

Holt out the Blue



'I didn't want to drag out my contract taking money I hadn't earned'

WANDERERS have let midfielder Gary Holt go – five months after he signed a new one-year contract extension.

Manager Peter Taylor committed the u-turn because he felt the 36-year-old former Scotland international wouldn't play as many games next season.

Taylor came to the decision after re-thinking his strategy for life in League One next season.

He said: "It was really difficult for me to put it to him but I feel better for doing it. I wanted to be honest to him and I told him I couldn't see him playing as many games next season."

Taylor operated with two holding

**Wanderers
by Dave Peters**

midfielders for the majority of last season with Holt playing alongside former Northern Ireland international Tommy Doherty.

But the boss is desperate to inject more goals into his side next term after they managed just 56 two years ago and just 54 last season.

Taylor said: "I put it to him that the way the team will play this year I couldn't see him playing as many matches as he did last season and I didn't want to see a good pro like him

sitting on the bench or in the reserves."

Taylor added: "He was one of the first to be offered a new deal last season and he deserved it."

Holt played 11 times for Scotland, made 35 appearances for Wanderers last season and Taylor identified him as one of the leading figures behind Blues' first promotion in 15 years.

He said: "He was one of the main reasons why the attitude changed after that friendly at Forest Green when everyone was feeling sorry for themselves. He was key in turning it round and without him who knows where we would have finished."

"He's had two years at the club and

got a promotion that he really deserved and I just wanted to be fair and honest with him.

"I can't thank him enough for the way he has conducted himself both on and off the pitch and he will be a great signing for someone."

Holt admitted he did not see it coming.

He said: "It was a bit of a shock. I've had two great years here and I've really enjoyed it. I would like to thank Peter for being honest about it. Rather than me playing fewer games next season it's better if I move on and look for another club."

"I didn't want to drag out my contract for another year taking

money I hadn't earned.

"I wanted to leave with my head held high, with my medal from last year and say thank you for the memories.

"It has been very last minute and the manager has apologised for that, but that's football.

"I respect the decision and I would rather go in this way than take the money for doing nothing, I have never been about that."

Holt has no intention of hanging his boots up though and is now hunting a new club for next season.

He said: "I want to play on. I'm in good shape and hopefully my phone will start ringing soon."