



The Sideways Sammy Season Preview 2014/15

Introduction

Welcome to the Sideways Sammy Season Preview. Within these 84 pages you will find nearly all the necessary information, analysis and facts to prepare you for the forthcoming league season.

To open this preview I have a few thoughts on what has been another long and difficult summer for the Sky Blues.

I will then take an in-depth analysis of our League One rivals. I will assess their strengths and weaknesses in an attempt to see where Coventry City stand in relation to them.

You will also find in these pages some brief profiles of our squad. I have also provided relevant statistics to see whether we are in an improved positions this season compared to 12 months ago.

I will then assess the tactical options that we have available to us and how effective they could be.

I will then take a look at who will be the key performers for the forthcoming league season. I will also take a look at

how our manager has fared over the summer and how he might lead the team to success this year.

Then there will be a look at the new additions to the squad, both the new signings and which young players people should be looking out for.

To close out this guide I will review the team's pre-season games and then turn my eye towards some predictions for both Coventry City and the league in general.

Hopefully this will provide you the reader with ample information to look forward to the season with.

Finally, all information is accurate to the time of writing which is 3rd of August 2014. All ages have been calculated for the 9th August which is when the season begins.

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Opening Words

After a long and difficult summer for the club, the start of the season is just around the corner and it is time to look forward to the football again.

The outcome of the judicial review was not as important as had been expected. The club continues to survive but it does feel in increasingly bad shape. The debacle surrounding the Ricoh Arena continues to roll on but surely we are now approaching the final few scenes.

At the time of writing the club is set to begin its league fixtures in Northampton for another season. For all of the excitement that the new season always brings, it's will be with a depressing sense of reality that those few fans enter Sixfields Stadium on August 16th.

For all of the joy that Steven Pressley's side brought in the opening months of last season, the backdrop of an empty stand at Sixfields was a constant reminder of the precipice of doom that club stands upon. What has been most frustrating about the past 12 months of being a Coventry City fan is the disparity between the quality of the football team and the quality of the

football club as an institution.

With Calum Wilson, Franck Moussa, Joe Murphy, Cyrus Christie and Blair Adams all having departed the club this summer and Carl Baker soon to be on his way, it feels that once again the team is in a weaker position than 12 months ago. After the team coped so badly after losing Leon Clarke in January, there is the sense that the quality of football team is getting closer to being that of the quality of the club.

Yet there have been signs of encouragement for Coventry City fans this summer. The signings of Jim O'Brien and Reda Johnson in particular give the squad a competitive edge and proven level of quality that was perhaps not there last season.

There is hope that Steven Pressley has the raw materials in his hands to finally achieve something this season. Whilst the sum of our squad's parts might arguably be lower than it was 12 months ago, we begin the season already 10 points better off than this point last season.

Let us not also forget the weight of negativity that the club was mired in this time last year. Many were

expecting certain relegation after the club was shorn of the spine of a side that had intermittently challenged for the play-offs in the 2012/13 season. We began the campaign with just one recognised central defender and Callum Wilson had only one goal for the club to his name.

Somehow Steven Pressley moulded what looked like a rag-tag bunch of youngsters and senior players no other club would want into an attractive side that could beat any time in the division.

Our manager has had the summer to bring in players who are more-or-less in fitting with his philosophies as a manager. Whilst the languid Carl Baker and Franck Moussa scored over 20 league goals for us last season, they arguably cost us a similar amount with their inability to cover their full-back.

The team this year has much more of an emphasis on hard-work and collective responsibility than last season. Our team last season regularly found themselves engaged in 'goal-fests' and runs of defeats where the team looked bereft of confidence. Who is not to say that by adding experience and harder workers to the squad that we might be more consistent and able

to take results from games where we have under-performed.

It is poignant then that we begin the season at Valley Parade when things took a turn for the worse during our last campaign. After racing into an early lead we failed to cope with Bradford's determination and physicality which won our opponents a well-deserved point.

Our opening fixture will be a good test of the mentality of this new team. For me this is where the excitement begins. We have no idea how good this team is yet. We now await that big reveal on August 9th to see what we can aspire to as Coventry City fans this season.

Club-By-Club Previews



Barnsley

Last Season: 23rd in Championship

Barnsley eventually suffered a relegation from the Championship which had seemed long in coming. The reappointment of former manager Danny Wilson failed to halt a long decline. Start this season with a nearly entirely new team.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Adam Davies	GK	22	0(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★
Christian Dibble	GK	20	0(0)	Bury	★
Ross Turnbull	GK	29	28(0)	Doncaster	★★★★
James Bree	RB	16	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Martin Cranie	CB/RB	27	35(0)	Coventry	★★★★
Jack Cowgill	CB	17	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Joe Dudgeon	LB	23	0(0)	Hull (Loan)	★★★
Jean-Yves M'Voto	CB	25	28(2)	Oldham	★★★★
Lewin Nyatanga	CB	25	12(0)	Bristol City	★★★
George Smith	LB	17	0(0)	Academy Product	★★
James Bailey	CM	25	1(0)	Derby County	★★★
Luke Berry	CM	22	42(12)	Cambridge United	★★★
Paul Digby	CM	19	5(0)	Academy Product	★★
Conor Hourihane	CM	23	45(8)	Plymouth	★★★
Dale Jennings	LM/RM	21	33(3)	Bayern Munich	★★★★
Dominic McHale	LM	17	0(0)	Manchester City	★★
Reuben Noble-Lazarus	LM/RM/ST	20	16(1)	Academy Product	★★
Nana Boakye-Yiadom	ST	17	0(0)	West Ham	★
Danny Rose	ST	20	9(3)	Academy Product	★★
Kane Hemmings	ST	23	31(18)	Cowdenbeath	★★★
Sam Winnall	ST	23	45(23)	Scunthorpe	★★★

Manager:

Danny Wilson – Failed to save Barnsley from relegation to League One after returning to the club. A safe pair of hands for the third tier.

Star Player:

Dale Jennings – Initially struggled after making the move from Bayern Munich last season. Benefited from a loan spell at Milton Keynes last season. Could be a real star at this level, offers trickery and can chip in with goals by cutting inside.

Key Signing:

Sam Winnall – Starred for Scunthorpe last season after being released by Wolves. Faces the pressure of proving that last season was no fluke as well as playing at a higher level.

Key Departure:

Chris O'Grady – Tried almost single-handedly to keep Barnsley in the Championship. An intelligent target-man who has moved on to Brighton.

Overview:

Relegation from the Championship long

seemed inevitable for Barnsley. Their squad increasingly looked patched together out of the dregs of other Championship squads. Manager Danny Wilson has spent the summer re-organising and rebuilding the Barnsley squad to overcome years of short-termism at the club.

Players like James Bailey, Ross Turnbull and Dale Jennings should give Barnsley genuine quality at this level of football. The club also have Luke Berry, Conor Hourihane and Kane Hemmings who have been given a chance at a higher level. In addition to some promising youngsters such as Dominic McHale, George Smith and Jack Cowgill, the challenge is for Danny Wilson to build a team out the resources at his disposal. Expect some poor early season form to be followed up with a strong run come winter, in a similar fashion to us in our first season in League One.

Prediction:

Play-off challengers

Bradford City

Last Season: 11th in League One

An impressive start to last season was eventually undermined by a poor run of form in the middle of last season. Ended last campaign in decent form to secure a strong mid-table finish. Are now looking to implement a change of style.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Jordan Pickford	GK	20	27(0)	Sunderland (Loan)	★ ★ ★
Stephen Darby	RB	25	46(0)	Liverpool	★ ★ ★
Andrew Davies	CB	29	28(1)	Stoke	★ ★ ★ ★
Rory McArdle	CB/RB	27	41(3)	Aberdeen	★ ★
James Meredith	LB/LM	26	26(0)	York City	★ ★ ★
Alan Sheehan	LB/CB	27	42(7)	Notts County	★ ★ ★
Raffaele de Vita	LM/ST	26	20(1)	Swindon	★ ★
Matt Dolan	CM/LB	21	31(2)	Middlesbrough	★ ★
Jason Kennedy	CM	27	15(1)	Rochdale	★ ★
Billy Knott	CM/LM	21	35(3)	Sunderland	★ ★ ★
Gary Liddle	CM/RB/CB	28	32(0)	Notts County	★ ★ ★
Mark Yeates	RM/LM	29	29(2)	Watford	★ ★ ★
Billy Clarke	ST/RM/LM	27	29(7)	Crawley	★ ★ ★
Lewis Clarkson	ST	20	1(0)	Scarborough	★ ★
James Hanson	ST	26	35(12)	Guisley	★ ★ ★
Oliver McBurnie	ST	18	8(0)	Academy Product	★
Aaron McLean	ST	31	28(4)	Hull	★ ★ ★

Manager:

Phil Parkinson – After leading Bradford to two Wembley finals in one season and starting last season strongly, Parkinson faces questions over his style of football following a drop in form from October onwards last season.

Star Player:

James Hanson – Was for a long time the only player Bradford has spent a transfer fee on during an extended stay in League Two. Hanson is a classic target-man who has made Bradford an effective unit over the past few seasons.

Key Signing:

Alan Sheehan – A real ball-playing defender with a wonderful set-piece delivery. A signal of intent from Phil Parkinson to change Bradford's style of play.

Key Departure:

Gary Jones – The captain that led them to two Wembley appearances was a surprise name on Bradford's released list. A real terrier in midfield who offered bite, drive and experience to the Bantams' central area.

Overview:

This summer has seen a shift in recruitment strategy from Bradford boss Phil Parkinson. Gone are most of the team which made Wembley twice two seasons ago, replaced by a number of interesting ball-playing footballers. The signings of Alan Sheehan, Matt Dolan and Billy Knott suggest that the Bantams will be less focused on building attacks around James Hanson and will be looking to keep the ball on the floor.

Given the current lack of squad depth that Bradford have and their attacking options of James Hanson and Aaron McLean, we could see Parkinson eventually revert to type this season. Still, they have made a number of intelligent signings and should not be troubled by relegation. I would not expect anything more than mid-table again for Bradford.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Bristol City

Last Season: 12th in League One

After a horrendous run of form at the start of last season, new manager Steve Cotterill eventually managed to turn things around. Displayed some strong form in the closing months of the season. Now expected to challenge for promotion this time around.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Frank Fielding	GK	26	16(0)	Derby County	★★★
Elliot Parish	GK	24	26(0)	Aston Villa	★★
Dave Richards	GK	20	0(0)	Cardiff City	★
Luke Ayling	RB/CM	22	42(2)	Yeovil	★★★★★
Greg Cunningham	LB	23	37(0)	Manchester City	★★★★
Adam El-Abd	CB/RB	29	23(0)	Brighton	★★★★
Aden Flint	CB	25	34(3)	Swindon	★★★★
Mark Little	RB	25	38(1)	Peterborough	★★★★★
Karleigh Osborne	CB	26	28(1)	Millwall	★★★★
Derrick Williams	CB/LB	21	43(1)	Aston Villa	★★★★
Joe Bryan	LM/LB	20	21(2)	Academy Product	★★
Wade Elliott	RM/CM	35	34(3)	Birmingham	★★★★
Marlon Pack	CM	23	43(0)	Cheltenham	★★★★
Bobby Reid	CM	21	25(1)	Academy Product	★★
Korey Smith	CM	23	44(1)	Oldham	★★★★
Scott Wagstaff	RM	24	37(5)	Charlton	★★★★
Jordan Wynter	CM	20	3(0)	Arsenal	★★
Sam Baldock	ST	25	45(25)	West Ham	★★★★★
Wes Burns	ST/RM/LM	18	20(1)	Academy Product	★★★
Jay Emmanuel-Thomas	ST/CM/RM	23	46(15)	Ipswich	★★★★★
Luke Freeman	LM/ST	22	45(6)	Stevenage	★★★★
Aaron Wilbraham	ST	34	4(0)	Crystal Palace	★★★

Manager:

Steve Cotterill – Turned Bristol City from relegation battlers to comfortably in mid-table last season. Should be able to take them even further this season.

Star Player:

Sam Baldock – Last season's League One top-scorer and expected to hang around despite interest from higher up the Football League. An out-and-out goalscorer who should be looking forward to another productive season.

Key Signing:

Luke Freeman – Starred for the past few seasons with Stevenage. A skilful and intelligent forward who can also play out wide.

Key Departure:

Marvin Elliott – Not that he will be missed much by Bristol City fans, Marvin Elliott was key during Gary Johnson's reign at the club. Has largely been in poor form ever since.

Overview:

Bristol City suffered the fate that many relegated clubs fall victim to last

season. Unable to win until the middle of October it seemed that Bristol City were sleep-walking into League Two. Steve Cotterill brought stability when he came in last December and got the squad performing to their expected levels.

This season the challenge is to continue that progress. On paper Bristol City have one of the strongest teams in the division. Their attack of Sam Baldock and Jay Emmannuel-Thomas has been bolstered by the signings of Luke Freeman and Aaron Wilbraham. They have quality and squad depth that few other teams in League One possess. Anything less than the top six should be considered a failure for Bristol City.

Prediction:

Promotion Challengers

Chesterfield

Last Season: 1st in League Two

Won the League Two title last season with plenty of style after making some big name signings. Now on a relatively limited budget this season but could become something of a surprise package.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Aaron Chapman	GK	24	16(0)	Belper Town	★★
Tommy Lee	GK	28	46(0)	Macclesfield	★★★
Jack Broadhead	CB	19	9(0)	Academy Product	★
Liam Cooper	CB	22	41(3)	Hull	★★★
Ian Evatt	CB	32	35(1)	Blackpool	★★★
Sam Hird	CB/CM	26	35(2)	Doncaster	★★★
Ritchie Humphreys	LB	36	45(2)	Hartlepool	★★
Daniel Jones	LB	27	20(0)	Port Vale	★★★
Charlie Raglan	CB/RB	21	42(0)	FC United of Manchester	★★
Drew Talbot	RB/RM/ST	28	25(0)	Luton	★★
Ollie Banks	CM	21	32(8)	FC United of Manchester	★★★
Tendayi Darikwa	RM/RB	22	42(4)	Academy Product	★★★
Dan Gardner	RM/ST	24	39(10)	Halifax	★★
Sam Morsy	CM	22	34(1)	Port Vale	★★★★
Jay O'Shea	RM/AM	25	41(9)	Milton Keynes	★★★
Gary Roberts	RM/LM	30	40(11)	Swindon	★★★★
Jimmy Ryan	CM	25	39(2)	Scunthorpe	★★★
Charlie Dawes	ST	18	0(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★
Eoin Doyle	ST	26	33(11)	Hibernian	★★
Armand Gnanduillet	ST	22	34(5)	Poissy	★★

Manager:

Paul Cook – Led Chesterfield quite stylishly out of League Two last season in his first full season in charge.

Star Player:

Sam Morsy – Surprisingly sold by Port Vale following promotion to League One last summer. Was the metronome in midfield for Chesterfield as they won the League Two title last season, could be a real star this season at a higher level.

Key Signing:

Daniel Jones – Sacked by Port Vale at the end of last season. Jones is an attacking left-back who has been very effective at this level.

Key Departure:

Marc Richards – Richards was joint top-scorer last season with just nine goals. Largely regarded as something of a disappointment during his two-season spell with the club, however the Spireites do seem to lack a genuine goalscorer.

Overview:

It seems like Chesterfield are now paying the price for over-spending last season. Despite winning League Two last season, the Spireites have been restricted in the transfer market thanks to disappointing attendances. The team manager Paul Cook has at his disposal is still strong but will be tested more strongly this time round.

Expect then that Chesterfield will turn to players such as Gary Roberts, Jay O'Shea and Sam Morsy to once again produce the goods. They lack a genuine goalscorer in their team but perhaps against opponents less likely to sit back against them, they could make up for this deficiency from last season. The Spireites have potential to surprise many but a lack of a clinical edge in the penalty-area could make this a more difficult season.

Prediction:

Lower mid-table

Colchester United

Last Season: 16th in League One

Continued to underwhelm last season despite some promising early performances. Will always have the potential to upset the apple-cart in this division. Will need to be more consistent this time out.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Chris Lewington	GK	25	42(0)	Dag & Red	★★★
Sam Walker	GK	22	46(0)	Chelsea	★★★★
Sean Clohessy	RB	27	24(2)	Kilmarnock	★★★
Tom Eastman	CB	22	36(0)	Ipswich	★★★★
Ben Gordon	LB	23	27(1)	Ross County	★★★
Frankie Kent	RB/CB	18	1(0)	Academy Product	★★
Magnus Okuonghae	CB	28	44(2)	Dag & Red	★★★
Josh Thompson	CB	25	0(0)	Portsmouth	★★★
David Wright	RB	34	35(1)	Crystal Palace	★★
Marcus Bean	CM	29	36(5)	Brentford	★★★
Craig Eastmond	CM/RB	23	39(4)	Arsenal	★★★
Alex Gilbey	CM/RM	19	36(1)	Academy Product	★★
Tosin Olufemi	RM/LM/LB	20	13(0)	Academy Product	★★
Sammie Szmodics	RM	18	7(0)	Academy Product	★★
Dominic Vose	RM/CM	20	27(0)	Barnet	★★★
Sanchez Watt	RM/LM	23	22(3)	Arsenal	★★★
Drey Wright	RM/LM	20	12(0)	Academy Product	★★
Macauley Bonne	ST	18	14(2)	Academy Product	★★
Dan Holman	ST	24	34(13)	Braintree	★★
Jabo Ibehre	ST	31	37(9)	Milton Keynes	★★
Gavin Massey	ST/RM	21	30(3)	Watford	★★★
Freddie Sears	ST/RM	24	32(12)	West Ham	★★★

Manager:

Joe Dunne – Stepped in to replace John Ward nearly two seasons ago and has just about kept the U's in the third tier during his spell in charge.

Star Player:

Tom Eastman – Tall centre-back who has been quietly impressive over the past few seasons for Colchester. Offers a real commanding presence at the back which has kept the U's in the division for the past few years.

Key Signing:

Sean Clohessy – Colchester have made a very solid signing in Sean Clohessy. Impressed for a few years with Southend in League Two before being solid in the Scottish top-flight with Kilmarnock.

Key Departure:

Ryan Dickson – Was a regular last season at left-back for Colchester. A very solid performer who offered experience to a young side.

Overview:

Whilst there have once again been no stand-out new signings at Colchester, it has for once been a summer where the

squad has arguably improved. At times manager Joe Dunne has looked like creating an enterprising young side but often the team have succumbed to complete losses of form and confidence. Last season was no different with the U's struggling to survive despite starting the season in decent form. A win over a Brentford side who had just won promotion was enough to survive.

With Joe Dunne in charge it seems like Colchester United will always be a side with brittle confidence. Some promising players in Dominic Vose, Sanchez Watt and Craig Eastmond should be doing better than merely treading water in League One. This season could finally see Colchester's squad live up to their potential but ultimately they seem lacking in many areas to do more than battle against the drop.

Prediction:

Relegation battlers

Crawley Town

Last Season: 14th in League One

John Gregory did pretty well to lead Crawley to safety after taking over half-way through last season. Has completely rebuilt the squad over the course of the summer. Are massive unknown quantities for the upcoming league season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Brian Jensen	GK	39	36(0)	Bury	★★★
Raphael Spiegel	GK	21	0(0)	West Ham (Loan)	★★
Sonny Bradley	CB	22	34(2)	Portsmouth	★★★
Ryan Dickson	LB	27	32(0)	Colchester United	★★★
Connor Essam	CB	22	6(1)	Gillingham	★★
Dean Leacock	CB	30	27(1)	Notts County	★★★
Lanre Oyebanjo	RB	24	41(0)	York	★★
Joe Walsh	CB/LB	22	39(5)	Swansea	★★★
Bobson Bawling	RM	18	0(0)	Watford	★
Gwion Edwards	RM	21	19(2)	Swansea	★★★
Conor Henderson	CM	22	3(0)	Hull	★★
Emmett O'Connor	RM	21	0(0)	Scarborough City Celtic (Canada)	★
Mitch Rose	CM	20	1(0)	Rotherham (Loan)	★
Josh Simpson	CM	27	39(2)	Peterborough	★★★
Jimmy Smith	CM/RM/RB	27	42(3)	Stevenage	★★
Lewis Young	RM/LM	24	19(0)	Bury	★★
Matt Harrold	ST	30	30(6)	Bristol Rovers	★★
Izale McLeod	ST	29	40(8)	Milton Keynes	★★
Gavin Tomlin	ST	31	24(5)	Port Vale	★★

Manager:

John Gregory – The ex-Aston Villa manager made his return to English league football after a long spell in Israel and Kazakhstan. He kept Crawley in the third tier with the minimum of fuss in his half season in charge.

Star Player:

Josh Simpson – Crawley's captain and one of the few remaining players from last season. A box-to-box midfield player with a decent range of passing.

Key Signing:

Gwion Edwards – Impressed during a six game loan spell last season from Swansea. A young winger with great potential, Crawley did well to secure his permanent signing this summer.

Key Departure:

Billy Clarke – It was strange that Crawley rejected a January transfer bid from Sheffield United to only release Clarke at the end of the season on a free.

Overview:

After the appointment of John Gregory in the middle of the season, Crawley, except for a considerable fixture pile-

up, managed a mid-table finish in comfort. Since May, Gregory has completely revolutionised the squad at Crawley. It is something of a gamble and bears resemblance to Graham Westley's 'project' at Preston a few years ago.

Aside from a one or two players such as Gwion Edwards and Sonny Bradley. The squad has a thrown together look to it. There are some veterans mixed in with a few who looked destined for non-league football. It could work out and they could be a surprise package, but overall they do not look anything special and may depend upon an ability to keep clean sheets.

Prediction:

Relegation Battlers

Crewe Alexandra

Last Season: 19th in League One

A tortuous season last time round at Gresty Road saw Crewe eventually edge to survival on the final day. Have lost a host of key players of the summer without adequate replacements. Will do well to stay in this division this time round.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Ben Garratt	GK	20	26(0)	Academy Product	★★
Scott Shearer	GK	33	12(0)	Rotherham	★★
Thierry Audel	RB/CB	27	16(3)	Macclesfield	★★
Harry Davis	CB	22	32(4)	Academy Product	★★★
Adam Dugdale	CB/LB	26	25(2)	Telford	★★
Jon Guthrie	CB/LB	22	23(0)	Academy Product	★★
Lee Molyneux	LB/LM	25	27(0)	Accrington	★★
George Ray	CB	20	9(0)	Academy Product	★★
Matt Tootle	RB/LB	23	43(0)	Academy Product	★★★★
Chris Atkinson	CM	22	32(3)	Huddersfield	★★
Ollie Turton	RB/RM/CM	21	12(1)	Academy Product	★★
Ryan Colclough	RM/LM/ST	19	8(2)	Academy Product	★★
Anthony Grant	CM/RM/RB	27	38(2)	Stevenage	★★★
Bradden Inman	LM/CM	22	36(4)	Newcastle	★★★
Liam Nolan	CM	19	13(0)	Academy Product	★★
Billy Waters	CM	19	9(0)	Academy Product	★★
Marcus Haber	ST	25	14(2)	Stevenage	★★
Vadaine Oliver	ST	21	25(1)	Lincoln	★★

Manager:

Steve Davis – After two seasons of progression during his time at the club, Davis oversaw a season of turmoil at Gresty Road. The pressure will be on Davis to prove that he can return to that early promise in his managerial career.

Star Player:

Matt Tootle – Received a glowing commendation from club legend Dario Gradi at the end of last season for his performances. One of the few players of genuine quality to remain at the club this season.

Key Signing:

Marcus Haber – He's tall and he wins headers, Haber could be an effective target-man at this level. Seems to be a capricious personality and already something of a journeyman at 25 years-old. Needs to settle and find a home at this stage in his career.

Key Departure:

Chuks Aneke – He may have only been on loan last season but the attacking midfielder almost single-handedly kept Crewe in this division.

Overview:

After winning the Johnstone's Paint Trophy in 2012/13, Crewe looked in pretty good shape last summer to continue their path of progression under Steve Davis. However a season which began with rape allegations against several players ended with a final-day battle for survival which was won largely due to the incompetence of other teams.

Going into this season Crewe are amongst the weakest teams. Losing loanee Chuks Aneke was a blow in and of itself but that has been coupled with winger Byron Moore and full-back Kelvin Mellor choosing Port Vale and Plymouth respectively over staying with the club. Their transfer market activity has been sluggish with only three new faces in so far. They will look once again to academy players such as Billy Waters and Ollie Turton to make the step up and help the club survive in this division.

Prediction:

Relegation Battlers

Doncaster Rovers

Last Season: 22nd in Championship

Cruelly relegated on the final day of the season from the Championship. A long, hard summer that has been undermined by a failed takeover bid. Several key players have left due to the uncertainty around the club.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Jed Steer	GK	21	0(0)	Aston Villa (Loan)	★★★
Cedric Evina	LB/LM	22	8(0)	Charlton	★★★
Rob Jones	CB	34	12(1)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★★
Mitchell Lund	LB	17	0(0)	Academy Product	★★
Jamie McCombe	CB	31	2(0)	Huddersfield	★★★
Luke McCullough	CB	20	14(0)	Manchester United	★★★
Reece Wabara	RB/CB	22	15(0)	Manchester City	★★★
Liam Wakefield	RB	20	4(0)	Academy Product	★★
Kyle Bennett	RM	23	25(1)	Bury	★★
James Coppinger	RM/CM	33	41(4)	Exeter	★★★
Marc De Val	CM	24	5(0)	Real Madrid	★★
Harry Forrester	RM/LM/CM	23	7(0)	Brentford	★★★★
Dean Furman	CM	26	32(1)	Oldham	★★★★
Paul Keegan	CM	30	34(0)	Bohemians	★★★
Harry Middleton	CM	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Richie Wellens	CM	34	37(0)	Leicester	★★★★
Curtis Main	ST	22	28(1)	Middlesbrough	★★★
Alex Peterson	ST	19	6(0)	Academy Product	★★
Theo Robinson	ST	25	31(5)	Huddersfield	★★★
Nathan Tyson	ST	32	24(0)	Blackpool	★★★

Manager:

Paul Dickov – A surprise appointment last summer after a severely underwhelming spell with Oldham. Dickov came incredibly close to keeping the club in the Championship.

Star Player:

Harry Forrester– Was hit by injuries and made only eight appearances last season. His form will be crucial in helping Doncaster achieve anything at all this season.

Key Signing:

Curtis Main – Joined from Middlesbrough as part of a deal to sell key full-back James Husband. Strong, hard-working and tall but lacks that all-important touch in front of goal.

Key Departure:

Mark Duffy – Alongside David Cotterill, Duffy left the Keepmoat stadium to join Lee Clark's Birmingham City. Excellent set-piece delivery and trickery on the ball in open play.

Overview:

It has been a summer of turmoil so far at the Keepmoat Stadium. Following the

failed takeover bid from ex-chairman John Ryan and One Direction's Louis Tomlinson, Doncaster are in crisis. There has been reported budget cutbacks from between 50-80%, several key players have left after broken promises over new contracts. What is left is a team largely made up of misfits and youth-team players.

What will be worrying is manager Paul Dickov's lack of pedigree in building successful sides. His style of football is unimaginative which might be enough to keep the team away from danger. There are still one or two real star acts that remain at this point in the summer, this season will be defined by Paul Dickov's ability to build a group at Doncaster.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Fleetwood Town

Last Season: 4th in League Two

An underwhelming promotion via the play-offs last season despite some heavy investment. Will be well-backed by chairman Andy Pilley in the transfer market. Do seem to lack some genuine quality to trouble the top-half this time round.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Scott Davies	GK	27	28(0)	Morecambe	★★
David Lucas	GK	36	0(0)	Birmingham	★
Chris Maxwell	GK	24	45(0)	Wrexham	★★★
Danny Andrew	LB	23	46(5)	Macclesfield	★★
Stephen Crainey	LB	33	20(0)	Wigan	★★★★
Ryan Cresswell	CB	26	20(1)	Southend	★★
Liam Hogan	CB	25	16(0)	Halifax	★
Stephen Jordan	LB	32	10(0)	Dunfermline	★★
Conor McLaughlin	RB	23	35(0)	Preston	★★★
Nathan Pond	CB	29	41(1)	Lancaster	★★
Mark Roberts	CB	30	33(3)	Stevenage	★★★
Matty Blair	LM/RM	24	28(5)	York	★★
Gareth Evans	RM	26	34(6)	Rotherham	★★
Jeff Hughes	LM/CM/LB	29	25(3)	Notts County	★★★
Josh Morris	LM/CM/LB	22	24(2)	Blackburn	★★★
Stewart Murdoch	CM	23	38(0)	Falkirk	★★
Antoni Sarcevic	CM/LM	22	42(13)	Chester	★★★★
Steven Schumacher	CM	30	32(5)	Bury	★★★
Keith Southern	CM	30	39(2)	Huddersfield	★★★
David Ball	ST	24	30(8)	Peterborough	★★★
Jamille Matt	ST	23	25(8)	Kidderminster	★★
Jamie Proctor	ST	22	44(6)	Crawley	★★★

Manager:

Graham Alexander – Has been solid as a manager in a season-and-a-half-long career. This season could be very demanding of his abilities.

Star Player:

Antoni Sarcevic – Put simply, Fleetwood are built around Antoni Sarcevic. Offers both strong set-piece delivery and creativity in open play in what is otherwise a workmanlike team.

Key Signing:

Keith Southern – The lynch-pin of Ian Holloway's Blackpool team which won promotion to the Premier League. An unfussy defensive midfielder who can break up play and makes sensible passes.

Key Departure:

Jon Parkin – 'The Beast' struggled for fitness during his two seasons with the Cod Army. On his day he was a powerful and effective target-man.

Overview:

Many expected that Fleetwood would have made League One slightly sooner after promotion to League Two a couple of seasons ago. Manager Graham

Alexander led them to a scrappy promotion which was epitomised by a 1-0 Wembley victory over Burton won thanks to a goalkeeping howler. There has always been a sense of underwhelming about Alexander's Fleetwood, they should have gone up in style given the talent they had at their disposal.

The step up in quality could be a tricky one for Fleetwood. Aside from Antoni Sarcevic and Jeff Hughes there is not a great deal of quality in the final third, although their defence should be strong. Simply due to the fact that they will be able to throw money should they run into trouble, it is difficult to see Fleetwood going down. I would not expect to see much else though.

Prediction:

Lower mid-table

Gillingham

Last Season: 17th in League One

Peter Taylor did well to lead Gillingham to survival last season in relative comfort. Made a few really smart signings that could help the Gills to improve upon last season's finish.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Glenn Morris	GK	30	31(0)	Aldershot	★★
Stuart Nelson	GK	32	46(0)	Notts County	★★★
Adam Barrett	CB	34	45(2)	Bournemouth	★★★
Callum Davies	CB	21	7(0)	Academy Product	★★
John Egan	CB	21	13(1)	Sunderland	★★★
Matt Fish	RB	25	2(0)	Dover	★★
Kortney Hause	CB/LB	19	14(1)	Wolves (Loan)	★★
Leon Legge	CB	29	37(2)	Brentford	★★★
Joe Martin	LB/LM	25	46(2)	Blackpool	★★★
Devante McKain	CB	20	1(0)	Maidenhead	★
Aaron Morris	RB/CB/CM	24	17(0)	AFC Wimbledon	★★
Bradley Dack	RM/CM	20	29(3)	Academy Product	★★★
Jake Hessenthaler	CM	20	19(1)	Academy Product	★★
Amine Linganzi	CM	24	20(1)	Accrington	★★★
Doug Loft	CM/LM	27	37(9)	Port Vale	★★★
Jermaine McGlashan	RM	26	43(6)	Cheltenham	★★★
Josh Pritchard	CM/CB	21	6(1)	Fulham	★★★
Brennan Dickenson	ST/LM	20	13(1)	Brighton	★★
Antonio German	ST/RM	22	19(0)	Brentford	★★
Danny Kedwell	ST	31	27(10)	AFC Wimbledon	★★
Cody McDonald	ST	28	44(17)	Coventry	★★★★
Luke Norris	ST	21	31(8)	Brentford	★★

Manager:

Peter Taylor – The former England caretaker managed arrived for a second spell at Priestfield after the sacking of Martin Allen. Achieved a minor miracle in keeping what looked to be a limited side in the division last season.

Star Player:

Cody McDonald – The ex-Sky Blue actually outscored Leon Clarke over the course of last season. Given the right service he has proven himself to be deadly at this level.

Key Signing:

Jermaine McGlashan – A pacey winger who has been terrorising defences in League Two during spells with Aldershot and Cheltenham. Has been linked with bigger clubs than Gillingham and could make them awkward customers this season.

Key Departure:

Charlie Lee – A key utility player in both midfield and defence was a something of a surprise name on the club's released list.

Overview:

In keeping Gillingham in League One

last season, Peter Taylor achieved something quite remarkable even if it went unnoticed by many. Taylor was able to bring the best out of Cody McDonald as well as a number of youth-team graduates such as Bradley Dack and Jake Hessenthaler.

Gillingham's summer transfer activity looks very astute. Jermaine McGlashan offers them pace which could be harnessed on the break this season. Former Sunderland youngster John Egan impressed whilst on loan with Southend last season. They also added Josh Pritchard who has Europa League experience after a spell with the Norwegians Tromso. The Gills could be a real surprise package this season and should not be underestimated.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Leyton Orient

Last Season: 3rd in League One

Looked like they had missed out on a real chance to get into the Championship last season. The takeover from Italian businessman Francesco Becchetti has really re-energised the club this summer. Could go one better this season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Adam Legzdins	GK	27	0(0)	Derby	★ ★ ★
Gary Woods	GK	23	0(0)	Watford	★ ★ ★
Mathieu Baudry	CB	26	42(2)	Bournemouth	★ ★ ★ ★
Nathan Clarke	CB	30	46(0)	Huddersfield	★ ★ ★
Scott Cuthbert	CB/RB	33	44(4)	Swindon	★ ★ ★
Shane Lowry	LB/CB	25	22(0)	Millwall	★ ★ ★ ★
Elliott Omozusi	RB/LB/CB	25	39(0)	Fulham	★ ★ ★
Gary Sawyer	LB/CB	29	22(0)	Bristol Rovers	★ ★
Marvin Bartley	CM	25	25(2)	Burnley	★ ★ ★
Dean Cox	RM/CM	29	45(13)	Brighton	★ ★ ★ ★ ★
Lloyd James	CM/RB	26	42(3)	Colchester	★ ★ ★
Bradley Pritchard	CM/RM	28	18(0)	Charlton	★ ★ ★
Jobi McAnuff	RM	32	35(2)	Reading	★ ★ ★ ★
Romain Vincelot	CM/RB	28	46(0)	Brighton	★ ★ ★ ★
Shaun Batt	ST/RM	27	35(4)	Millwall	★ ★ ★
Chris Dagnall	ST	28	34(8)	Barnsley	★ ★
Kevin Lisbie	ST	35	39(16)	Ipswich	★ ★ ★
Darius Henderson	ST	32	34(8)	Nottingham Forest	★ ★ ★ ★
David Mooney	ST	29	38(19)	Reading	★ ★ ★
Jay Simpson	ST	25	21(1)	Buriram United	★ ★ ★

Manager:

Russell Slade – Last season's Wembley appearance was a well-deserved reward for a hard-working and talented manager. Has now been given the license to really achieve something with the O's.

Star Player:

Romain Vincelot – Was absolutely vital last season in protecting the defence and providing a platform for attacking players such as Dean Cox and Moses Odubajo to perform.

Key Signing:

Jobi McAnuff – His signing was a real statement of intent that Leyton Orient mean business this season. A pacey and effective winger now entering the twilight of his career.

Key Departure:

Moses Odubajo – Really developed over the course of the past two seasons from promising youngster to star player at Orient. Will be galling to O's fans that he made the move to rivals Brentford.

Overview:

Many expected that Leyton Orient would not be able to last the distance

last season. After making only minor adjustments to his squad last summer, Russell Slade led Orient to a Wembley play-off final. After racing into a two goal lead it looked like the final chapter to a real fairy-tale season at Brisbane Road. However they were eventually pegged back and defeated on penalties by Rotherham United.

This season has seen a change of stature for Orient. No longer are they plucky overachievers, they have been bolstered by the funds of the Italian Francesco Becchetti. After signing proven performers in Jobi McAnuff and Darius Henderson, Leyton Orient are now expected to push for promotion. Given that they successfully were able to stay the course with the promotion challengers last season, they should be able to get back into the play-offs at the very least this season.

Prediction:

Play-off challengers

Milton Keynes

Last Season: 10th in League One

Another disappointing season for England's least favourite club saw them fail to make the play-offs without ever really challenging. Have made some quality additions in the transfer market and could challenge the top six this time round.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Charlie Burns	GK	19	1(0)	Academy Product	★
David Martin	GK	28	40(0)	Liverpool	★★★★
Ian McLoughlin	GK	22	20(0)	Ipswich	★★
Tom Flanagan	CB	22	9(0)	Academy Product	★★
Harry Hickford	LB	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Lee Hodson	RB	22	23(1)	Watford	★★★
Antony Kay	CB/RB/CM	31	30(2)	Huddersfield	★★★
Dean Lewington	LB	30	43(1)	Academy Product	★★★
Kyle McFadzean	CB	27	42(1)	Crawley	★★★★
Dele Alli	CM	18	33(6)	Academy Product	★★★★
George Baldock	RM	21	38(2)	Academy Product	★★★
Danny Green	RM	26	18(0)	Charlton	★★★
Darren Potter	CM	29	29(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★★
Mark Randall	CM	24	4(0)	Ascoli	★★
Giorgio Rasulo	CM/ST	17	7(0)	Academy Product	★★
Ben Reeves	CM/LM/LB	22	28(7)	Southampton	★★★★
Dean Bowditch	ST/LM	28	12(1)	Yeovil	★★★
Will Grigg	ST	23	34(4)	Brentford (Loan)	★★★
Tom Hitchcock	ST	21	18(9)	Q.P.R.	★★★
Daniel Powell	ST/RM	23	32(1)	Academy Product	★★★

Manager:

Karl Robinson – Has stayed true to a passing style of football during his tenure as Milton Keynes manager. This season could be 'do-or-die' for his reign at the club after a couple of seasons of underachievement.

Star Player:

Ben Reeves – Has become a real star act since signing for the club last summer. An attacking midfielder who offers a goalscoring and creative threat.

Key Signing:

Tom Hitchcock – Impressed last season as an out-and-out goal poacher on loan at Rotherham. A proven goalscorer at League One level who could act as a long-awaited replacement for Sam Baldock who left three seasons ago.

Key Departure:

Stephen Gleeson – Consistently one of the best central midfielders in this division. Has finally made the step up to the Championship with Birmingham City.

Overview:

After twice missing out on the play-offs

due to a combination of budget cut-backs and lengthy injury lists, Milton Keynes have decided to go for it this season. Manager Karl Robinson has made some strong moves in the transfer market, bringing in strikers Tom Hitchcock and Will Grigg as well as centre-back Kyle McFadzean who could be all stars at this level.

With the division looking weaker than it was last season it seems to have been a calculated move from the club's board to improve the squad this season. There is pressure on manager Karl Robinson to do so after years of failing to live up to some promising performances. With attendances dwindling slightly, the Milton Keynes project seems to depend on making the Championship in the next couple of years.

Prediction:

Play-off challengers

Notts County

Last Season: 20th in League One

A dramatic late run to survival last season in Shaun Derry's first season as a manager gave fans hope that they could really push on and challenge this time around. Have lost a multitude of key players and have had to build an entirely new team. Could continue to be frustrate their fans this new season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Fabian Speiss	GK	20	1(0)	Academy Product	★★
Blair Adams	LB	22	36(0)	Coventry	★★★
Mustapha Dumbuya	RB	27	24(0)	Crawley	★★★
Hayden Hollis	CB	21	10(4)	Academy Product	★★★
Taylor McKenzie	CB/RB	20	0(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★
Shaun Derry	CM	36	7(0)	Q.P.R.	★★★
Zeli Ismail	RM	20	24(3)	Wolves (Loan)	★★★
Hayden Mullins	CM/CB	35	24(1)	Birmingham	★★★
Liam Noble	CM	23	34(5)	Carlisle	★★★
Alan Smith	CM	33	24(0)	Milton Keynes	★★★
Greg Tempest	CM/LM	20	14(0)	Academy Product	★★
Curtis Thompson	CM/RM	20	11(0)	Academy Product	★★
Garry Thompson	RM	33	44(2)	Bradford	★★★
Elliott Whitehouse	CM	20	18(0)	Sheffield United	★★
Nicky Wroe	CM	28	33(2)	Preston	★★
Jeremy Balmy	ST/LM	20	1(0)	Le Havre	★★
Jake Cassidy	ST	21	33(1)	Wolves (Loan)	★★
Danny Haynes	ST/RM	26	30(4)	Charlton	★★
Ronan Murray	ST	22	24(7)	Ipswich	★★★
James Spencer	ST	22	26(6)	Huddersfield	★★★
Tyrell Waite	ST	20	1(0)	Academy Product	★

Manager:

Shaun Derry – Kept Notts County up in memorable fashion in his first season as a manager. Now eligible for selection as a player, but only as an emergency, Derry is expected to push a young team further on.

Star Player:

Hayden Mullins – Re-signed this summer after impressing as a converted centre-back whilst on loan from Birmingham last season. Will be crucial in providing experience for a young Magpies side.

Key Signing:

Blair Adams – Was rather shockingly released by Coventry City this summer. One of the best left-backs in the league, a more than adequate replacement for the departed Alan Sheehan.

Key Departure:

Bartosz Bialkowski – Built a solid reputation after signing for the club from Southampton two years ago. His departure to Ipswich was another in a long line of departures from Meadow Lane this summer.

Overview:

If Shaun Derry thought that the challenge at Notts County was to keep them up last season it appears that he was wrong. A lengthy list of key players are no longer available to the rookie manager due to a combination of contract refusals, transfer bids, returning loanees and injuries. Probably the biggest blow has been the loss of Jimmy Spencer to injury who provided an important reference point in attack for the team.

It is essentially a whole new starting line-up for Notts County going into this season. Fans were hoping to push on but it seems like it is going to be another long and tough season at Meadow Lane. The hope will be that the experience of last season will prevent any prolonged spells of poor form.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Oldham Athletic

Last Season: 15th in League One

Played some entertaining football for much of last season without getting the rewards they deserved. Eventually secured survival by playing some less attractive football. Will probably do more-or-less the same this time round.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Paul Rachubka	GK	33	10(0)	Leeds	★★
Joel Coleman	GK	17	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Luke Simpson	GK	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Connor Brown	RB	21	27(1)	Sheffield United	★★
Genseric Kusunga	CB/RB	26	18(1)	Basel	★★★
Adam Lockwood	CB	32	20(1)	Guisley	★★
Joseph Mills	LB	24	24(0)	Burnley	★★
Jack Truelove	RB	18	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Brian Wilson	RB	31	38(0)	Colchester	★★
James Wilson	CB	25	20(1)	Bristol City	★★★
James Dayton	RM/LM	25	34(3)	Kilmarnock	★★
Timothee Dieng	CM/CB	22	26(3)	Brest	★★★
Mike Jones	RM/CM	26	42(3)	Crawley	★★★
Liam Kelly	CM	24	2(0)	Bristol City	★★★
David Mellor	CM/LB	21	20(0)	Academy Product	★★
Carl Winchester	CM/CB	21	12(1)	Academy Product	★★
Jonson Clarke-Harris	ST	20	40(6)	Peterborough	★★★
William Gros	ST	22	14(0)	Kilmarnock	★★
Amari Morgan-Smith	ST/RM	25	37(9)	Kidderminster	★★
Jonathan Forte	ST/RM	28	0(0)	Southampton	★★★
Danny Philliskirk	ST	23	38(4)	Coventry	★★★
Rhys Turner	ST	19	2(0)	Stockport	★

Manager:

Lee Johnson – Did well last season in preventing Oldham from getting involved in a relegation scrap. Has shown he has inherited his father's eye for a good player.

Star Player:

Jonson Clarke-Harris – The 'one who got away' for many Coventry City fans. Scored for fun for our youth-team before being released. Proved himself to be a strong performer in attack at this level last season.

Key Signing:

Mike Jones – Arrives after an effective season with Crawley Town where he was utilised through the centre. Naturally a winger, Jones's arrival plugs the gap in the team left by the departed Gary Harkins.

Key Departure:

James Wesolowski – Despite some severe injury issues, Wesolowski is a strong performer at this level in central midfield. Was surprising that he has dropped into League Two with Shrewsbury this summer.

Overview:

After playing some entertaining football last season with little reward, Lee Johnson eventually ground out some results with what looked to be a talented but raw Oldham side. This summer has seen the team strengthened thanks to sponsorship deal with Sports Direct.

Whilst this Oldham side do not like pulling up any trees this season, they should be able to play some decent football without the pressure of a relegation battle. They have a few bright young footballers in their squad, including former Sky Blues Jonson Clarke-Harris and Danny Philliskirk. Oldham could pull off a few shocks this season if they can defend better than last time out.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Peterborough United

Last Season: 6th in League One

An incredibly inconsistent campaign saw the Posh eventually squeeze into the play-offs. Look to have strengthened this season and with no outstanding team in this division, Peterborough could be one of the favourites this season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Ben Alnwick	GK	27	11(0)	Leyton Orient	★★★
Joe Day	GK	23	4(0)	Rushden	★★
Robert Olejnik	GK	27	42(0)	Torquay	★★★
Jack Baldwin	CB	21	37(2)	Hartlepool	★★★
Michael Bostwick	CB/CM	26	42(4)	Stevenage	★★★★
Shaun Brisley	CB	24	22(1)	Macclesfield	★★★
Kgosi Ntlhe	LB/RB	20	27(2)	Academy Product	★★★
Michael Richens	RB	19	4(0)	Academy Product	★
Ricardo Santos	CB	19	25(0)	Thurrock	★★
Michael Smith	RB	25	43(0)	Bristol Rovers	★★★
Gabriel Zakuani	CB	28	30(1)	Kalloni	★★★★
Jermaine Anderson	CM	18	13(0)	Academy Product	★★
Kane Ferdinand	CM	21	7(0)	Southend	★★
Grant McCann	CM	34	35(4)	Scunthorpe	★★★
Kenny McEvoy	LM	19	0(0)	Tottenham (Loan)	★★
Nathaniel Mendez-Laing	RM/ST	22	22(1)	Wolves	★★★
Joe Newell	LM/CM	21	11(0)	Academy Product	★★
Erhun Oztumer	CM/ST	23	42(28)	Dulwich Hamlet	★★
Jack Payne	CM	22	36(2)	Gillingham	★★★
Jon Taylor	RM	22	41(9)	Shrewsbury	★★★
Nicky Ajose	ST	22	38(12)	Manchester United	★★★
Britt Assombalonga	ST	21	43(23)	Watford	★★★★★
Tyrone Barnett	ST	28	38(7)	Crawley	★★★
Kyle Vassell	ST/LM	21	18(6)	Bishop's Stortford	★★
Conor Washington	ST	22	41(8)	Newport County	★★★

Manager:

Darren Ferguson – A Johnstone's Paint Trophy and a top-six finish kept Ferguson in the Peterborough job last season. There is pressure though to get the Posh genuinely challenging for promotion this season.

Star Player:

Britt Assombalonga – The Congolese striker was a sensation in his first season at London Road after arriving as the club's record signing. Pacey, skilful and strong, Assombalonga provides excitement and inspiration in attack for the Posh.

Key Signing:

Gabriel Zakuani – Returning to London Road after a short-stint with Kalloni in the Greek Premier Division. His return gives Peterborough's defence some much needed experience, physicality and height.

Key Departure:

Tommy Rowe – Has been a key performer for Peterborough as either a left-back, left-winger or through the middle. Has taken a well-deserved move up into the Championship with Wolves this summer.

Overview:

Peterborough continued to entertain and frustrate their fans last season. After starting the season off in imperious form, the Posh struggled for consistency. They eventually crawled into a play-off spot thanks largely to a lack of quality from the teams below them. Peterborough will be looking to be more efficient in attack and tighter at the back this season, although who isn't?

Their transfer activity has been once again interesting. Attacking midfielder Erhun Oztumer arrives from non-league Dulwich Hamlet and could be a real wild-card this season. Bringing Gabriel Zakuani back to the club could be a good move as well, the Posh lacked a settled defensive line-up last season. With mid-season signings Jack Baldwin and Conor Washington continuing their development and with Britt Assombalonga still at the club, it could be a memorable season at London Road.

Prediction:

Promotion contenders

Port Vale

Last Season: 9th in League One

A fantastic season last time round for a Port Vale side that many thought would struggle. Have lost a few important players over the summer and may suffer that much-dreaded 'second season syndrome'.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Ryan Boot	GK	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Sam Johnson	GK	21	16(0)	Academy Product	★★
Chris Neal	GK	28	31(0)	Shrewsbury	★★★
Carl Dickinson	LB	27	40(0)	Watford	★★★
Richard Duffy	RB/CB	28	28(0)	Exeter	★★★
Ryan McGivern	LB/CB	24	33(0)	Manchester City	★★★
Chris Robertson	CB	27	37(3)	Preston	★★★
Frederic Veseli	CB	21	18(0)	Ipswich (Loan)	★★
Adam Yates	RB	31	34(1)	Morecambe	★★
Chris Birchall	RM	30	28(1)	Columbus Crew	★★
Michael Brown	CM	37	18(0)	Leeds	★★★
Colin Daniel	LM	26	28(2)	Mansfield	★★
Steve Jennings	CM	29	25(1)	Tranmere	★★★
Chris Lines	CM	30	34(1)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★★★
Ryan Lloyd	LM	20	9(0)	Academy Product	★★
Mark Marshall	RM/LM	27	14(0)	Coventry	★★★
Byron Moore	RM/LM	25	40(4)	Crewe	★★★
Michael O'Connor	CM	26	29(2)	Rotherham	★★★
Louis Dodds	ST/RM/LM	27	29(4)	Leicester	★★
Tom Pope	ST	28	43(12)	Rotherham	★★★★
Ben Williamson	ST	25	39(4)	Hyde	★★

Manager:

Micky Adams – The ex-Coventry boss has worked wonders at Port Vale, transforming them from a lower-half League Two side in financial difficulties into a solid mid-table League One outfit.

Star Player:

Tom Pope – Found his goalscoring touch during Port Vale's promotion season. Proved he was no 'one season wonder' by scoring 12 goals last season. A traditional target-man who is crucial in making Vale an attacking threat.

Key Signing:

Byron Moore – Finally decided to leave Crewe after seven years with the club to join local rivals Port Vale. A pacey winger who at times has attracted attention from Championship clubs.

Key Departure:

Doug Loft – Last season's captain made the step up to third-tier football and added dynamism and energy to Port Vale's midfield.

Overview:

Port Vale surprised many in not only surviving but thriving in League One

last season. After suffering a transfer embargo and a winding-up order, not to mention the loss of several key players, the challenge for Micky Adams is to repeat last season's performance.

For the most part, Vale have done some sensible business in the transfer market. Michael Brown, Steven Jennings and Michael O'Connor should add quality and experience to Port Vale's midfield. Byron Moore is a decent replacement for Jennison Myrie-Williams. They should be okay but may struggle to surprise their opposition in the same manner as last season.

Prediction:

Lower mid-table

Preston North End

Last Season: 5th in League One

One of the most consistent teams in League One last time round after seasons of disappointment at Preston. Having only lost one regular from last season's side, the club are amongst the favourites to win the league this time out.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Jamie Jones	GK	25	28(0)	Leyton Orient	★★★★
Thorsten Stuckmann	GK	33	0(0)	Aachen	★★★
David Buchanan	LB	28	19(0)	Tranmere	★★★
Tom Clarke	CB/RB	26	40(4)	Huddersfield	★★★
Ben Davies	CB/LB	18	44(0)	Academy Product	★★
Paul Huntington	CB	26	23(2)	Yeovil	★★★
Jack King	CB/RB/ST	28	24(2)	Woking	★★★
Scott Laird	LB/LM	26	34(1)	Stevenage	★★★
Scott Wiseman	RB/CB	28	38(0)	Barnsley	★★★
Callum Woods	RB/LB	27	19(1)	Huddersfield	★★★
Bailey Wright	CB	22	43(4)	Academy Product	★★★
Alan Browne	CM	19	8(1)	Cork	★★
Josh Brownhill	CM	18	24(3)	Manchester United	★★★
Joel Byrom	CM/LM	27	15(2)	Stevenage	★★
Paul Gallagher	RM/ST	29	28(6)	Leicester (Loan)	★★★★
Will Hayhurst	LM/RM	20	24(2)	Academy Product	★★
Lee Holmes	LM/RM	27	32(3)	Southampton	★★★
Chris Humphrey	RM	26	42(3)	Motherwell	★★★★
Neil Kilkenny	CM	28	30(2)	Bristol City	★★★
Kyel Reid	LM	26	26(4)	Bradford	★★★
John Welsh	CM	30	36(2)	Tranmere	★★★
Kevin Davies	ST	37	38(3)	Bolton	★★★
Joe Garner	ST	26	35(19)	Watford	★★★★
Andy Little	ST/RM/RB	25	21(5)	Rangers	★★★
Jordan Hugill	ST	22	27(9)	Port Vale	★★★

Manager:

Simon Grayson – A serial promotion winner from the third-tier with Leeds, Huddersfield and Blackpool. Finally awoke Preston from their Phil Brown/Graham Westley inspired torpor in leading the club into the play-off semi-finals.

Star Player:

Joe Garner – Very much like Preston North End, Garner awoke from a long spell of poor form to top score for the Lilywhites last season. Could leave the club due to a dispute over a new contract.

Key Signing:

Paul Gallagher – His re-signing at Deepdale provides Preston with some all-important creativity, something that can be missing in a largely workmanlike team.

Key Departure:

Declan Rudd – The Norwich youngster was a consistent presence in goal at Deepdale. Jamie Jones and Thorsten Stuckmann will now compete for the goalie's jersey at Deepdale.

Overview:

Preston were ruthlessly consistent last season. Following season's of under-performance, Preston seemed very happy to simply be in the mix last season when they could have pushed on and challenged. After sitting pretty in the play-offs for nearly all of last season, Preston are amongst the favourites to win the division outright this time out.

Preston have not really lost any key players in the transfer window. Declan Rudd has returned to Norwich and speculation surrounds the future of Joe Garner. However the signings thus far have been solid and add strength in depth to what was already a strong Preston side. They may just lack the ability to open up sides happy to sit back against them, but then again they have a real physical threat which can be enough in this division.

Prediction:

Promotion contenders

Rochdale

Last Season: 3rd in League Two

Played some entertaining football last season after the return of Keith Hill. Finances are tight at Spotland and after the departure of Scott Hogan to Brentford they could really struggle this season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Steve Collis	GK	33	0(0)	Macclesfield	★
Josh Lillis	GK	27	45(0)	Scunthorpe	★★★
Rhys Bennett	CB/RB	22	23(0)	Bolton	★★
Ashley Eastham	CB	23	15(0)	Blackpool	★★
Olly Lancashire	CB	25	38(0)	Aldershot	★★
Sean McGinty	CB	20	5(0)	Sheffield United	★★
Joe Rafferty	RB	20	31(0)	Academy Product	★★
Michael Rose	LB	32	42(4)	Colchester	★★
Scott Tanser	LB	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★★
Jamie Allen	CM	19	25(6)	Academy Product	★★
Brian Barry-Murphy	CM	36	3(0)	Bury	★
Callum Camps	CM/RM	18	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Matty Done	LM/LB	26	38(0)	Barnsley	★★
Bastien Hery	CM	22	12(1)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★
Matthew Lund	CM	23	40(8)	Stoke	★★★
Peter Vincenti	CM	28	42(5)	Aldershot	★★
Calvin Andrew	ST	27	23(1)	York City	★★
Joe Bunney	ST	20	21(3)	Stockport	★★
George Donnelly	ST	26	32(5)	Macclesfield	★★
Ian Henderson	ST/CM/RM	29	45(11)	Colchester	★★★
Joel Logan	ST	19	4(0)	Academy Product	★
Jack Muldoon	ST	24	42(21)	Worksop	★

Manager:

Keith Hill – Returned to the club just over a year ago after a mixed spell with Barnsley in the Championship.

Immediately restored the spirit of his old side and won promotion in his first full season back in some style.

Star Player:

Ian Henderson – Henderson is Rochdale's creative fulcrum. Playing at the tip of a midfield diamond, he offers a real touch of class and creativity to a team that is otherwise low on quality.

Key Signing:

Calvin Andrew – Has just 13 league goals at the age of 27, however Rochdale fans are hoping that Keith Hill can turn the former Palace striker into the new Chris O'Grady.

Key Departure:

Scott Hogan – Sold to Brentford this summer for £750,000 after a breakthrough season in 2013/14. Rochdale may struggle to replace his goals.

Overview:

Not many were expecting Keith Hill's return to Rochdale to go as well as

quickly as it did last season. Hill built an attractive side on a limited budget, bringing the best out of players such as Ian Henderson and Scott Hogan. With finances tight at the Greater Manchester club, it will be one of the managerial achievements of the season if Hill can keep Rochdale in this division.

Transfer activity has been marked by the departure of star striker Scott Hogan. Much depends on whether gambles taken on the journeyman Calvin Andrew and non-league striker Jack Muldoon can pay off. Ultimately though Rochdale look a couple of levels in quality below many in this division.

Prediction:

Relegation battlers

Scunthorpe United

Last Season: 2nd in League Two

Thanks to a record-breaking unbeaten run to begin his managerial career, Russ Wilcox led the Iron to promotion from League Two. This season should present more of a challenge and it will be interesting to see how Scunthorpe and Wilcox adapt.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
James Severn	GK	22	0(0)	Derby	★
Sam Slocombe	GK	26	46(0)	Academy Product	★★★
Miles Addison	CB/CM	25	6(0)	Bournemouth (Loan)	★★★
Andrew Boyce	CB	24	34(1)	Gainsborough	★★
Niall Canavan	CB	23	45(4)	Academy Product	★★★
Andy Dawson	LB	35	18(0)	Hull	★★
Callum Howe	CB	20	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Miguel Llera	CB	35	22(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★★
David Mirfin	CB	29	45(2)	Watford	★★★★
Eddie Nolan	RB	26	39(0)	Preston	★★★
Luke Waterfall	CB	24	9(1)	Gainsborough	★★
Marcus Williams	LB	28	28(0)	Sheffield United	★★★
Hakeeb Adelakun	RM/LM	18	28(2)	Academy Product	★★
Neal Bishop	CM/RB	33	35(1)	Blackpool	★★★★
Terry Hawkrige	RM	24	45(1)	Gainsborough	★★★
Sean McAllister	CM	26	39(0)	Cowdenbeath	★★★
Gary McSheffrey	LM/ST	31	23(1)	Chesterfield	★★★
Jennison Myrie-Williams	RM/LM	26	38(7)	Port Vale	★★★★
Matt Sparrow	RM/CM	30	26(3)	Crawley	★★★
David Syers	CM	26	39(10)	Doncaster	★★★
Curtis Bateson	ST	17	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Dean Burton	ST	37	29(6)	Gillingham	★★
Paddy Madden	ST	24	30(5)	Yeovil	★★★
Lyle Taylor	ST	24	40(9)	Sheffield United	★★★

Manager:

Russ Wilcox – Turned Scunthorpe's season from an underwhelming one to a promotion winning one. Despite a long unbeaten run last season, he still has some questions to answer as a manager.

Star Player:

David Mirfin – A dominant presence at the back for the Iron. He will make Scunthorpe tough to beat this season and nasty customers to boot.

Key Signing:

Jennison Myrie-Williams – One of the stars of Micky Adams's Port Vale side over the past few seasons. A rapid winger who also offers a goal-threat.

Key Departure:

Sam Winnall – Was the star of last season's promotion season but was eventually sold to Barnsley after a summer of speculation. It could be a struggle for Scunthorpe to replace his goals.

Overview:

Russ Wilcox has restored some pride at Glanford Park after two relegations in three seasons which took the Iron from

the Championship to League Two. The rookie manager attracted headlines for the long unbeaten run that he oversaw immediately after taking over. There are however questions over his style of play and the amount of games which the club drew during that run which ultimately cost the side the League Two title.

Scunthorpe's transfer activity has been very encouraging though. The loss of Sam Winnall is of course a blow but he only had one season of form behind him in a lower division. Miguel Llera, Jennison Myrie-Williams and Neal Bishop are all proven performers at League One level. The addition of Sheffield United flop Lyle Taylor could work out well for the Iron, the former Falkirk man seems a natural strike partner for Paddy Madden. Scunthorpe could be one of the real surprise packages this season.

Prediction:

Upper mid-table

Sheffield United

Last Season: 7th in League One

It took a while for the Blades to recover from the disastrous reign of David Weir. An FA Cup run and a 7th place finish have given Sheffield United fans confidence in Nigel Clough to lead the club back into the Championship at long last.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Mark Howard	GK	27	19(0)	Blackpool	★★★
George Willis	GK	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Craig Alcock	RB/CB	26	30(0)	Peterborough	★★★
Andy Butler	CB	30	45(2)	Walsall	★★★★
Neill Collins	CB	30	43(2)	Leeds	★★★
Bob Harris	LB	26	15(0)	Blackpool	★★★★
Terry Kennedy	CB	20	5(0)	Barnsley	★★
Harrison McGahey	CB	18	3(0)	Blackpool	★★★
Chris Basham	CM/RB	26	40(2)	Blackpool	★★★
Jamal Campbell-Ryce	RM	31	36(3)	Notts County	★★★
Florent Cuvelier	CM	21	9(0)	Stoke	★★★
Ben Davies	CM/RM	33	22(3)	Derby	★★★
Connor Dimaio	CM	18	3(0)	Academy Product	★★
Michael Doyle	CM	33	43(2)	Coventry	★★★
Ryan Flynn	RM/LM	25	32(5)	Falkirk	★★★
Stephen McGinn	CM	25	30(0)	Watford	★★★
Stefan Scougall	RM/CM	21	31(4)	Livingston	★★★
James Wallace	CM	22	18(2)	Tranmere	★★★
Jose Baxter	ST/RM	22	40(8)	Oldham	★★★★
Diego de Girolamo	ST/CM	18	0(0)	Academy Product	★★
Joe Ironside	ST	20	14(2)	Academy Product	★
Marc McNulty	ST	22	35(17)	Livingston	★★★
Jamie Murphy	ST/LM	24	34(4)	Motherwell	★★★★
Chris Porter	ST	30	35(8)	Derby	★★★

Manager:

Nigel Clough – Took over last October and initially struggled to keep the Blades out of the bottom four. A successful second half of the season, which included a run to the semi-finals of the FA Cup, has Sheffield United fans looking towards the coming season with renewed optimism.

Star Player:

Jose Baxter – The ex-Oldham player took a while to adjust to life at Bramall Lane, but by the end of the season became an integral member of the team's style of play. An intelligent forward player who likes to drop deep to find space.

Key Signing:

James Wallace – The former Tranmere captain who suffered a massive injury which cost the Birkenhead side promotion two seasons ago. A tough tackling midfielder who is also very good with the ball, may cost Michael Doyle his place in the Blades side.

Key Departure:

Harry Maguire – Has been the first name on the team-sheet for the Blades

in recent years. A dominant central defender who is also very competent with the ball at his feet, a massive loss.

Overview:

After a shocking first two thirds of last season, Sheffield United ended the season with panache. Their league finish last season displays just how little of the season a team can be good for to be successful in this division. Nigel Clough will now have to achieve something he is yet to do in his managerial career, get a team promoted in the Football League.

The worry for Sheffield United fans is a lack of an out-and-out goalscorer. They look dangerous in every other area of the team but Chris Porter and Marc McNulty may struggle to fire the Blades into the Championship. The potential signing of Michael Higdon could remedy that problem. Overall though it will be a real test of Nigel Clough's managerial ability this season with an expectant crowd at Bramall Lane to finally take the Blades back up to the Championship.

Prediction:

Promotion contenders

Swindon Town

Last Season: 8th in League One

Swindon surpassed many's expectations of them to finish so close to the play-offs last season. It has been a really tough summer where key players have left and no replacements have been forthcoming. Could struggle to repeat last season's trick.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Tyrell Belford	GK	20	5(0)	Liverpool	★ ★
Wes Foderingham	GK	23	41(0)	Crystal Palace	★ ★ ★ ★
Jack Barthram	RB	20	11(0)	Tottenham	★ ★
Raphael Rossi Branco	CB	24	15(0)	Whitehawk	★ ★
Nathan Byrne	RB/RM	22	36(4)	Tottenham	★ ★ ★
Josh Lelan	CB	19	4(0)	Derby (Loan)	★
Nathan Thompson	RB	22	41(1)	Academy Product	★ ★ ★
Darren Ward	CB	35	36(0)	Millwall	★ ★ ★
Ben Gladwin	CM	22	14(0)	Marlow Town	★ ★
Ryan Harley	CM	29	21(1)	Brighton	★ ★
Yaser Kasim	CM	23	37(2)	Brighton	★ ★ ★ ★
Massimo Luongo	CM	21	44(6)	Tottenham	★ ★ ★ ★
Tijane Reis	LM	23	6(0)	Chaves	★ ★
Anton Rodgers	CM	21	7(0)	Oldham	★ ★
Louis Thompson	LM	19	28(2)	Academy Product	★ ★ ★
George Barker	ST	22	11(0)	Brighton	★
Michael Smith	ST	22	43(17)	Charlton	★ ★ ★ ★
Connor Waldon	ST	19	5(0)	Academy Product	★
Andy Williams	ST	27	12(0)	Yeovil	★ ★ ★

Manager:

Mark Cooper – After an abysmal spell with Peterborough a few years ago, it seemed like Cooper's chance to manage in the Football League had passed. Stepped into the Swindon role following the surprise departure of Kevin MacDonald and has proven himself to be a tactically flexible young manager.

Star Player:

Yaser Kasim – The Iraq international struggled in non-league before impressing on trial last summer. Dubbed the 'Iraqi Xavi' by fans at the County Ground for his passing ability.

Key Signing:

Anton Rodgers – Son of Liverpool manager Brendan. Swindon's only permanent summer signing thus far.

Key Departure:

Alex Pritchard – The Spurs loanee was the star attraction at Swindon last season in a free role behind the striker. His departure leaves a creative vacuum that is yet to be filled at the County Ground.

Overview:

Swindon fans must have thought that the upheaval at the club was over after a tumultuous last summer which saw manager Kevin MacDonald resign after an entire team was dismantled. Somehow Mark Cooper built an attractive side made up of promising young players. However a summer of inactivity in the transfer market makes the task to do any better that much more difficult.

Whilst Swindon's first 11 looks strong enough to challenge any side in this division, there is a worrying lack of squad depth in all areas. You would imagine that a few more faces would be added to the squad in time for the new season but at the moment Swindon look like struggling to repeat last season's 8th place finish.

Prediction:

Mid-table

Walsall

Last Season: 13th in League One

A strong showing from Walsall last season after losing their three top scorers from the previous campaign. Continued to lose key players over the course of this summer, manager Dean Smith is used to this challenge which could keep them afloat this season.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Craig MacGillivray	GK	21	40(0)	Harrogate	★★
Richard O'Donnell	GK	25	46(0)	Sheffield Wednesday	★★★
Malvind Benning	LB	20	16(2)	Academy Product	★★
James Chambers	RB	33	40(1)	Doncaster	★★★
Paul Downing	CB	22	44(1)	West Brom	★★★
Dean Holden	RB/CB	34	25(2)	Rochdale	★★
James O'Connor	RB/CB	29	3(0)	Derby	★★
Matt Preston	CB	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Ben Purkiss	RB	30	14(0)	Hereford	★★
Andy Taylor	LB	28	33(1)	Sheffield United	★★★★
James Baxendale	RM	21	40(2)	Doncaster	★★★
Adam Chambers	CM	33	45(0)	Leyton Orient	★★★
Reece Flanagan	CM	19	0(0)	Academy Product	★
Sam Mantom	CM	22	43(5)	West Brom	★★★★
Kieron Morris	LM	20	2(0)	Academy Product	★★
Romaine Sawyers	RM/CM	22	44(6)	West Brom	★★★
Amadou Bakayoko	ST	18	6(0)	Academy Product	★★
Tom Bradshaw	ST	22	28(7)	Shrewsbury	★★
Jordan Cook	ST/RM	24	3(0)	Charlton	★★★
Ashley Grimes	ST	27	15(0)	Bury	★★

Manager:

Dean Smith – Has worked wonders on a limited budget at the Bescot Stadium and has regularly turned rag-tag teams into play-off challengers.

Star Player:

Andy Taylor – A left-back who has rebuilt his reputation at Walsall after an underwhelming spell in the Championship with Sheffield United. His signing of a new contract this summer was one of a few causes for optimism for Walsall fans.

Key Signing:

Jordan Cook – Spent two frustrating seasons with Charlton, making just 10 league appearances. A pacey forward who can play out wide, potentially a star player at this level if given a consistent run in the first-team.

Key Departure:

Andy Butler – The ex-captain provided experience and sturdiness to a youthful Walsall defensive unit. His loss is a massive blow to the Saddlers' hopes for the coming season.

Overview:

Walsall's squad has once again been

shorn of its star players. In losing key defender Andy Butler and key striker Craig Westcarr, this season could be a tough one for Walsall. It is a fact of life at the Bescot Stadium for manager Dean Smith though. He has proven before that he can develop young talent and work miracles with cast-offs from other clubs. This year seems slightly different though, neither Andy Butler nor Craig Westcarr have really been replaced adequately. Walsall look weaker now in both attack and defence.

The best signing so far has been Jordan Cook from Charlton, his pace could give a different dimension to Walsall's attack. Other than that, Smith is looking to some younger players to make the step up this season. Amadou Bakayoko has been scoring goals for fun in academy football and winger Kieron Morris is another who could make a name for himself this season. Overall though it seems that Walsall are much weaker than in previous seasons and could struggle.

Prediction:

Relegation battlers

Yeovil Town

Last Season: 24th in Championship

Will hope to use last season's experience in the Championship to put in a strong showing in League One this season. Under the management of Gary Johnson, Yeovil should continue to punch above their weight.



Player Name	Position	Age	13/14 Apps(Goals)	Signed From	Star Rating
Artur Krysiak	GK	24	37(0)	Exeter	★★★
Gareth Stewart	GK	34	1(0)	Bournemouth	★
Chris Weale	GK	32	35(0)	Shrewsbury	★★★
Matteo Lanzoni	CB/RB	26	17(1)	Oldham	★★★
Aaron Martin	CB	24	8(0)	Birmingham	★★★★
Brendan Moloney	RB	25	33(0)	Bristol City	★★★
Ben Nugent	CB	20	11(0)	Cardiff (Loan)	★★★
Nathan Ralph	LB	21	0(0)	Northampton	★★
Nathan Smith	LB	27	14(0)	Chesterfield	★★★
Jakub Sokolik	CB	20	12(0)	Liverpool	★★★
Seth Twumasi	RB	24	3(0)	Northampton	★★
James Berrett	CM	25	40(2)	Carlisle	★★★
Liam Davis	LM/LB	27	27(1)	Oxford	★★★
Kevin Dawson	CM/RM	24	35(1)	Shelbourne	★★★★
Joe Edwards	CM/RB	23	46(1)	Bristol City	★★★
Sam Foley	CM/RM/LM	27	16(0)	Newport County	★★★
Joel Grant	LM/RM/ST	26	34(3)	Wycombe	★★★★
James Hayter	ST	34	37(6)	Doncaster	★★★
Sam Hoskins	ST	21	19(0)	Southampton	★★
AJ Leitch-Smith	ST	24	20(1)	Crewe	★★★
Kieffer Moore	ST	20	20(4)	Dorchester	★★★

Manager:

Gary Johnson – Re-ignited a flagging managerial career in leading Yeovil into the Championship two seasons ago. Has the ability to really transform previously unheralded players into stars.

Star Player:

Kevin Dawson – Effective both out wide or in central midfield. A tireless worker who gives Yeovil some real forward momentum.

Key Signing:

Aaron Martin – Struggled to make an impact with Birmingham during a short-term spell at St Andrews. A calm and composed centre-back who impressed during a brief stint with the Sky Blues two seasons ago.

Key Departure:

Marek Stech – The goalkeeper who was crucial to both their promotion season and in keeping the team competitive in the Championship.

Overview:

Relegation from the Championship last season was hardly unexpected for Yeovil who were operating at a

significant financial disadvantage to their opponents. The gamble that was taken last season was that by running the club sensibly they would have the cash reserves to fund a more competitive side in League One than they would otherwise be expecting. This season will put that theory to the test.

The Glovers have lost key players from that Wembley win two years ago in Luke Ayling, Byron Webster and Marek Stech. Gary Johnson now has to evolve his playing squad beyond that famous season. With the former Bristol City man at the helm you would imagine that they will continue to be awkward opponents for anyone stupid enough to underestimate them. The challenge now will be to adjust to being favourites in more games than they are used to.

Prediction:

Play-off challengers

League One Stats

Biggest Squad



Smallest Squad



Oldest Squad



Youngest Squad



Most League Appearances 13/14



Least League Appearances 13/14



Most League Goals 13/14



Least League Goals 13/14



Highest Star Rating



Lowest Star Rating



Squad Profiles



Ryan Allsop

Pos: GK Age: 22 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

On loan from Bournemouth, has previously performed well at this level with both the Cherries and Leyton Orient. Has looked a commanding presence in pre-season.

Lee Burge

Pos: GK Age: 21 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Looks like the long-term replacement for Joe Murphy. Is yet to be given a chance at first-team level and will need to be given every chance before the end of Allsop's loan.

Jordan Clarke

Pos: CB Age: 22 Apps(Goals): 113(3)



Bio:

Spent last season adapting to the centre back position where he became a real classy presence. Still prone to the odd mistake.

Jack Finch

Pos: CB/CM Age: 17 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Originally a central midfielder, Finch has been converted to centre-back in reserve team football.

Ryan Haynes

Pos: LB Age: 18 Apps(Goals): 3(0)



Bio:

Young attacking full-back who impressed in the under-21 side, expected to soon make the breakthrough into first-team football.

Reda Johnson

Pos: CB/LB Age: 26 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

A physically dominant defender who has impressed at Championship level with both Plymouth and Sheffield Wednesday

Aaron Phillips

Pos: RB Age: 20 Apps(Goals): 11(1)



Bio:

Nippy full-back who loves diving into challenges, best remembered for his equaliser against Wolves last October.

Danny Pugh

Pos: LB/LM/CM Age: 31 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Started as a winger but has evolved his game to be effective at left-back or in central midfield. Offers experience and cover to the squad

Danny Seaborne

Pos: CB Age: 27 Apps(Goals): 21(1)



Bio:

An unfancy centre-back who is at his best when playing an uncomplicated role in central defence.

Stuart Urquhart

Pos: CB Age: 19 Apps(Goals): 0(0)

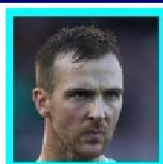


Bio:

Young Scottish centre-back who has struggled to push on into the first-team since signing last September.

Andy Webster

Pos: CB Age: 32 Apps(Goals): 41(2)



Bio:

Veteran Scottish international who can be a class-act in defence on his day, lacks pace but still has some good football left in him yet.

Jordan Willis

Pos: CB/RB Age: 19 Apps(Goals): 32(0)



Bio:

A cool head in defence despite his young age. Can play anywhere across the back-line.

Carl Baker

Pos: RM Age: 31 Apps(Goals): 160(21)



Bio:

Clearly on his way out of the club due to his wage demands. Can frustrate and entertain in equal measure but is perhaps reaching the end of his effectiveness at this level.

Adam Barton

Pos: CM Age: 23 Apps(Goals): 36(3)



Bio:

Classy midfielder who has been unable to make a place in the team his own. Has been given a chance in pre-season, could find himself back in fold.

Mohamed Coulibaly

Pos: RM/ST Age: 25 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Pacey winger on loan from Bournemouth, well regarded at Dean Court. Has his issues with injuries which has prevented him from being involved in pre-season.

Billy Daniels

Pos: CM Age: 20 Apps(Goals): 22(3)

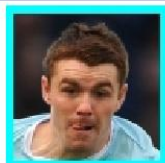


Bio:

Still doesn't have a set position having played out wide, in central midfield and attack. Could be an important season in establishing himself in the team.

John Fleck

Pos: CM Age: 22 Apps(Goals): 78(4)



Bio:

One of the most talented central midfielders in the division who possesses the class to play at a much higher level than this one.

Devon Kelly-Evans

Pos: LM/RM Age: 17 Apps(Goals): 0(0)

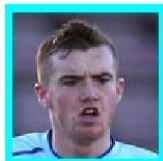


Bio:

Plays with his twin brother Dion in the academy. Was called into the first-team during pre-season and made an impression in the Stevenage game.

Ivor Lawton

Pos: CM/RM/CB Age: 18 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Has captained the club at youth-team level and is a full-blooded player. Can play in both defence and midfield, should make his full debut this season.

James Maddison

Pos: AM/ST Age: 17 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Has had a strong pre-season and put a marker down to challenge for a starting spot. Could still be too early to throw him into first-team action.

Jim O'Brien

Pos: RM/LM Age: 26 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Hard-working and committed wide player who loves to run himself into the ground for the team.

Danny Swanson

Pos: AM/RM Age: 27 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

An inconsistent player during spells with Dundee United and Peterborough. Can win games on his own when on form.

Conor Thomas

Pos: CM Age: 20 Apps(Goals): 81(1)

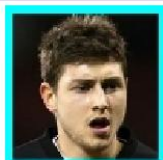


Bio:

Finally became a first-choice central midfielder last season, adds energy and drive to the team when on form.

Shaun Miller

Pos: ST Age: 26 Apps(Goals): 0(0)



Bio:

Can be an effective goal poacher at this level, but is still recovering from a serious injury.

George Thomas

Pos: ST Age: 17 Apps(Goals): 1(0)



Bio:

Very young striker who made his first-team debut against Leyton Orient last season. Definitely 'one for the future'.

Marcus Tudgay

Pos: ST Age: 31 Apps(Goals): 0(0)

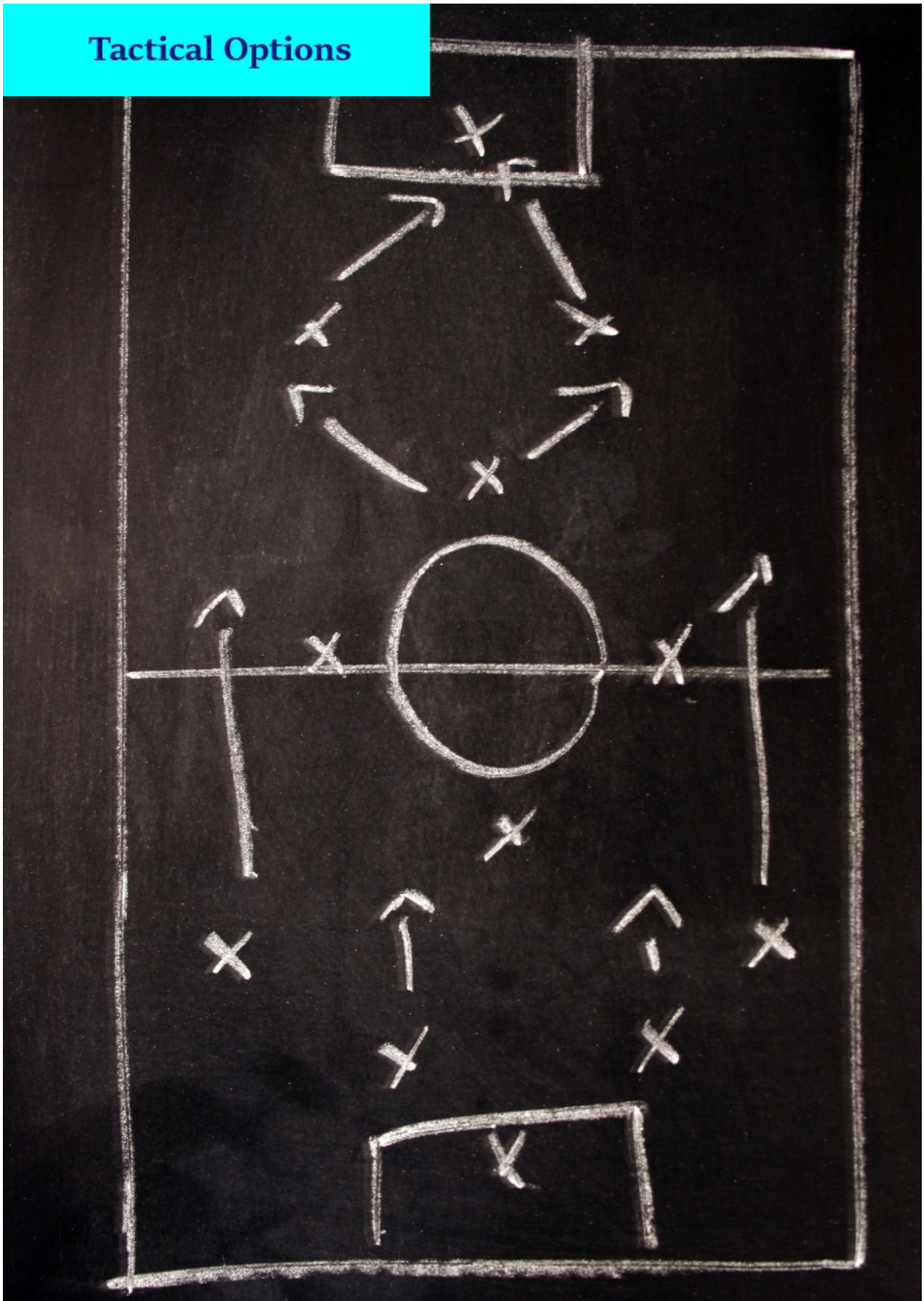


Bio:

Experienced centre-forward expected to replace the link-up play that Leon Clarke offered last season. Not exactly a prolific goal-scorer though.

Stats Compared to 12 Months Ago	
13/14	14/15
Average Age	
21.5	23.8 (17 th in League)
Appearances in the Previous Season	
339	467 (15 th in League)
Goals in the Previous Season	
48	30 (20 th in League)
Oldest Player	
Joe Murphy (31)	Andy Webster (32)
Youngest Player	
Ryan Haynes (17)	George Thomas (17)
Most League Appearances for the Club	
Carl Baker (123)	Carl Baker (160)
Most League Goals for the Club	
Carl Baker (14)	Carl Baker (21)
Number of Players Yet to Make League Debut	
4	13
Number of Players Yet to Score for the Club	
10	16
Number of Home-Grown Players in First-Team	
10	13

Tactical Options



3-5-2



Steven Pressley has regularly utilised the 3-5-2 formation in pre-season to good results. The benefit of the formation is that it allows the team to play with an extra central-midfielder whilst also having two in attack. The three centre-backs need to be well-drilled otherwise it can create problems, the two wider centre-backs need to mark players whilst the central one is there to cover or protect the defence. It is also important to have attacking wing-backs as well as midfielders who are looking to break into the box, that will require players like Jordan Willis and Conor Thomas to adapt their playing styles slightly.

4-4-2



Our most used formation last season which successfully brought out the best in both Leon Clarke and Callum Wilson. The key to being effective in this shape will be the combination between the two wingers and strikers as well as intensity with our pressing game. The benefit of this formation is that the players are used to it and it allows Pressley to play with both wingers and two strikers. The disadvantage is that it can be exposed by teams playing with an extra central-midfielder. Additionally a lack of pace from our first-choice centre-backs could be more exposed in this formation.

4-4-1-1



Initially this was the shape that Pressley was looking to use when he first came into the club. It would allow Danny Swanson to be played in his preferred position as well as accomodating two wingers. With an extra man in midfield we would be able to create passing triangles more easily. The main disadvantage is that with one-man up front it can be hard to translate domination of the midfield into chances. Our strike-options at the moment do seem to lack a player who could comfortably play as a lone striker.

4-4-2 Diamond



This formation will always bring to mind the Andy Thorn era at the club. Whilst it can produce some very attractive passing football, the system is badly exposed to teams who play with width and/or attacking full-backs. When Steven Pressley deployed it towards the end of last season a lack of off-the-ball movement from the team made it ineffectual. If we can get players who can work hard both in and out of possession it could be a very effective use of our resources. Once again a slow defence and lack of genuine attacking full-backs might make this an awkward formation to use.

Key Player



Jim O'Brien

An energetic performer out who provides a strong work-ethic to the team. Has been an effective performer in the second-tier.

Jim O'Brien

Jim O'Brien arrives at the club this summer after turning down the offer of a new contract with Barnsley. The Ireland youth international was holding out for a move to the Championship but his signing displays ambition from Steven Pressley.

O'Brien's main qualities as a footballer are his tireless work-rate and energy. He will run himself into the ground for the team, this quality marks a sea change in the style of winger that we have been accustomed to in recent seasons.

Whilst the likes of Carl Baker and Franck Moussa had their merits in what they provided in an attacking sense. Their lack of defensive cover left the team exposed at the back. It would be interesting to see the goals that the duo provided compared with the amount that they cost the team.

A case in point would be the 2-2 draw with Crawley last January. Franck Moussa had clearly switched off with the team two goals up against what looked like an opposition side low on quality. However Crawley managed to exploit Moussa's half-heartedness,

running at an exposed Blair Adams to mount a late comeback.

With Jim O'Brien in the team we should be expecting to see full-hearted performances for 90 minutes. This will be important for a team which looks on paper to be weaker in many areas than the one last season. It should allow us to close out results and sit on leads rather than sweat in the closing minutes.

It is obvious to many who have watched the team closely over the past season that Pressley prefers commitment from his wingers first. The unceremonious exit of Carl Baker over the summer displays the ruthlessness of Steven Pressley's vision for the first team.

With the budget lower than it was last season, O'Brien also provides a level of quality that is arguably above what we should be affording in our current situation. The move to bring him in shows the force of character that Steven Pressley has over this club. O'Brien should be one of the star names at Coventry City this season.

Key Player



John Fleck

Suffered a worrying dip in form towards the end of last season but still possesses a level of quality far beyond this level of football.

John Fleck

After signing for Coventry in the summer of 2012 amid much hype. Fleck has taken his time to establish himself as a key player at the club.

He arrived at the club as an attacking midfielder who would operate just behind the striker. However he struggled to impress in that position under both Andy Thorn and Mark Robins. It was only until Steven Pressley moved him into a deeper lying midfield position that we truly saw what Fleck could do.

His form at the beginning of last season was genuinely astounding. He had almost everything you could want for a central midfielder at this level. Not only could he dictate the tempo of games single-handedly but he also was able to get stuck in with the defensive side of the game.

One of the many highlights of the past season was watching the midfield partnership between John Fleck and Conor Thomas. Whilst Thomas provided the energy and hustle when he was on form. It was Fleck who supplied imagination and creativity to the team.

The central axis between Jordan Clarke in defence, Fleck in midfield and Leon Clarke in attack provided the team its beating heart.

The Scot struggled to maintain his form after Leon Clarke left in January. It seemed like the additional responsibility was slightly too much for him as his own performances declined dramatically. Suddenly the partnership of Fleck and Thomas in midfield looked like more of a weakness than a strength, neither seemed to offer much in attack or defence.

With no additional senior central midfielders incoming thus far, Pressley is putting faith in Fleck recovering his form for the start of this season. The level he played at for the first six months of last season was far beyond what many would expect from a League One player. He is one of the few stars from last season to remain at the club.

The hope is that the addition of Marcus Tudgay as well as some defensive covering wingers reduces the burden on Fleck this season. That provides him with the platform to be the star of this Coventry City side. There also comes pressure with that role and his ability to recover his form will be crucial.

Key Player



Reda Johnson

The new captain of the club after signing this summer. Could be an inspired addition if he can stay fit this season.

Reda Johnson

The appointment of Reda Johnson as captain of the club signalled the beginning of a new era at the club. The team which did so well at the beginning of last season have nearly all moved on. Reda Johnson will be key in shepherding this Coventry City side into a new beginning.

The Benin international has struggled for fitness in pre-season, missing the Italian tour after picking up an injury whilst with his country. This has been cause for concern for Coventry City fans that he might be constantly in-and-out of the team.

His performances in pre-season have been mixed. Against Watford he put in an uncompromising display which really negated the Championship side's attacking threat. When deployed at left-back in the Stevenage game he seemed struggle to stay in position.

Whilst Johnson provides an option at left-back it seems that by far his best position is at centre-back. His extreme physicality which he is not afraid to use is his main quality. He should make the team a more physical proposition than before.

With Bradford City forthcoming in the opening game of the season, Coventry City fans will be able to see how much of an impact he will have on the team. Our opponents will no doubt be looking to exploit James Hanson's height which won them a point last November. Reda Johnson could be key in shutting off that option.

Reda Johnson as a choice as new club captain symbolises the change in emphasis at the club. There should be less of the highs and lows of the Carl Baker-era of captaincy. What we will hopefully see is genuine leadership and calmness about the way we play.

The choice of a defender as the leader in the side also emphasises the focus on defence for this season. Johnson should give the team a voice on the pitch which should help close out points in difficult fixtures.

Finally, Reda Johnson's community work, rewarded by the PFA award for player in the community this year, shows the quality of man we have signed as well as the quality of player. It speaks of more considered approach to player recruitment than last season.

The Manager



Steven Pressley

Built an exciting Coventry City side last season, now needs to prove that he can build a winning team in his own image.

The Manager

Last season Steven Pressley built a Coventry City side that looked to have broken through the typical assumptions that Sky Blues fans have of their team. However the loss of Leon Clarke and a subsequent drop in form due to poor signings in the transfer market, has led to some doubting his ability as a manager.

The argument is that he inherited a group of players that were a cut above their opponents. The team could play at a lower level of intensity and get away with it due to a moment of magic from an individual player.

Given the way the team struggled after losing Leon Clarke, there are questions now over Pressley's ability to recruit the right players to improve the team.

With a more limited playing squad than the one he began last season, the key will be coaxing out a high-level of intensity from his players in every game. Whilst he has undoubtedly got the best out of a few players last season, the team would regularly seem to start games in a state of lethargy, requiring a kick up the arse at half-time to play to their expected levels.

From looking at our pre-season performances, any drop-off in the commitment in our performances could be punished more severely this season. Jim O'Brien, Danny Swanson and John Fleck seem like the only three players in the squad capable of producing something from nothing. The overall quality of the collective has to improve this season.

With the prospect of a return to the Ricoh Arena in mind, there could be a whole set of fans unaccustomed to Steven Pressley's style of management and far less patient with the team. It could really alter the season and potentially put Pressley in the position of having to win fans over again should the club return to Coventry.

Dealing with current set of realities for this coming season though, whilst Pressley undoubtedly did a remarkable job this season, he now has to produce what he did for most of last season over an entire campaign. There is the potential for this to be a really memorable season at the club despite all the difficulties. It will be a test of all of Pressley's qualities as a manager to make a success out of the resources he has available to him.

Signings



Danny Swanson



Age:27

Position: MR/AMC

Career Apps(Goals): 212(30)

Looks to be the spiritual successor to Franck Moussa in the squad. A player that has delighted and frustrated in equal measure during his career. Might have to watch out for potential injury issues but he will add a touch of flair in comparison to our other signings.

Jim O'Brien



Age:26

Position: MR/ML

Career Apps(Goals): 188(11)

It was a real signal of intent to bring Jim O'Brien in. After turning down a new deal at Barnsley he had ambitions of playing in the Championship this season before joining. After a summer of losing our best players, O'Brien could be a real star this season.

Ryan Allsop



Age:22

Position: GK

Career Apps(Goals): 50(0)

Has looked very commanding and composed in goal during pre-season. A more than adequate replacement for Joe Murphy. The main concern will be keeping him beyond the end of his loan deal which expires in the middle of January.

Mohamed Coulibaly



Age:25

Position: MR/ST

Career Apps(Goals): 17(0) *(Information for appearances prior to 2011 unknown)*

A very highly rated talent by many at Bournemouth but has been struggling with injuries during pre-season. Could be an unexpected gem this season but it all seems to depend on how much his injury issues have affected his ability.

Reda Johnson



Age:26

Position: CB/LB

Career Apps(Goals): 132(20)

A fans favourite at Sheffield Wednesday for his commitment both on and off the pitch. A commanding and physical presence at the back who should make us nastier opponents this season. Embodies a lot which we lacked last season.

Shaun Miller



Age:26

Position: ST

Career Apps(Goals): 199(46)

A potentially useful goal-poacher who has struggled for form and fitness in recent seasons. Has had spells in his career of looking like a star player both with Crewe and Sheffield United. Could make a big impact this season if given a run of games.

Danny Pugh



Age:31

Position: LB/LM/CM

Career Apps(Goals): 248(15)

It is a calculated gamble to bring in Danny Pugh after releasing Blair Adams. Presumably the move is with a view to bringing Ryan Haynes into the first-team. Pugh also adds versatility, being a capable deputy at both left and central midfield.

Marcus Tudgay



Age:31

Position: ST

Career Apps(Goals): 364(84)

An experienced and intelligent forward who should offer guile to our attack. Seems to be the long-awaited successor to Leon Clarke in our team. He will be crucial in creating chances in what looks to be a more defensively focused team.

Reice Charles-Cook



Age:20

Position: GK

Career Apps(Goals): 5(0)

Young goalkeeper who came through the academy at Arsenal before spending last season at Bury. Lacks first-team experience and has been loaned to Nuneaton. Could compete with Burge for the goalkeeper's spot come January.

Young Players To Watch



Lee Burge



Age: 21

Position: GK

Is yet to be given first-team experience with the club, with Ryan Allsop only here for half a season, expect Burge to be given plenty of opportunities. Has looked competent during pre-season friendlies, still needs to be tested at senior level.

Ryan Haynes



Age: 18

Position: LB/LM

Has progressed from the player who looked so nervous on his debut in April 2012. An attacking full-back who needs to work on his defending to become a first-choice player. Could be making the starting line-up by the end of the season if things go as planned.

Aaron Phillips



Age: 20

Position: RB

Showed last season that he is a tigerish and competitive player who can time his tackles to perfection. Far from the finished article and his lack of height will be exploited by opponents at this level. Another who will be expecting to become a more regular starter in a season's time.

Ivor Lawton



Age: 18

Position: CM/RM/CB

Former under-18 captain who has now been given a chance during pre-season friendlies. A hard-worker and another fierce competitor. Can play in a number of positions and that versatility should earn him first-team football in some capacity this season.

Devon Kelly-Evans



Age: 17

Position: LM/RM

Was given game time during pre-season, provided an assist for Marcus Tudgay in the Stevenage friendly. May be a couple of steps away from the first-team still but looks a promising player for the future.

James Maddison



Age: 17

Position: AM/ST

Has scored goals for fun in youth-team football and has been included on the bench on a few occasions already. A creative and skilful player who could be the next big thing to come through the academy. Has impressed in pre-season and should be included in the first-team squad in some form this season.

George Thomas



Age: 17

Position: ST

Made his debut during Leon Clarke's transfer saga, playing 45 minutes against Leyton Orient. Still looks to be a very raw talent and could do with building his confidence up in youth-team football before making the step up to the first-team.

Pre-Season Review



Nuneaton Town**Score: 0-1 (Abandoned after 53 minutes)**

A match that will be remembered for a torrential storm and an ill-judged tweet from our near neighbours. A young team matched Nuneaton Town in the first-half before Lee Burge spilled a shot from our opponents and their captain Gaz Dean scored the game's only goal. An improvement from Sky Blues in the second-half was undermined by a tropical storm which ended the game early.

Roma B**Score: 2-0**

Another game played in poor conditions which reduced the quality of football. Shaun Miller scored his first goal for the club after getting in behind a young Roma defence. Danny Pugh sealed the win with a penalty-kick in what was a straightforward win for the Sky Blues.

Chievo Verona**Score: 0-3**

Coventry City were given a lesson in football from our Serie A opponents. The 'Flying Donkeys' turned on the style in the first-half by scoring three goals. The second-half was a more even contest but there was a clear gulf in class between the Sky Blues and Chievo.

Kalloni

Score: 0-0



An ill-tempered affair that was not helped by a poor refereeing display. Two players on either were sent off with an obvious impact on the quality of play. The game had begun well enough but it soon petered out once either side had to cope with playing with ten men.

Newport County

Score: 0-1



A poor performance from Coventry City on the day that Marcus Tudgay signed for the club. Defender Ismail Yakubu took advantage of some poor defending to hand the League Two side the win. A lack of intensity overall cost the Sky Blues anything from the game. Adam Barton came on and produced a cameo performance to keep himself in Steven Pressley's thinking.

Watford

Score: 1-0



A vastly improved performance from Coventry City as they took the sting out of a strong Watford side. Marcus Tudgay finished off a brilliant move from the Sky Blues to give the team the lead. A strong defensive display in the second-half showed some encouraging signs for our new-look team.

Bristol Rovers**Score: 2-1**

A young Sky Blues team dominated a first-choice Bristol Rovers side for most of the 90 minutes. After falling behind to some once-again hesitant defending, Coventry City did well to recover from the blow. Goals from Danny Swanson and Aaron Phillips secured a well-deserved come-back. Promising displays all-round, particularly from Adam Barton and young James Maddison.

Stevenage**Score: 1-2**

A poor performance from a supposedly first-choice Coventry City team. After surviving numerous close-shaves from set-pieces, the Sky Blues fell behind after conceding two penalties in quick succession. Marcus Tudgay converted a Devon Kelly-Evans cross to score what proved to be a consolation. After two good pre-season wins, the hope is that the intensity of the league season will be the difference.

Predictions



Coventry City Predictions

League Finish

10th – It is clear to many this season that there is a lack of quality in League One. It will only take one or two good months of form to make this a memorable season.

Top Scorer

Shaun Miller – The main concern about Miller will be keeping him fit after a horrendous injury two years ago. He's a real goal-poacher he could win us games that we have no right to win. If he can form a partnership with Marcus Tudgay in attack, he could be a real asset to the team.

Player of the Season

John Fleck – Fleck is going to be pivotal for us this season. If he can recover his form from the beginning of last season then we should be able to dominate our opponents. He showed signs towards the end of the last season of offering more of a forward drive. If he can chip in with a few more goals then that could make up for the some of the players we have lost over the summer.

Young Player of the Season

Jordan Willis – The second half of last

season delivered very few positives for Sky Blues fans to look forward to for this upcoming campaign. A rare bright spot was Jordan Willis establishing himself as a more regular first-team player. At right-back he is strong yet unadventurous, at centre-back he adds pace to the back-line but needs to be more physically assertive. It will be a battle for Willis to establish himself as first-choice centre-back but he could be one of a few young players to benefit from the experience elsewhere in the squad.

Signing of the Season

Jim O'Brien – Jim O'Brien embodies a lot of the qualities that Pressley demands from his players. He is a tireless hard-worker who will put in dedicated performances just because it's a wet Tuesday night in Northampton. He has also proven to be a strong performer at Championship level. Comes very close to replacing some of the class that we have lost over the summer.

Predicted League Table

Position	Team
1	Bristol City
2	Preston
3	Peterborough
4	Sheffield United
5	Leyton Orient
6	Milton Keynes
7	Yeovil
8	Barnsley
9	Scunthorpe
10	Coventry City
11	Swindon
12	Bradford
13	Gillingham
14	Oldham
15	Notts County
16	Fleetwood
17	Chesterfield
18	Doncaster
19	Port Vale
20	Walsall
21	Rochdale
22	Colchester
23	Crawley
24	Crewe

The strongest looking teams at this stage look to be **Bristol City, Preston, Peterborough, Sheffield United** and **Leyton Orient**. Expect those five to be the main contenders for automatic promotion.

There's a group of teams below that which stretches from **Milton Keynes** down to **Swindon** in that predicted league table which could make the play-offs if they find their mojo, that includes us.

The teams from below us down to **Walsall** are wild-cards that could be real surprise packages this season but ultimately lack enough quality individual players or squad depth. For the most part it's much of a muchness between 12th and 20th and the teams could be put in any order. These teams give me confidence for this season as they look on paper to be a grade in quality below **Coventry City** and assuage any overt fears of relegation. The four teams that are left; **Rochdale, Colchester United, Crawley** and **Crewe**. Are the four teams most likely to go down. That is not to say that these four are without the potential to succeed this season but from looking at the balance of squad power in this division, they all look to be another step in class below the mid-table teams.

Predictions for League One

Top Scorer

Sam Baldock (*Bristol City*) – Out of the four top scorers in the division from last season, only Sam Baldock and Britt Assombalonga remain. I am tipping Baldock for the golden boot this season as I expect that he will be playing for an in-form Bristol City side this season.

Signing of the Season

Jobi McAnuff (*Leyton Orient*) – Leyton Orient have made a real statement of intent in bringing McAnuff into their squad. Still has enough pace, quality with the ball at his feet and with his crossing to be a strong performer at Championship level let alone League One. Could combine well with fellow new signing Darius Henderson to fire Orient up into the second-tier after last season's near-miss.

Player of the Season

Jay Emmanuel-Thomas (*Bristol City*) – Starred last season for Bristol City, offers both flair and physicality. The challenge for Steve Cotterill will be creating a team that can bring the best out of him but Bristol City will be unstoppable with both him and Sam Baldock in the side if he can find his best form.

Young Player of the Season

Josh Brownhill (*Preston North End*) –

The youngster has been heavily involved in the club's pre-season schedule. A genuine play-maker who gives Preston another dimension beyond the repetitive work-rate and consistency in the rest of the side.

Surprise Package

Scunthorpe United – They may have lost Sam Winnall to Barnsley but in Lyle Taylor and Paddy Madden they have a strike-force that could catch many in this division out.. The spine of their team is ultra-solid and strong. Scunthorpe could have a similar impact as Port Vale did last season.

Underachievers

Walsall – After losing several key players this summer, the replacements do not look to be of similar quality. They are yet to source a defensive leader to replace Andy Butler. Their new strikers Ashley Grimes and Tom Bradshaw both have relatively poor scoring records in recent seasons.