

Can Blues get rid of their travel bug?

**Bury v Wycombe
Tomorrow, 3pm**

WANDERERS' need to shake off their travel sickness in time for crunch trips to Bury and relegation-haunted Exeter City in the coming days.

Bury is first up tomorrow, before a trip to Devon on Tuesday night.

But if Blues can reproduce their recent home form the matches should present real opportunities for points.

Manager Gary Waddock said: "We've got two big away games and the challenge now is to see if we can back up the performances and results of the last two home games."

"We've picked up some points in tough games and we need to do that away from home."

"We've got good memories of Bury from last year and if we can use that to motivate ourselves and get the result we need then all well and good."

"And if we're able to get a result at Bury we'll go to Exeter in a good frame of mind with some confidence."

Both Bury and Exeter were in League Two with Wanderers not so long ago.

Waddock said: "Bury have done very well this year, they've adjusted to League One very well and Exeter have been able to stay at this level for a couple of years but now they are trying to fight and get out of it – similar to ourselves."

Joel Grant is injured, but Chris Hackett and Matt McClure could both come back for at least one of the matches after returning to training this week.

McClure's big break

MATT McClure might not have reached own personal goal targets this season, but the young striker has done enough to impress boss Gary Waddock.

Despite injuries at awkward times, McClure can look back on 2011/12 as a breakthrough season, according to his manager.

Waddock said: "I think it has been a breakthrough season for him. The idea of him going out on loan was for him to play first team fixtures."

"Unfortunately he picked up the injury, but he's worked extremely hard to overcome that and he's forced his way into the team and he's scored his first senior goal."

"Unfortunately he picked up a niggle while he was in the team, but he'll be stronger for it because he's a very determined young man and he's a talented player on top of that."

"I'm more than happy with his progress."



Surgery for defender

JAMES Tunnicliffe is to have surgery on a shoulder injury which curtailed his loan spell at Crewe.

The big defender joined the League Two side last month on loan but he only featured twice for the Railwaymen.

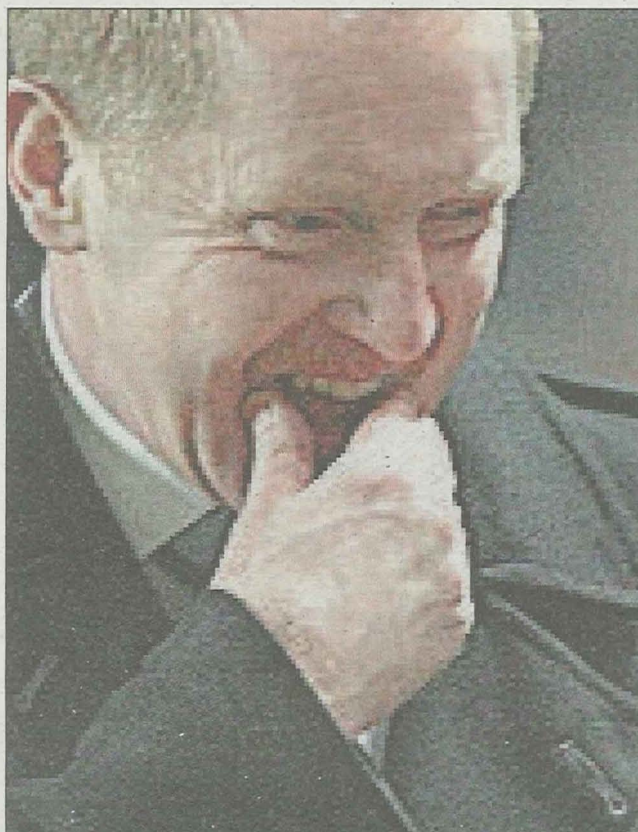
The 23-year-old hasn't played since February 18 and has gone back to Wycombe Wanderers ahead of his operation on Wednesday.

Meanwhile Blues striker Paul Hayes was this week having treatment on a hamstring niggle at his parent club Charlton Athletic, but was set to be back in training yesterday.

Waddock: It's about holding our nerve now

By Alan Feldberg

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BIRTHDAY BOY: Gary Waddock will celebrate his 50th birthday on a coach back from Bury tomorrow evening. He said: "I won't get back until late on Saturday so the best possible present I could get would be three points."

GARY Waddock says survival this season will be decided by who blinks first.

Incredibly, with ten games to go anyone in the bottom half could still be drawn into it.

Blues are four points from safety at the moment but they are just nine points from 14th place, and while that sounds like a lot their cause is helped by the sheer number of teams still in the mix – they can't all win each week.

Waddock said: "Teams that were out of it have lost two or three games and now they're looking over their shoulder."

"We've been in this position for quite some time so we know what we need to do. But teams that are dragged into it can find it very difficult to turn it around."

"It's who holds their nerve the best and who deals with the pressure the best."

"I can only talk for our group of players, but last year they dealt with the pressure of trying to get promotion – it was a different kind of pressure but it was still pressure and we coped with that very, very well."

"We're not going to win every game, of course we're not, but it's how you deal with setbacks along the way."

"There is middle ground somewhere. You don't get carried away and you don't get too disappointed."

Of course, Waddock and Wanderers

■ Anyone in the bottom half could still be drawn into the relegation battle

■ Blues picked up 15 points from their last ten games two years ago – would that be enough?

have been here before.

Two years ago they were as good as down by now and not even a late surge was enough to save them.

In the final ten games of 2009/10 Blues won four and drew three, collecting 15 points.

The current squad would do well to repeat that, although they might actually need more than that.

Waddock said: "Peter Taylor assembled a very good group of players, but unfortunately we ran out of games."

"I think we would have done it had there been a few more games left."

"But that's history, that's gone. It's what we do now that counts. There are still plenty of games and points to play for this season."

Remaining fixtures: March 17, Bury, A; March 20, Exeter, A; March 24, MK Dons, H; March 31, Stevenage, A; April 6, Carlisle, H; April 9, Chesterfield, A; April 14, Oldham, H; April 21, Charlton, A; April 28, Notts County, H, May 5, Sheff Wed, A.

Wall of silence greets tabloid reports of Wanderers' sale

WYCOMBE Wanderers are not commenting on stories in the tabloid media this week claiming that owner Steve Hayes will look to sell the club once he has got Wasps off his hands.

The sale of the rugby team is expected to be completed within weeks, but Hayes' long-term commitment to Blues had not previously been questioned.

When announcing that he was putting Wasps on the market last October, he said in a statement: "I remain fully committed to Wycombe Wanderers."

"Of course, as ever, if approaches are made to me for the club then these would be considered carefully based on what is best for the club, but for now my intention is to remain the owner of the club for the foreseeable future."

There have been no contradictory statements from the club or its owner

since then and David Cook of the Wycombe Wanderers Supporters Trust says he'd be surprised if Hayes was looking to sell.

He said: "I've not heard that anywhere else and it would come as a huge surprise if he did sell. He's brought all these loan players in and they're not cheap, so that's a sign of commitment."

Cook also says he'd be happy for Hayes to remain in control of the club long-term, providing the cash continued to flow.

He said: "There have been a number of good things that he's done for the club. Had he not stepped in when he did, who knows what would have happened?"

"The downside of that is, while his input of capital was timely, we were unaware it was a loan. It's taken Wanderers into debt and what we need

now is stability and a long-term plan."

"We seem to be yo-yoing between leagues and for the club to progress we need an owner – whoever it is, and it could be Steve – capable of investing in the future. If Steve can focus on Wanderers if and when Wasps are sold, then he'd be welcomed. But we need a strategy and considerable investment."

However, Cook is critical of the wall of silence erected by Hayes since his stadium proposals fell through.

He said: "Steve isn't the best communicator and when he doesn't say anything then rumours fill that space."

"While we accept that there are situations when confidentiality is key – the sale of Wasps, for example – an outline of intentions wherever possible would be very useful. It's always better to say something than to say nothing."



OWNER: Steve Hayes