

# BAKER'S BLUES

WITH IAN BAKER

## Hail the man of the people

**D**on't think anyone can forget the moment Sergio Torres stepped on to Adams Park for the first time. It was Bank Holiday Monday, August 2005 and Wycombe were drawing 0-0 with Cheltenham. Sergio made his mark with one of the best cameos you'll ever witness. And immediately the crowd took to him.

Since then, he's delighted supporters with his flair. But it is more his demeanour off the pitch that has made him the person and player he is.

Down to earth. That sums him up. The story of him paying his own fare to play for Basingstoke before working in Boots from early in the morning has been told so many times. He used to also get the bus to training. And he has always made time to chat to supporters. Despite his background, miles away in South America, you get the feeling he is one of us.

It is why the news that Sergio had signed a new two-year contract extension was, for me, the best Wanderers moment of 2008 so far.

Sergio could have quite easily done a Kevin Betsy/Tommy Mooney/Jermaine Easter and refused to sign a new contract. After all he's easily good enough to play at a higher level.

But it was loyalty to all his friends at the club – his team mates, officials and fans – that made him stay.

He is in a way putting loyalty ahead of personal ambition. Part of the reason that Martin O'Neill was so loved as Wycombe manager was because he did the same thing.

In these days of foreign mercenaries on thousands a week, it is so refreshing to find a foreign player who does not fit that stereotype.

True, he may well leave if a club offer enough – but that offer will have to come close to the £675,000 record transfer fee received from Nottingham Forest for Nathan Tyson.

For now, injury permitting, we can rejoice in watching one of the finest and nicest players ever to grace Adams Park for a while longer.

*Ian Baker is on the Board of Wanderers Supporters Trust. For further details about the Trust see*

*[www.wwst.org](http://www.wwst.org)*

