

Blues set for a £700k windfall

WANDERERS look set for a £700,000 windfall after Cardiff City accepted Birmingham City's £5m bid for centre back Roger Johnson.

Bluebirds chairman Peter Ridsdale confirmed that they had now given Johnson permission to discuss personal terms with the Premiership new-boys.

He said: "It's up to Birmingham and Roger to thrash out a deal."

Birmingham had two previous bids for the 26-year-old rejected before making it third time lucky in their chase for the 2008 FA Cup finalist who also attracted interest from North East rivals Sunderland and Middlesbrough, as well as Premier League Portsmouth.

Wanderers will now receive just over £700,000 from Cardiff as their cut of the deal after negotiating a generous sell-on clause when they sold him to Championship side Cardiff for £275,000 in the summer of 2006.

About £250,000 of that is due in August, with more cash coming 12 months later.

Ridsdale said: "There is a sell-on clause of profitability to Wycombe Wanderers and they'll be getting what they're owed out of this deal."

Blues managing director Steve Hayes commended Ridsdale for his role in the deal.

He said: "The way Peter Ridsdale handled it as far as Wycombe is concerned has been absolutely first class.

"It's important we are able to trust chairman, chief executives and owners to do a good job because these sell-ons are a lifeline for our club."

Blues have recently sold Mike Williamson to Watford with a similarly favourable sell-on clause.

However, were Watford to sell Williamson and another player to the same club in a joint deal, Blues would be relying on them to disclose the exact valuation of each player or risk missing out on their percentage.

Johnson made 119 League appearances for the Bluebirds, scoring 12 goals – one of which came in their FA Cup quarter-final win at Middlesbrough.

Hayes said: "I'm very fond of Roger and I'm delighted he's got his chance in the Premiership.

"He has worked ever so hard.

"He didn't make it at Chelsea and it wasn't going well at Portsmouth, but he's got where he wanted to and at a good age too. I think he can cope in the Premiership. His attitude and desire is first class."

For more reaction go to
bfcf.com or
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Board members step down

SUPPORTERS representatives Ian Mather and Dave McGee have both resigned from the football club's board citing a conflict of interests.

The Supporters Trust representatives made the decision in the light of the current takeover plans.

No looking back as Antwi hunts new challenge



MOVING ON: Defender Will Antwi

CENTRE HALF Will Antwi has ruled out a return to Adams Park even though boss Peter Taylor left the door ajar for him.

The defender was released at the end of last season but Taylor said he would be welcome to return in pre-season and try out for the club again.

But even with skipper Dave McCracken leaving the club this week to join MK Dons – creating a hole at centre half – Antwi says he won't be returning to try and fill it.

The former Aldershot player hasn't been snapped up by anyone yet but he has spoken to a number of clubs and is now keeping his fingers crossed.

He said: "I've got to be patient and see what happens. I've spoken to one or two clubs but the whole market seems to be a bit slow at the moment.

"But going back to Wycombe is not something I think will be happening.

"I've left now and it is not something I will be thinking about.

"It is time to find a new challenge and start afresh."

Antwi had an injury-jinxed time at Blues first with a complex groin problem and then with a toe injury which prevented him getting a long run of games for Taylor's side.

He managed to play six games all season and was loaned out to Blues Square outfit Northwich Victoria.

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

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He said: "It was difficult to leave but you have got to find new challenges."

His departure and the exit of skipper McCracken means that Taylor is now hunting a centre half but Antwi believes he has already got a ready-made replacement in the building.

He believes giant 6ft 7ins Luke Oliver could be the man to fill McCracken's boots alongside Leon Johnson.

He said: "Luke is a very good player. He's got all the attributes you want in a centre half. He's tall, he can head it and he's got good feet."

Oliver is unproven at this level. Taylor plucked the former Wanderers trainee off the subs' bench of Blue Square Premier League side Stevenage Borough last season.

He made eight appearances, most as substitute, and did not always look comfortable.

But Antwi believes the time is right for the 26-year-old to blossom.

He said: "He's got plenty of potential and maybe now is his time to show it."

Wanderers sign Wigan midfielder Montrose

Picture courtesy of WWFC.com

by Dave Peters

PETER Taylor has completed his first capture of the summer, signing Lewis Montrose on a two-year deal from Premiership Wigan.

Taylor completed the deal within the first 48 hours of having his budget finally settled after a seven-week delay.

The 20-year old midfielder will officially join the Blues on July 1 after his Latics contract expired.

Montrose, who can play wide or centrally, made his debut for Wigan as a substitute in a Carling Cup tie with Crewe in October 2006.

He then went on to have loan spells with Rochdale, Cheltenham and Chesterfield and played for the Spireites in their 1-1 draw with Wycombe at Adams Park in March.

Boss Peter Taylor said: "I've kept tabs on Lewis ever since we played against Chesterfield last season.

"I've also spoken to a few people I know at Wigan and that's why I followed up my interest."

Taylor did stress his need for experience at the end of last season, and signing a 20-year-old does not fulfil that need.

He said: "I'm delighted to sign a young player and I hope with some

games and experience he will kick on. Just because the first one is young doesn't mean they all will be. Hopefully by the end of pre-season there will be a spread of youth and experience."

For Montrose, the lure of working with a former England and England U21 boss was too good to turn down.

He said: "You want to be at the right club and I think Wycombe is the right club for me.

"There were a few other clubs interested but the manager persuaded me to come here.

"He is good with younger players so hopefully I can work with him and improve, because that's what I want to do."

And Montrose, who describes himself as a centre midfielder and says Matty Phillips was the player who most caught his eye when he played against Blues last season, is not coming to Wycombe simply to make up the numbers.

He said: "I want to be a first team regular next season. That's my target."



THE FULL MONTY: Lewis Montrose with his new club's strip

Hayes eases doubts during a two-hour meeting with shareholders this week

**by Alan Parry
Associate Director**

Around 500 shareholders will decide the fate of Wycombe Wanderers in a crucial vote on July 6 and having heard some of them speak at Wednesday's meeting at Adams Park, I'm confident that the club's future is in safe hands.

The shareholders are being asked to approve a proposal by managing director Steve Hayes

that he is given ownership of the club in return for writing off £3m worth of debt. I know that Steve expected a rough ride when he outlined his plans to a packed audience on Wednesday and he wasn't disappointed.

Shareholders grilled him for almost two hours, but he didn't duck any questions and ended up getting a standing ovation.

The shareholders were clearly impressed by Steve's honesty in addressing their concerns and his desire to do what's best for the club.

Most of those who spoke praised Steve's contribution as

managing director and backed him to take the club forward.

He also received a ringing endorsement from chairman Ivor Beeks who passionately backed Steve's proposal and gave shareholders a stark warning that if the plan was rejected, the club will almost certainly be plunged into administration.

I spoke to many of the

shareholders after the meeting and their mood was positive and upbeat. They told me that they trusted Steve and believed that the club would have a bright future under his control.

There are some dissenting voices, of course, but even those against the proposal must realise that a 'no' vote on July 6 could destroy the club that we all love.