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Friday, May 30, 2008

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TURN TO PAGES 8&9



New boss for Wanderers

Blues hire ex-England manager



WYCOMBE Wanderers were celebrating a stunning coup last night after hiring ex-England manager Peter Taylor from under the noses of Newcastle United.

Mr Taylor, 55, *right*, also a former England and Tottenham player, has been appointed on a one-year rolling contract to manage the Blues after the shock departure of Paul Lambert.

Newcastle were trying to hire Taylor, a former caretaker England boss, to coach their junior academy.

Wycombe paraded their new manager at a press conference yesterday, with Managing Director Steve Hayes saying: "He was the one we wanted and we have turned down a lot of very good people to get him."

■ Full story – SEE BACK PAGE SPORT



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Page 3

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Turn to page 7

PLUS

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Turn to pages 124-128

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Let Taylor do his job and don't compare him to Martin O'Neill

Wanderers
by Dave Peters

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TOP scorer Scott McGleish has begged everyone connected with Wycombe Wanderers to give new boss Peter Taylor a chance

He says the board, directors and media must stop comparing every new manager with Martin O'Neill.

He claims constant comparisons with the Irishman, who led Wanderers into the Football league before enjoying massive success with Leicester and Celtic are making Wycombe the almost impossible job.

He said: "It is a tough enough job as it is but it is even tougher when every manager here is compared to Martin O'Neill.

"It is important that the past is remembered and we should all acknowledge what he has done but each manager that comes in cannot be held up to that high esteem.

"It is not fair to any manager. It is a big shadow and we are always being told about Martin O'Neill.

"Martin O'Neill is a one-off. He could have had any job in England and could even have been the England manager.

"But it is now eight or nine managers down the line since he's been here and you've got to let the manager create his own image and be his own man."

And McGleish reckons Taylor, who flopped as successor to O'Neill at Leicester, could be the man to take Wycombe back up to League One - although he says he doesn't know if he will be part of the new chapter.

He fears his cards may be marked



Forward thinking: Scott McGleish has urged everyone to move on from the Martin O'Neill era

Picture by ANITA ROSS-MARSHALL 08656p23

following his comments last week when he expressed his dissatisfaction at the board for not doing more to keep Paul Lambert.

McGleish, who has one year left on his contract, said: "I don't know what the position is. At the moment I seem to be public enemy number one. But I don't regret what I said."

But he feels his comments could bring repercussions.

He said: "Because I have aired my grievances it might be out of

my hands.

"If he wants to keep me I will be giving it my all just like I would do for any manager. I am still under contract and if I'm still wanted I will give it 100 per cent as I always do.

"We are all upset that Paul Lambert has gone but life goes on and this is a clean slate and we have all got to impress.

"Out of all the names mentioned for the job, Peter Taylor has got the

highest cv.

"He's got a wealth of experience and will have a lot of contacts. He's been reasonably successful and had a tremendous record with England U21s.

"He's got to quickly assess who he wants and doesn't want.

"He's got the experience. He's managed at every level and hopefully he can hit the ground running and hopefully the club will give him all the support he needs."

A player's verdict

FORMER Wanderers ace Steve Guppy says Peter Taylor will be a hands-on tracksuit manager for Wycombe.

Guppy played for Taylor at Leicester City and admits that the former Gillingham chief struggled at Filbert Street before he was sacked after 15 months with Leicester bottom of the Premiership.

He said: "It was always going to be difficult to follow Martin O'Neill at Leicester - it was almost an impossible job.

"He has managed at the highest level with England and at Leicester in the Premiership. He's got plenty of experience and I found him a good coach. He would certainly bring a lot of experience to Wycombe.

"I quite liked him even though he didn't always play me. He's a very approachable manager and gets on well with the players.

"At Leicester he had a decent budget and spent quite a bit.

"It was a tough period. Peter Taylor made a lot of changes in a short period and following Martin O'Neill was never going to be easy. Martin brought a lot of players in and they wanted to play his way and Peter Taylor wanted to change things and it was bit tough for some people."

Taylor spent £23million during his time at Leicester - the most spent by any Leicester manager - and he presided over the FA Cup quarter-final defeat at the hands of Wycombe.

Guppy, now assistant manager of Rochester Rhinos in America, says his personal choice for the job would have been Ebbsfleet boss Liam Daish.



'I'm as excited to be joining them as I am sad to be leaving Wycombe'

Wanderers
by Dave Peters

dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk

WANDERERS right back Russell Martin, left, has agreed to sign for Peterborough United less than two weeks after saying he loved Wanderers and wanted to stay.

He said: "I understand that I will probably get slagged by the club but I really meant what I said. I do love Wycombe and I did want to stay.

"But then the chance came to go to Peterborough. It was a really hard decision, it was a really good opportunity and I thought I would regret it if I said no.

"I am as excited about joining them as I am sad to be leaving Wycombe.

"I was really happy at Wycombe and there is only one reason why I am going and that is to play at a higher level.

"I just hope that the fans at Wycombe will understand. They have always been so good to me and there is a lot of sadness that I am leaving after four years."

Martin spoke to Championship sides Plymouth Argyle and Crystal Palace before agreeing to sign a three-year-deal with Darren Ferguson's Boro side who were promoted to League One as runners-up this season.

He said: "When I spoke to Peterborough they really sold the place to me and I knew that if I was

going to leave Wycombe they were the club I wanted to go to.

"They have offered me a three year deal which shows just how much they want me."

Plymouth never made a concrete offer and Brighton boy Martin says his dad would have killed him if he had joined the Seagulls bitter rivals Crystal Palace.

Wanderers will receive a fee for the former England youth international, who they signed four years ago on a free transfer after he was binned by his hometown club.

Blues converted him from a midfielder into a right back and he has been one of the stars of the season as Wanderers kept a club-record equalling 19 clean sheets in the league this season.

Martin was out of contract at Wycombe and had been offered a new deal.

Wycombe are entitled to a compensation fee because Martin is under 24.

If the two clubs cannot agree a deal it will be fixed by a transfer tribunal.

● Wanderers midfielder Gary Holt is

being linked with a return to Scotland.

The 35-year-old is unhappy at Adams Park following the resignation of boss Paul Lambert and Dundee are prepared to swoop.

Holt has one year left on his Blues contract but in an exclusive interview with the Free Press last week he made it clear he wants out.

He said: "At the moment I don't want to stay.

"He [Paul Lambert] got me here and he's the main reason I came.

"I ask myself, can I have the same enthusiasm to play for someone else here or would someone else want me."

Dundee boss Alex Rae has picked up on the situation and has made the unsettled former Scotland international his top summer target.



Gary Holt

Taylor's cv

NEW Wanderers boss Peter Taylor has had a management career of highs and lows.

He had two successful spells as head coach of the England U21 side and was also appointed caretaker manager of the England team for one match in 2000 following Kevin Keegan's resignation.

In that game, a 1-0 defeat against Italy in Turin, he gave David Beckham the England captaincy for the first time.

While he was with the U21s he lost just three of his 31 games.

On the domestic front, he achieved back-to-back promotions with Hull City and has also won promotion with Gillingham and Brighton.

But among the highs there have also been lows – most notably at Premiership Leicester, and most recently at Conference side Stevenage.

At Leicester he was given the unenviable task of following in the footsteps of Martin O'Neill.

He began well with the Foxes, topping the Premiership for two weeks, but nine defeats in their final ten games and an FA Cup quarter-final defeat at home to Wycombe saw his popularity nosedive.

It didn't improve the following season and he was sacked after two months with City bottom of the league despite him splashing out £23 million in transfer fees.

He was also sacked by Crystal Palace in 2007 just 16 months after the South London club paid Hull £300,000 in compensation to land him.

But it didn't go to plan and as the Eagles flew dangerously close to the relegation zone, Palace wielded the axe.

Most recently Taylor has been working in the Conference with Stevenage Borough.

He joined them in November but lost more games than he won and they dropped out of the Conference play-off zone. He left at the end of his six month contract.

But even Stevenage chairman Phil Wallace says the stats are misleading, with the club losing five players to Football League teams.

Wallace said: "From the first week Peter was fire fighting and that continued right through the January transfer window and into February. In fact, we still had players making home debuts in March. No side can seriously expect to compete for promotion under those circumstances."

As a player, Taylor began with hometown club Southend United and went on to represent Crystal Palace, Spurs, Leyton Orient, Oldham (on loan) before finishing at Exeter City.

'We gave him a copy of last week's BFP, he can make his own decisions'

New boss must pacify players unhappy at Lambert's exit

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

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ONE of Peter Taylor's first jobs will be to sort out the split that has developed at Adams Park.

Some senior stars spoke out in the Bucks Free Press and said they wanted to leave the club following the resignation of manager Paul Lambert last week.

They criticised the board for not doing more to keep the Scotsman who resigned because 'one or two things weren't right.'

But the board, who were unhappy with the comments in the paper, have said they will leave it up to Taylor to decide who he wants and who he doesn't.

They say they will not be trying to sway the new boss one way or the other, but they have given him a copy of last week's explosive Free Press and told him to do what he wants.

Managing director Steve Hayes said: "We gave him a copy of last week's Bucks Free Press. He can read those comments and make his own decisions."

Taylor said: "As far as I'm concerned it is a clean slate for them and I will address it as quickly as I can and if there are any problems I want to get them out of the way now."

"It doesn't surprise me that Paul Lambert was a popular man here and a good manager and I can understand players being really



Strong bond: Previous boss Paul Lambert consoles Stefan Oakes, left, and Gary Holt, below, after play-off defeat to Stockport County

upset that he's gone but I don't think it's going to take too long. They know I respect Paul.

"Sure, there were certain things said in the press but I'm sure we can address those and get that bit sorted out.

"I'm sure they regret a few things that were said, and in some ways, I respect them for being disappointed that the manager has gone and I hope that I can be as popular as him, but I will be a bit

different.

"I've never had too many problems getting on with players."

He must also act quickly to sort out the future of midfielder Stefan Oakes.

The midfielder, who played under Taylor at Leicester has yet to sign a new deal after being offered reduced terms.

Taylor said: "I know Stefan very well. He's a real good lad who has a wonderful left foot."



Prolific striker tops Taylor's wish list

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

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NEW boss Peter Taylor says he wants to bring four or five new players to the club with a striker top of his wish-list.

He said: "Last year Wycombe didn't have enough people to score goals and that may be one of the reasons they only finished in seventh position because I know the team are organised and play patient football.

"That is the area that I think we need to address but I think we will need four or five fresh faces and I'm determined to do that."

His contacts book, having worked in all four divisions was a major plus for Wanderers as is the fact the he has managed in the Conference, and fans can expect to see more signings from outside the Football League.

Taylor has already got his homework done.

He said: "I always keep a list of players in different positions and loads of different targets. Sometimes you are lucky and get the one that you want and if not you go down that list.

"I don't think there will be money to buy people. I will stay in the budget it is as simple as that."

But Taylor who made his reputation as England's most successful U21 manager will also give youth a chance.

He said: "That side is very important."

His players will start training on July 1, but before then he plans to meet with everyone of them.

He has gathered all their mobile phone numbers and will contact them to organise a series of summer meetings before the pre-season games against Forest Green and Oxford United.

And he hopes players will be as happy to join him at Wycombe as he is to be here.

He said: "I'm delighted to be here. I think I can help players improve, have an organised team and one that supporters will enjoy seeing play.

"I want to build a relationship with players, with supporters and everything else. I'm all about good team spirit really. And to me there's lots of types of team spirit.



'Last year Wycombe didn't have enough people to score goals and that may be one of the reasons they only finished seventh.'
Peter Taylor, above

It can be in the changing room, players with supporters, players with directors. You have always got a chance if everyone wants the same thing and, if we all have a go together and put in as much hard work as we can, I think we've got a chance.

"I've come here to get another promotion. How quickly we do that I don't know. There are a few players who have gone who will need replacing.

"I'd love to get a successful team in August but if it takes another 12 months to do that so be it.

"I get the impression through Ivor Beeks and Steve Hayes that they are going to be patient and I'm not a manager who picks a team for today, I always pick a team and sign players for later on who will benefit the football club.

"Sometimes that will cost me my job but that's how I do things. I do things for long term.

His Blues will play 4-4-2 next season, but Taylor was keeping quiet about his backroom team.

He said: "I've got my thoughts on it. I'm going to have a chat with everyone that's here and then we will decide that very quickly."

Blues made him the boss he is

PETER Taylor says defeat at the hands of Wycombe has made him a better manager.

He described that 2001 FA Cup defeat against Blues as one of his worst moments in management.

He said: "I was the idiot that followed Martin O'Neill. He had done an amazing job there and it was a very difficult job to follow him.

"It was going OK until all of a sudden we decided to play you in the FA Cup quarter-final and you beat us.

"I was feeling as low as you could but there are going to be times in your managerial career where you get awful days and awful weeks and those are the times when you've got to bounce back and as much as that was a really low point, I bounced back and since then I was fortunate enough to get another three promotions.

"I've learned from every club I've been at and hopefully I will be ready."

Gorman: I can't believe Wycombe got him



FORMER Wanderers boss John Gorman says Wycombe have performed a masterstroke by luring Peter Taylor to the club.

Gorman said: "I'm surprised they've pulled it off. He is a man in demand."

"I worked with him with England and he's a great man, a good coach and a good friend."

And Gorman reckons he is just the ticket for Wycombe as they bid to end their four-year exile in the basement division.

He said: "He's proven at the lower level. He can get a team out of the league and that is just what Wycombe want."

"But he has also worked at a much higher level. He was a huge success with the England U21

team and has worked with some of the best players in the country."

Gorman said: "It is a real coup for Wycombe because he was linked with other clubs higher and to be honest I am surprised he's taken a job at the lower level."

"With his contacts he should be able to bring players to the club."

And Gorman – who was top of many Wanderers supporters' wish-list when it came down to choosing the new manager – says the players will enjoy working with him.

He said: "He's a real players' manager. He's an excellent coach and a real mixture. He can have a laugh but he knows, and makes sure the players know, when it is time to work."

Two years ago he was tipped to succeed Sven Now he is Wycombe Wanderers' new manager

TWO years ago Peter Taylor was a 9-2 shot to succeed Sven Goran Eriksson as England manager – yesterday he was paraded as Wycombe's fifth manager in five years.

The former England caretaker manager and U21 boss was the Blues' only target and the Wycombe board contacted him within hours of Paul Lambert's shock resignation last Tuesday.

Three meetings later and the Wycombe board – who have a penchant for attracting top managers and big names – got their man, persuading him to turn down a possible coaching role with Newcastle United's academy.

Managing director Steve Hayes said: "He was the one we wanted and we believe we have got the best man for the job."

"He wants to come because he has seen the potential of this place and we believe he is the man to move things forward."

"It is a major appointment for Wycombe Wanderers. He has managed England before and it is a coup for us to get him."

"Our record of appointing managers at Wycombe is pretty good and we believe we have done it again."

Blues ignored all the other candidates – even though Hayes says 'you would not believe the quality of some of them' – because they were convinced that Taylor is the right man.

Taylor has been described as a legend by Manchester United captain Rio Ferdinand following Taylor's successful reign as England U21 manager.

And it is Taylor's prowess with young players that was one of the many driving factors for the Blues



Captain and the gaffer: Peter Taylor made David Beckham his England captain

board as they went after their man.

Hayes said: "He is a manager for the club, not just for the team."

Taylor's arrival comes nine years after it could have done.

He said: "When I first left the U21s in 1999 I was talking to Alan Parry about coming here but then I went to Gillingham."

"I have always thought it is a good football club and recently it has under-achieved."

"As soon as they contacted me

this time I was very interested."

"I've won four promotions in the lower leagues, which is something I'm very proud of, and I'm hungry to do it again. I enjoy working. This felt right and that's why I accepted."

"I don't like being out of work. That's why I went to Stevenage. I could have sat around waiting for something else to come up but that's not me. I want to be out there every day."

"Why Wycombe? Because it is a

very good football club and I'm here to enjoy working."

Delighted Blues chairman Ivor Beeks said: "We've always been a breeding ground for managers [Martin O'Neill, Lawrie Sanchez, John Gregory and Tony Adams have all gone on to coach in the Premier League]."

"But this time we have got an experienced one who has got an outstanding track record."

"He ticks so many boxes."

Peter Taylor: A guide to Blues' new boss

■ Was capped by England while playing in the old Third Division for Crystal Palace. He won four caps in total scoring two goals.

■ In his England heyday, he once posed as a Sun 'Page Seven Stud.'

■ He was manager at non-league Dover when Glenn Hoddle first asked him to manage the England U21 side in 1996.

■ Taylor is renowned for giving youth a chance. On his one and only game in charge of the full England side against Italy in Turin on November 15, 2000, he used six players still eligible for the U21 squad: Rio Ferdinand, Gareth Barry, Jamie Carragher, Kieron Dyer, Seth Johnson and Emile Heskey.

■ He was inducted into the Football Association Hall of Fame in 2002.

■ He is the only person to have had a one-game tenure as England manager, following Kevin Keegan's resignation and the only one never to win or draw a match.

■ He is the man that gave David Beckham the England captaincy for the first time.

■ When he was managing Hull he insisted that any players who turned up late must be a sitting duck target for their team-mates to blast balls at.

When he arrived late one day he accepted a dose of his own medicine and faced the players' firing squad.

They all missed.

■ His party trick is doing impressions of Norman Wisdom.

■ When he accepted the job of managing Conference side Stevenage last year there was never a question in his mind that he was too big for it.

He said: "If the Conference is good enough for Brian Clough's son, then it's good enough for me."

■ As a manager he has topped all four divisions. But all four of his promotions have come in the lower half of the English game with Brighton, Gillingham and Hull twice.

**It is time to stop
the Martin O'Neill
comparisons: Page
133**

**Martin joins Boro:
Page 133**

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Dallaglio reflects on 18 years of Wasps service

Page 124



Sport

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Five pages of Wasps news and preview ahead of the Grand Final
Pages 124-128

Friday, May 30, 2008

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Taylor made

Wanderers act quickly to appoint former England boss

by Dave Peters

WANDERERS have appointed former England caretaker boss Peter Taylor as their new manager. The man who gave David Beckham the England captaincy for the first time was unveiled at a press conference yesterday afternoon.

The 55-year-old has signed a one year rolling contract at Adams Park and succeeds Paul Lambert, who resigned last week.

Taylor, who has achieved four promotions in his domestic managerial career, was the first and last choice for the Wanderers board.

They went after him the day after Lambert quit and he was the only candidate they interviewed despite receiving dozens of 'high calibre' applications.

Blues MD Steve Hayes said: "He was the one we wanted and we have turned down a lot of very good people to get him."

"We were looking for stability, someone to pull the club together and someone to win promotion and with Peter we believe we've got that."

Taylor, whose last job was with Conference side Stevenage Borough last season, chose Wanderers above a possible position at Newcastle United's academy.

He said: "I've got so much enthusiasm still to be a manager. I want to be out on the training pitch every day."

And he is a man on a mission.

He said: "I have come here to win promotion. I think Wycombe have under-achieved in the division they are in now and I feel that everybody connected with Wycombe thinks we should at least be in the next division."

Taylor inherits a club in turmoil though.

Some of the team's star players reacted to Lambert's resignation by saying they wanted to leave - and Taylor's first job will be to win them over.

But he says he won't be holding anything against anyone and that it is a fresh start.

He said: "I don't think there will be too many problems on that front."



Welcome to Wycombe: Peter Taylor was unveiled at Adams Park as the new boss yesterday

Picture by ANITA ROSS-MARSHALL 08939 4

The Free Press is published by Newsquest (London) Ltd, part of Newsquest Media Group Ltd, 58 Church Street, Weybridge KT13 8DP, a Gannett company. Printed by Newsquest Oxfordshire, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0EJ.



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