

Matt McClure joins the Wanderers 100 club but admits...

My first game might've been my last

MATT McClure said after making his 100th appearance for Wanderers this week that he's come a long way since suffering a serious injury at the start of his career.

The striker joined the One Hundred Club as a substitute against Bury on Saturday and almost marked the occasion with his 23rd goal for the side.

It's a landmark the forward may not have got anywhere near making after a horrendous injury he suffered three seasons ago.

Making his debut on loan at Hayes and Yeading on the opening day of the 2011/12 season, McClure broke his ankle and severely damaged his tendons.

He eventually made a comeback after missing six months of action but was told at one point his career may be over before it had properly begun.

Since then McClure's career has been on an upward trajectory, with the striker establishing himself as a first team squad regular and ending each of the last two seasons as top goalscorer.

by **ANDY CARSWELL**
acarswell@london.newsquest.co.uk

Reflecting on the dark times has enabled McClure to focus on the positives, and he passed a milestone by becoming a Wanderers centenarian on Saturday.

He said of his time out: "It was a bad injury. There was a chance I might not have played again, or played at a good level.

"I kept my head down, worked hard to get myself back and worked the ankle up.

"I don't think they wanted to break it to me [that he might not play again]. When I was speaking to Stuart Ayles, our physio at the time, he explained it was probably the worst thing that could have happened to my ankle. I'd done the ligaments and chipped the bone, which is quite serious.

"He did a great job getting me back to fitness. We had one of the best surgeons, an ankle specialist – I was very fortunate in that sense.

"I didn't find out until last week it was my 100th appearance – it crept

up on me a bit. It's a good achievement and I'm looking forward to the next hundred now."

Asked for his best moment as a Wanderers player, McClure said: "There's been a few – your debut's always up there.

"I liked Rotherham away – the gaffer had just taken over and we'd just gone bottom. They were either first or second, I scored two and we won 3-2.

"Obviously Torquay last year has to be up there. It was quite an emotional day. There's a few highs and a few lows as well, but you take those."

McClure almost snatched a late winner against Bury as his header hit the bar, before his team mates couldn't quite force the ball over the line in the scramble that ensued.

He said: "I was about six yards out and I thought if I head it down it'll go in, but it bounced up and hit the bar. I don't think it went in."

