seriously and has called on organisers to bring the payments into line with the FA Cup.

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

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He believes prize money, which is all taken out of the Football League kitty with sponsors Carling making no contribution, should be much more significant and paid on a round-by-round basis as it is in the FA Cup.

He says cup runs are the only way small clubs like Wycombe can hope to compete with all the wealth in the game going to the top clubs.

Hayes said: "Jose Mourinho said after we played his Chelsea team that only in this country could you get a fourth division team playing against the Premiership champions in a semi-final and give them a good game, but as the years go on that's not going to happen."

Hayes says the fact that Crewe are considering having to close their academy – the one thing that has made them money and kept them going – underlines how serious the problem is for the lower league teams as only the rich get richer.



Scant reward: Blues' prize money for reaching the semi-finals of the Carling Cup was next to nothing