



RAM RAID: Peter Taylor is among those touted for Pride Park

Bookies put Taylor in the frame

PETER Taylor is a 10-1 top tip to become the next Derby County manager even though he says he has had no contact from the Rams.

Bookmakers Victor Chandler have him among their front-runners to succeed Chris Hutchings who has been appointed on a temporary basis following the resignation of Paul Jewell last Sunday.

Derby's chairman is Adam Pearson who was Hull's chairman in 2002 when he appointed Taylor as manager.

Taylor then delivered two promotions in as many seasons at the KC Stadium.

Neal Watkins, a spokesman for Victor Chandler says that makes them wary of laying Taylor at too

big a price.

He said: "Taylor and Pearson have a bit of history from their Hull days. It is true that they fell out over his move to Crystal Palace, but despite that Pearson has a lot of respect for the job he did, and it's not out of the question that he opts for Taylor once again. The job he is doing at Wycombe is raising his profile again."

Taylor said: "I can understand people linking me but I've not been approached or had any contact."

"If there are any rumours that's all they are. It's part of the game we are in and I'm sure there are going to be a lot of names linked with it but from my position I'm delighted with the 46 points we've got here from 23 games."

Tipped for the top



TIP FOR THE TOP: Angelo Balanta

SKY Sports pundit Chris Kamara has earmarked Angelo Balanta as one of his two players to look out for in 2009.

He believes the 19-year-old Colombian could be the next big thing to hit the game along with young Southampton forward Adam Lallana.

Kamara said: "They are both lovely footballers with big futures ahead of them. As they improve they will become big stars in the next generation."

Balanta is on loan at Adams Park until Saint Valentines Day from QPR.

Bloomfield backs the Blues to keep it going

Wanderers' nine-point lead Christmas lead is trimmed to five

BLUES ace Matt Bloomfield is confident Wanderers won't implode in the second half of the season despite seeing their nine-point lead at the top of the table whittled down to just five over Christmas.

Bloomfield was part of the Wycombe team which blew a four-point lead three years ago and failed to go up – but he says that won't happen again.

In the last six years Wanderers have been the only Christmas Day League Two leaders not to go on and clinch promotion but their failure that year was due to exceptional circumstances as they were derailed by double tragedy.

First midfielder Mark Philo died in a car crash and then just a month later manager John Gorman lost his wife to cancer.

Bloomfield said: "We all know the reasons why we didn't go up that year. It was a terrible time for everyone at the club."

And he is confident that the Blues will reach the promised land this year despite a disappointing Christmas, where they took just two points out of a possible six.

Draws at home to promotion rivals Exeter City on Boxing Day and then away to Gillingham on Sunday have enabled in-form Brentford to cut the gap to just five points and, if the Bees win their game in hand, Wanderers' seemingly big lead of just a week ago, would be down to two points.

But Bloomfield, is not concerned and is convinced that Wycombe will last the distance this year.

He said: "The lads can cope with the pressure. We've got a bigger squad and we've got enough to cope with it."

"I don't see any reason why we can't continue doing what we've done in the first half of the season."

"It is disappointing to see our lead is now down to five points, but

Wanderers by Dave Peters

dpeters@london.newsquest.co.uk

we've had a tough Christmas programme, and if we beat Bury then five points out of nine doesn't sound bad over Christmas.

"We've got to forget about the disappointments and look forward to Saturday."

Boss Peter Taylor is also remaining calm, despite now having Brentford breathing down his team's necks.

He said: "It doesn't concern me that the lead is down to five points from the second team. If it was five points down to the fourth or the seventh team then it might concern me, but no."

Taylor says it was unrealistic for anyone to expect his team to continue streaking clear at the top of the table.

But Taylor is keen to address his team's goalscoring problem – a concern that cost them automatic promotion last season when they managed just 56 goals all term.

This season they have reached the halfway point with 31 but they have hit just three in their last four games, including a dubious penalty against Exeter and a freak own goal from Gills defender Stuart Lewis down in Kent last Sunday.

And now that the transfer window is open for business, Taylor plans to recruit at least one new striker and is also considering whether to recall Scott McGleish back from his loan at League One outfit Northampton Town.

How does Peter Taylor's squad compare with the one which last topped the festive table. Tell us at
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HAND IT OVER: Matt Bloomfield claimed Wanderers' goal in Sunday's 1-1 draw at Gillingham before Gills defender Stuart Lewis owned up to scoring it. The Gills defender said: "Unfortunately it was my goal. I couldn't get out the way." The ball struck him as he, Bloomfield and home keeper Simon Royce chased a 50-50 ball on the edge of the box. Under pressure from Bloomfield, Royce blasted his clearance straight at Lewis and the ball rebounded in

Gorman at Ipswich

FORMER manager John Gorman has been appointed Jim Magilton's number two at Ipswich Town.

Gorman led Wanderers to the play-offs in the 2005-06 season in a year when the Chairboys led the table at Christmas time before the deaths of Gorman's wife from cancer and midfielder Mark Philo in a car crash.

LEAGUE TWO

TEAM	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Ps
Wycombe	23	6	5	0	18	7	6	5	1	13	6	46
Brentford	22	6	4	1	18	8	5	4	2	11	7	41
Bradford City	23	6	5	1	24	14	5	1	5	16	13	39
Dagenham	22	6	3	1	26	6	5	1	6	19	17	37
Shrewsbury	23	9	1	2	28	7	1	6	4	10	13	37
Bury	23	5	2	4	17	11	5	4	3	17	14	36
Exeter City	22	5	3	4	17	16	5	3	2	14	10	36
Darlington	22	5	4	2	18	10	4	4	3	17	12	35
Rochdale	22	6	3	2	21	11	3	5	3	14	16	35
Gillingham	23	7	4	1	23	7	2	3	6	9	26	34
Aldershot T	22	7	4	1	22	15	3	0	7	11	20	34
Lincoln City	23	4	5	2	16	9	4	1	7	11	16	30
Chesterfield	23	3	4	4	18	17	4	3	5	19	18	28
Macclesfield	23	4	1	7	14	26	4	2	5	15	21	27
Port Vale	23	4	1	7	12	21	4	1	6	12	16	26
Morecambe	23	4	5	2	16	12	1	5	6	9	22	25
Notts County	23	2	5	5	9	15	3	4	4	16	20	24
Chester City	23	4	2	5	16	12	2	3	7	10	27	23
Accrington S	22	4	1	6	16	16	2	3	6	9	18	22
Rotherham U	22	5	2	3	15	11	5	4	3	15	12	19
Barnet	23	1	3	7	9	22	3	4	5	17	25	19
Grimsby T	23	1	4	6	10	17	1	4	7	9	25	14
Bournemouth	23	4	4	4	10	9	1	5	5	15	25	7
Luton Town	23	4	4	4	20	19	3	4	4	10	14	-1

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