

Here we go....again

■ Andy Carswell gives you the lowdown on the Blues

So what happened over the summer?

An initially frustrating summer for fans came to an end in an outpouring of elation as the Supporters' Trust took over the ownership of the club from Steve Hayes.

It had been a long drawn out process by necessity, but prior to the deal being done fans were concerned Gary Waddock was missing out on signings as Wanderers were in the meantime under a transfer embargo.

They needn't have worried however as within 24 hours of it being lifted he was able to bring in signings of the calibre of Matt Spring and Gary Doherty.

Is Gary Waddock the right manager for the job?

Fans started to question the manager's ability last season as they were relegated after a single season in League One for the second time under Waddock.

In between those two campaigns however he guided them to promotion, and having also led Aldershot into the Football League he knows what's needed to get Wanderers challenging for promotion.

His new signings Gary Doherty, Sam Wood, Richard Logan and Matt Spring all have experience of promotion and should have more of an impact than last summer's

new arrivals. Elliot Benyon and Ben Harding left in January after failing to impress and James Tunnicliffe and John Halls were both released without much fanfare at the end of the season.

Tellingly, none of this season's new arrivals are loanees. Waddock used 14 of them last year, to varying degrees of success – for every Marcello Trotta or Paul Hayes there was a James Harper or Nicholas Bignall.

Who should fans keep their eye out for this season?

Charles Dunne. The 19-year-old had a couple of substitute appearances in the dying embers of the League One campaign last season and has had a big role to play at left back during pre-season. He was outstanding against Championship Watford on Saturday and the casual observer would assume he was making his 100th start, not his first. Last season's first choice left back, Grant Basey,



GARY WADDOCK

will have a serious challenge on his hands to hold down a regular starting slot.

What style of play can fans expect?

Last season goals flooded in at both ends during Wanderers' matches, but too often they let in more than they scored.

The goals against column ran into three figures and Waddock has worked hard to try to rectify that over the summer.

Blues' friendlies concentrated on defensive shape and work rate and, the 4-1 loss to Brentford aside, it worked. That was to the slight detriment to the attacking side however as Wycombe failed to score in three out of seven games.

It won't be as exciting this season but Blues will be much harder to break down.

Where will Wanderers finish this season?

There's no one with the crowds, squad and financial muscle of the Sheffield clubs, Huddersfield and Charlton to contend with this season but Blues won't be as faniced for automatic promotion as the likes of favourites Fleetwood, Bradford & Rotherham.

Wycombe have got out of this division before and should challenge again, but the top three looks like it might just be beyond them. A play-off place looks more likely.

Andy's guide to the newbies

Gary Doherty

Experienced centre half who impressed during a loan spell at Adams Park last season. An old head in an otherwise youthful defence, the ex-Ireland international has been handed the captain's armband and his leadership will be key in the development of Blues' younger players.

Sam Wood

Spent last season on loan at Rotherham after making more than 100 appearances for Brentford, a club he helped to win the League Two title in 2009. Skilful and has shown a strong work ethic to get back and defend when needed during pre-season. Looks a useful acquisition on the left wing.

Matt Spring

Dubbed the Andrea Pirlo of League One by fans of Leyton Orient, who were left bemused at Russell Slade's decision to release the experienced midfielder. Has added a touch of class

and creativity to complement the graft of Stuart Lewis and Matt Bloomfield in the middle. The most impressive of the new faces.

Richard Logan

A cult hero at Exeter after scoring important goals in two promotion campaigns for the Grecians. Will give Blues more of a presence in attack with his height and aerial ability and scored twice with headers in pre-season. Should he score it, his tenth goal of the season will be his 100th in professional football.

Dennis Oli

Able to play up front or on the wing, Oli has shown glimpses of his ability during pre-season. Could miss the start of the campaign with a knee injury however, opening the door for Joel Grant on the right wing

Lee Angol

One for the future, the 18-year-old



IN THE THICK OF IT: Sam Wood in action against Watford

was released by Spurs after failing to make a first team appearance. Another who can play out wide or in

attack, he's shown great pace in the matches he's played in during the pre-season campaign.

Waddock: Stability not targets

AFTER a summer of upheaval at Adams Park, Gary Waddock is not setting his players a target on where he wants them to finish.

Protracted takeover talks, a transfer embargo and the scrapping of the club's youth setup made life tough for the Wanderers manager, who said the summer break was an exercise in plate spinning.

Because of that he wants a period of stability this season and isn't interested in targets.

Seventh place will guarantee a place in the play-offs but Waddock said: "I've got no position in mind at the moment. We're looking at the York game first. We've got a hell of a long way to go before we know if we'll end up seventh, higher, lower - we don't know."

"We've got a new group

together and it's been quite an eventful summer with the takeover and everything else. We need to calm things down. We need to be more stable and that takes time."

The Blues boss said the transfer embargo – which was only lifted when the club accounts were submitted with the takeover completed – didn't affect his summer transfer plans and he didn't miss out on any targeted signings.

He said: "The timing of the embargo being lifted was fantastic and we were able to bring in the players for day one of pre-season training."

"We were trying to spin as many plates as we possibly could without any of them falling off."

"The timing was probably the best it could be. It fell into place quite nicely."

Age is no barrier here

WANDERERS' talented crop of youngsters will get the chance to play a significant part this season, says manager Gary Waddock.

Six members of last year's youth team have been given squad numbers for the forthcoming campaign and others featured prominently in the first team's pre-season campaign.

Anthony Stewart and Charles Dunne had brief tastes of first team football last season and with a full pre-season under their belts they are in a position to force their way into the side on a regular basis.

Waddock, who last season gave a first team debut to 15-year-old Jordan Ibe, said: "They are good enough. It doesn't matter about their age, we'll stick them in. We've proved that in the time I've been here. We've got some very good young players at the club and if they're performing they will play."

The Blues boss admitted he wanted to give Stewart more of a break during the summer, but injuries forced his hand on team selection.

Waddock said: "He possibly played too many minutes but we've picked up one or two injuries. We wanted to give him a rest like we've been able to do with the majority of the players. That's helped him in many ways because he needs that work. He needs time to be fit and sharp."