



# Sentinel Sport

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**Vale players vow to fight for the cause after Grew blast: Page 52**

Phone (01782) 602525

## Future of Grew still uncertain after talks put on ice

### PORT VALE

by Steve Shaw

PORT Vale's unrepentant coach Mark Grew was mulling over his future at the club last night as showdown talks with chairman Bill Bratt were put on hold. Yesterday, Bratt was due to confront Grew over comments he made after Saturday's miserable 3-1 defeat at Leyton Orient, when he slammed his players for being 'gutless' and 'spineless'.

Although the pair came face-to-face at Vale Park yesterday, they agreed to delay talks for at least 24 hours.

Grew said: "I did speak with the chairman, but he had a few things to do and I had to take training so we left it at that, which gives a me a chance to think about what I'm going to do."

"Leaving the club is a possibility, but there will be one or two things I will be discussing with him to find out what's going on."

"That includes the management situation because that has to be sorted out sooner or later, because the club has to be stable."

When Grew was asked whether he regretted his verbal onslaught, he added: "Not one regret."

Bratt said: "The delay gives everybody the chance to calm down, because it is better to

**ON THE MARK:** Striker Danny Glover scores for Vale Reserves during their clash with Bradford last night. However, the youngster's night took a turn for the worse when he later saw red. Photo: HAMPTON PRODUCTIONS



**Mixed night for young gun Glover – page 53**

discuss things in the cold light of day."

The club have interviewed four candidates for the managerial hot-seat already and four others are due to be interviewed by the end of this week.

Ex-Huddersfield boss Peter Jackson, former Carlisle manager Neil McDonald and Crewe assistant boss Neil Baker are

believed to be among those still in the running for the post. Caretaker boss Dean Glover will be interviewed in the coming days as he prepares for the visit of Swindon Town on Saturday. And Glover may be tempted back into the loan market to further bolster his squad.

He said: "If we need to be bring more bodies in, I've been told by

the chairman that we have the backing of the board. "Defensively, we're not strong enough as we're giving too many goals away....and despite creating chances, we're not ruthless enough in the final third."

■ EX-VALE manager Martin Foyle has applied for the vacant manager's position at League Two

strugglers Lincoln City, but has yet to be interviewed.

Foyle, who is currently scouting for Championship side Watford, said: "I want to get back into football as soon as I can because I feel I have a lot to offer."

"However, I'm not getting too excited as I'm sure there will be a lot of candidates."

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## Holland eyeing up loan swoop

### CREWE ALEX

by Gwyn Griffiths

CREWE plan to scour the loan market again after being decimated by an injury crisis. Lee Barnard, Julien Baudet and Steven Schumacher are out of Saturday's trip to Cheltenham, while Ryan Lowe and George Abbey are doubtful starters.

The overflying treatment room – the result of Saturday's bruising victory over Luton – leaves first-team coach Steve Holland with a selection headache ahead of an important basement clash at Whaddon Road.

Barnard is the most serious casualty with ankle ligament damage. The on-loan striker has returned to Tottenham for treatment and has been ruled out for at least six weeks.

Defender Baudet's thigh injury will keep him out of the next two fixtures, while midfielder Schumacher has suffered a recurrence of his hamstring troubles and will be missing for a couple of weeks.

Luton match-winner Lowe also missed training yesterday as he nursed a kick on a calf.

"Losing Barney is a real blow," admitted Holland. "Julien and Schumacher are also out, while Ryan will have to train by the end of the week. George Abbey has a slight hamstring and that could rule him out at Cheltenham too, although he has a glimmer of hope."

"But it looks like we are going to be four or five down, so the loan market is definitely something we are looking at." He is already armed with a list of potential striker/winger targets after scouting activity ended in Reading youngster Simon Church signing ahead of the Luton clash.

Church offered a lively display on his debut and was involved in both of Crewe's goals.

But if Lowe is ruled out, Holland faces selecting one of Crewe's youngest ever attacks in the shape of the 18-year-old loanee and 20-year-old Shaun Miller, who was due to play in a reserve outing at Mansfield today alongside the fit-again Tom Pope.

"It was an encouraging first game for Simon and you have to remember that was his first game in the league," said Crewe's coach. "We're hopeful he can build on that, but it is a lot to expect him to carry us through on his own."

There was some good news on the injury front yesterday when Ben Rix was able to train despite suffering a kick in the Luton clash. Danny Woodards is also expected to recover from illness in time for this weekend.

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# RYAN NO BAD BOY

STOKE City have leapt to the defence of young defender Ryan Shawcross after he was pilloried in the national media for the challenge that left Francis Jeffers with a broken ankle.

Shawcross, who again features at the heart of City's defence at Crystal Palace tonight, was publicly accused of a career-threatening tackle

## Kemp defends Shawcross over Jeffers challenge

### STOKE CITY

by Martin Spinks

from behind by Wednesday defender Michael Johnson.

But Stoke's assistant manager Dave Kemp retorted: "There's no way that was a malicious challenge, Ryan isn't that sort of player."

"To be fair, Jeffers was playing well at the time and it was probably a new experience for Ryan to get frustrated, maybe that's why he chased down the ball and made the tackle."

"But there was no malicious intent, it was a genuine attempt to get the ball. It was just one of those footballing injuries and I'm sure we've seen far worse challenges go unpunished."

"I don't think it will affect Ryan. It's one of those incidents

that frequently happen in the game and before long he might be on the end of one himself."

Shawcross will learn before tonight's kick-off if there is to be yet another change of partner in central defence – after six sidekicks already this season – as City decide whether to shift skipper

Dominic Matteo out of the back four.

Manager Tony Pulis must also decide whether to hand Peter Sweeney a start on the left flank to allow Richard Cresswell to play inside with Ricardo Fuller.

City's depleted squad included versatile 16 year-old Nathaniel Wedderburn – a reserve-team player at the age of 14 – to provide added cover in defence and mid-field.

City will be desperate not to play bridesmaid on Neil Warnock's first home match at the Palace, with Kemp admitting: "It's always

**UNDER FIRE:** City defender Ryan Shawcross.



difficult in those circumstances because their players will be running that extra yard and their fans will be up for it all the more."

"He has a reputation, shall we say, and you try not to get involved with him, but that's not always easy because of his passion."

Kemp, a Palace player and coach in his time, added: "I was also at Wimbledon when they played at Selhurst Park, so it's always going to be a special place for me. We must quieten their players and crowd down, then get on top of them. And I'm glad we've got an early chance to put right Saturday's defeat against Sheffield Wednesday."

■ Crystal Palace v Stoke City match preview: Page 54

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