

## Rangers not Celtic

WANDERERS boss Paul Lambert has failed in his bid to bring his former club Celtic to Adams Park for a pre-season friendly but has managed to secure Rangers instead - Queens Park Rangers.

He tried to get Celtic at the start of the year but the Bhoys' plans were already confirmed by then.

He is now hoping that they will come at the start of next season.

He said: "It would have been terrific to get them here. Their fans would fill the place, but it won't happen this year, maybe next year."

Instead Blues have lined up Championship side QPR as their Adams Park opponents on Saturday, July 28.

That will see a return to Wycombe for former Blues boss John Gregory who is now the manager of QPR.

Lambert said: "Hopefully it will also see Tommy Doherty playing for us against his former side."

Doherty was on loan to Blues from Rangers last season and Wycombe are hoping to make that a permanent deal.

Rangers are prepared to release the former Northern Ireland midfielder from his contract a year early but Doherty would have to take a big reduction in wages to join Blues.

The QPR fixture looks like being the only home friendly for Wanderers.

The club are off to Germany to play the Dortmund U23 side in July and are also close to agreeing an away friendly at Conference outfit Oxford United.

In addition, reserve team friendlies against Maidenhead United and Holmer Green have also been arranged, although dates have yet to be confirmed for those matches.

## £675,000 to talk

ANYONE wanting to sign Jermaine Easter will have to cough up £675,000 to even get to the negotiating table.

Easter is worried that playing in League Two could jeopardise his Welsh international career after John Toshack dropped him from his summer schedule.

But Lambert said: "At this moment in time there have been no bids for him and I want it to stay that way."

"He has done brilliantly for us and it would have to be a massive offer for us to even listen. Nathan Tyson left here for £675,000 after scoring all those goals and it would have to be the equivalent again."

## Oh brother

TWINS David and James Reading were among the intake of nine new apprentices welcomed to Adams Park by manager Paul Lambert on Wednesday.

The twins were joined by George Daly, Daniel Fitchett, Jordan Lumsden, Chidi Ogbuago, David Pearce, Matthew Phillips and Craig Read.

The club are hoping that they will follow in the footsteps of Lewis Christon, who is the latest to graduate from the youth team to first team.



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# Wanderers close in on Bristol City defender

WANDERERS boss Paul Lambert is poised to make Bristol City defender Craig Woodman his second signing of the summer.

The gaffer, who has already snapped up Macclesfield's Martin Bullock on a two-year deal, is now closing in on the released Ashton Gate left back.

He has offered the 24-year-old former FA School of Excellence graduate a two-year contract at Adams Park and Lambert is confident the paperwork will be completed in the next couple of days.

Woodman has made more than 100 appearances for Bristol City and also had loan spells at Torquay and Mansfield Town.

He was released by the Ashton Gate outfit this summer following City's elevation to the Championship despite making 16 first team appearances last year, and Lambert was quick to pounce.

Lambert said: "We've spoken to him, he's keen to come and hopefully this one is not too far away."

Wanderers have been tracking the Devon-born defender, who comes from the same small town as Sam Stockley, for several months and they are confident of signing him despite competition from League One Cheltenham Town.

Lambert said: "We've had good reports on him. He's played at a really decent club and now we are waiting to see what he thinks."

"He's played predominantly at left back but he can also play in midfield and I think you need versatility."

"He's a good age, he's a decent height and he's played a lot of games and I need people like that. He is a defender who can

## Wanderers by Dave Peters

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play a bit as well and in modern day football you need that, especially on the left side.

"If he comes it will be great because he will give us a bit of balance."

"We've known about him for a while and everyone we've spoken to about him speaks highly of him."

Woodman is one of five targets Wanderers are currently in negotiation with.

One of those five is a goalkeeper and Blues hope to get him signed up next week. Two more targets are centre halves.

Lambert said: "Touch wood, slowly but surely we are getting them in. This club needs a lot of players. We are talking to five but we need more than that and we are trying really hard to get them in."

"A lot will depend on the money situation. We don't have a massive budget. People have this perception that we are a wealthy club but we're not."

"We don't have an open well."

The money situation could put the dampers on Wanderers' interest in Mansfield midfielder Giles Coke.

Any fee for the 20-year-old is likely to be settled by a transfer tribunal and Lambert is worried about getting his fingers burned.

He said: "You can get done at a tribunal and end up paying much more money than you've got."

And he dismissed speculation that he is chasing Stoke's Stags team-mate Alex John Baptiste.



In his sights: Blues boss Paul Lambert is chasing Craig Woodman

## I've hit the Bullseye with my first signing



PAUL Lambert reckons he has hit the bullseye with new signing Martin Bullock (pictured left).

He says his new recruit is the best right-sided midfielder in League Two and has backed him to fill the void created by Kevin Betsy's departure to Bristol City.

The 32-year-old has frequently been their nemesis when he has played against Wycombe for Blackpool and Macclesfield and Lambert is delighted to have him on his side now.

He said: "Every time Martin has played against Wycombe he's given them a torrid time. Now it's our turn to

unleash him on others."

"He has played at a really high level [in the Premiership for Barnsley] and he will bring something different to us."

"He's 32 but that doesn't bother me one bit. In fact I'm glad because I think you are still hitting your prime at 32."

"We need players of that ilk, people who have got a little bit of experience and he has definitely got that."

"Signing him is a real coup for us. He was Macclesfield's best player and we have stolen him from them. He is one of the best at this level of football and the good thing about him is that he knows how to win games."

## I get scared sending my players out to train each day

WANDERERS boss Paul Lambert says he was scared to send his players out to train last season because of the state of their training pitch.

The pitches near Booker airfield Ko'd goalkeeper Frank Talia's Wycombe career and Lambert says it was lucky it didn't do for more players.

He said: "The training pitch

might look good but when you are on it, it's nowhere near good enough."

"Frank hurt his knee on it and in dry weather the pitch is way too hard and there's no give in it."

"It scared me some days sending the players out to train on it. I've never liked it and I'm surprised we've not had more injuries on it."

The pitch is now being re-done to

Lambert's requirements.

He said: "There needs to be some give on it. It's never going to be a Wembley but it should be a lot better than what it is."

Meanwhile, 20 days after the season finished, the players are finally off on their summer holidays.

Lambert has had them all in for three days a week since the season

ended to maintain their fitness.

They have been put through their paces by fitness coach Terry Evans but will today be released to go on their holidays until June 25 when they report back for pre-season training.

Lambert said: "We've had them doing some strength work with Big Terry just to keep them ticking over."

**Blues warn their fans against travelling to Germany  
- see Tuesday's Free Press Midweek**