

TOUCHLINE



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LFE

MAT HUDSON

The Oldham Athletic shot-stopper discusses his inspirational rise to prominence

JAZ GOUNDRY

The Grimsby Town Academy graduate details his transition from footballer to Ironman athlete

TENDAYI DARIKWA

The Imps skipper reflects on a record-breaking campaign



LFE's Academy Education Managers



Paul Bartlett
North & North East



Will Morford
South West



Carl Craner
West Midlands



Tom Palmer
South



Simon Dwight
South & London



Neil Chadwick
North West



Peter Hood
North East



Ian Tombs
East Midlands



Ben Lavelle
North West



Claire Wilberforce-Marsh
North West & Midlands



Gabriel Mellor
North East



Gavin Willacy
South & London



David O'Donovan
South East



Richard Donnelly
Wales

ALUMNI PLAYER VOICE

In June 2021, LFE launched the **Alumni Player Voice** initiative to facilitate a safe and confidential space for past apprentices to talk about experiences, best practices, and areas for development regarding the transition support provided by clubs and wider organisations.

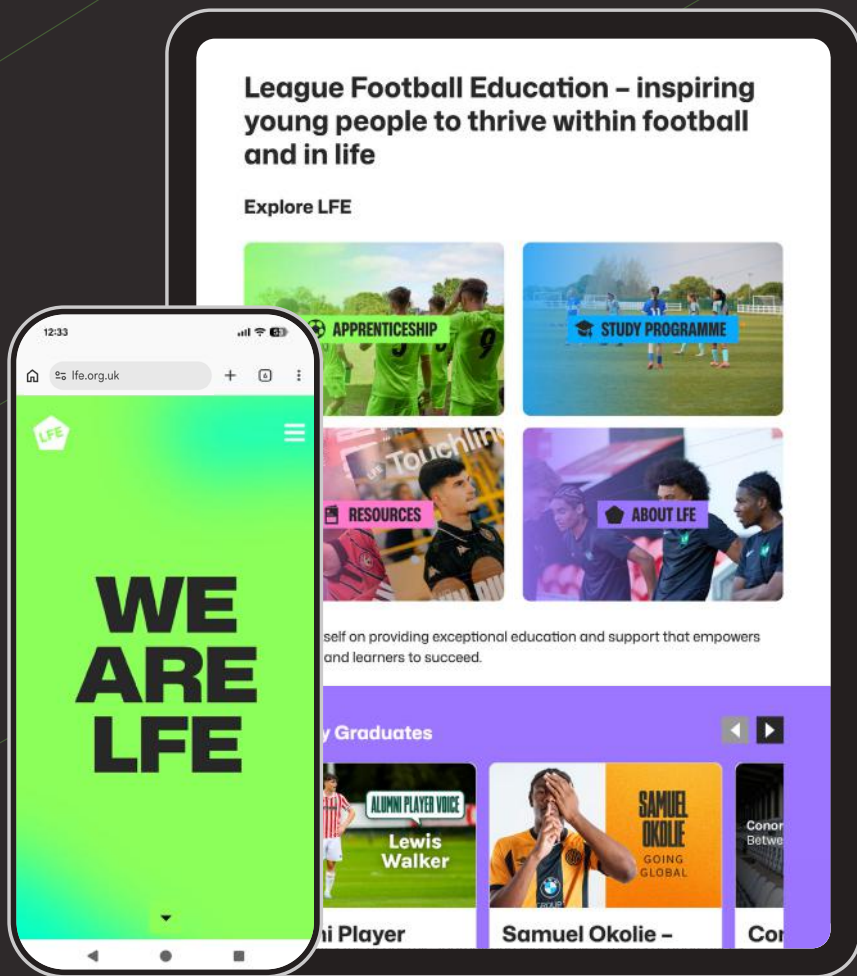
If you are an academy graduate and would like to contribute to our next session, contact PCT Support Officer, Ryan White (RWhite@lfe.org.uk) or LFE Communications (communications@lfe.org.uk).

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ACADEMY LEAGUES

ROUND UP



EFL Youth Alliance North

Shrewsbury Town clinched the EFL Youth Alliance North title following a closely contested race with **Preston North End** and **Grimsby Town** that ebbed and flowed throughout the season. Sean McAllister's young Shrews were lethal in front of goal, finding the net 85 times in 31 matches, which ultimately proved to be the key to their success.

Preston North End, in second place, pushed them all the way after a highly impressive campaign under new Lead Development Phase Coach Ryan Taylor, who joined in September.

Grimsby Town also performed strongly and posted impressive numbers along the way. The young Mariners boasted the best defensive record in the division, conceding just 35 goals across the season.

Due to the competition format, champions Shrewsbury Town faced EFL Youth Alliance South winners **AFC Wimbledon** in the National Final, where the south-west London side emerged victorious.

EFL Youth Alliance South

It was a season to remember for **AFC Wimbledon** in the EFL Youth Alliance South, as Simon Clark's side finished a remarkable 18 points clear of defending champions **Luton Town**.

The young Dons were dominant across the board, producing outstanding numbers throughout the campaign. They won 24 of their 31 matches and recorded a league-best goal difference of +56, scoring 82 goals while conceding just 26.

Second-placed Luton Town once again showcased their attacking prowess, a hallmark of their success in recent years. Spearheaded by prolific forward Dawid Gaweł, the young Hatters found the net 85 times. However, a total of 54 goals conceded ultimately exposed a defensive weakness that prevented the 2024/25 champions from retaining their title.

League winners AFC Wimbledon went on to face EFL Youth Alliance North champions **Shrewsbury Town** in the National Final, securing a 2-0 victory to complete a historic quadruple following their successes in cup competitions.



U18 Professional Development League North (PDL North)

Wigan Athletic sealed top spot in the U18 Professional Development League North with an impressive campaign that saw them finish a comfortable eight points clear of their closest title challengers, **Hull City**.

The Tigers, who finished in second place, put up a strong fight and boasted similar attacking numbers to champions Wigan. However, the young Latics' assured defensive unit ultimately saw them over the line.

Due to their regional success, Mark Maddocks' Wigan side faced U18 Professional Development League South runners-up **Millwall** in a play-off tie to determine who would progress to the national final. Wigan edged the match 1-0 in a tense encounter, booking themselves a place in the final.

They went on to face U18 Professional Development League South winners **Charlton Athletic** at The Valley in the final, where they were eventually defeated 3-0 by the south-east London side.

U18 Professional Development League South (PDL South)

Charlton Athletic enjoyed a remarkable campaign in the U18 Professional Development League South, posting the best records across the board and winning the title with ease, finishing 12 points clear of second-placed **Millwall**.

Jason Pearce's side were dominant in both boxes throughout the campaign, finding the net on 77 occasions and conceding just 29 goals in 28 matches.

Following the Addicks' league triumph, they beat U18 Professional Development League North runners-up **Hull City** 4-1 in the play-off semi-final to book a place in the national final.

Success followed in the final, as they defeated U18 Professional Development League North winners **Wigan Athletic** 3-0 at The Valley, with goals from Ellis McMillan and a brace from Raynon Richman.

ACADEMY LEAGUES

ROUND UP



U18 Premier League North

In the U18 Premier League North division, the two **Manchester** rivals led the way throughout the season and locked horns in an exciting title race, with **City** eventually coming out on top, finishing four points clear of their red counterparts.

Darren Fletcher's **United** side built their title challenge on an extremely solid defensive unit, conceding on average less than a goal per game. However, it was City's attacking prowess that United couldn't match, as Oliver Reiss' young Blues scored an incredible 96 goals in just 26 games.

The four LFE clubs in the division experienced differing seasons. Sunderland enjoyed a solid campaign, finishing sixth, while **Blackburn Rovers**, **Derby County**, and **Stoke City** ended the season in ninth, tenth, and fourteenth respectively.



U18 Premier League South

As is often the case, **Chelsea** were extremely strong in the U18 Premier League South division this season and won the title with relative ease, finishing thirteen points clear of their nearest challengers, **Tottenham Hotspur**.

The young Blues were dominant at both ends of the pitch, with the underlying numbers reflecting their strength in both boxes. Scoring 88 goals and conceding just 24 in 28 matches, they finished the season with a highly impressive +64 goal difference.

They crowned their campaign in style, defeating **Manchester City** 5-1 at Stamford Bridge to clinch the U18 Premier League National title.

As in the northern division, the four LFE clubs in the south experienced mixed campaigns. However, the strength and size of some of the clubs they compete against is worth noting. **West Bromwich Albion** enjoyed a successful year, finishing sixth. **Norwich City**, **Reading**, and **Birmingham City** finished twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth respectively.

TENDAYI



DARIKWA

In the summer of 2024, Tendayi Darikwa returned to the EFL with Lincoln City following a stint in Cyprus. In his first season at Sincil Bank, he helped the club to an 11th-place finish and was named Player of the Year.

In July 2025, the Chesterfield academy graduate was appointed captain by manager Michael Skubala for the forthcoming League One campaign. Fast forward nearly 12 months, and Darikwa has led the Imps to the Championship for the first time in 65 years after a truly remarkable, record-breaking season.

“I don’t think it’s really sunk in yet,” Darikwa told LFE. “We had a few celebrations when we first achieved promotion, but after that we obviously had to focus on winning the league, which thankfully we did. We’ve since had a squad trip to Vegas and, immediately upon returning, had the trophy parade around the city, so there’s not really been a moment yet to fully reflect. It’s just been an amazing time for the football club.”

It wasn’t too long ago that Lincoln City were in the National League, with the club spending six seasons in the fifth tier of English football between 2011 and 2017. “The rise of this football club has been incredible. I was actually part of the Burnley team that was knocked out of the FA Cup by Lincoln during their special cup run in 2017 when they were in the National League.

“To now be part of the club and experience what we have this season is a really proud moment for me. I’m so grateful to everyone within the club and the supporters, who have been amazing all season; they really deserve this.”

Going into the 2025/26 season, it’s fair to say that the prospect of Lincoln City being crowned champions was beyond the wildest dreams of even the most optimistic Imps supporters. “I think if you’d told someone at the start of the season that we’d go on a 29-game unbeaten run and win the league on 103 points, they might have called you crazy,” Darikwa admits.

“I was quite open about the fact that I wasn’t happy finishing 11th the season before, as I thought we were capable of a lot more. We had a really rough spell in which we had no wins in 15 games but still managed to finish above mid-table, so I think that shows that, with a bit of consistency that season, we could’ve achieved more.

“We obviously wanted to improve on that this season, and we believed that, with the personnel we had in the squad, we could give promotion a real go. We had a target of reaching the play-offs but, of course, we didn’t expect it to pan out the way it did and for us to become champions.”

Michael Skubala’s side started the 2025/26 campaign in electric fashion and never really looked back. However, an element of doubt from outsiders that they could sustain their all-conquering form was ever-present - a feeling that Darikwa and the rest of the squad unequivocally did not share.

“We quickly realised at the start of the season that we had built a special group with lots of quality. For myself and the rest of the players, we’ve always had that belief that we can go toe-to-toe with anybody and beat them on our day. Certainly, from the outside we’re not a huge football club or a massive name, but in that dressing room there is a togetherness that money can’t buy.”

The former Zimbabwe international said belief that something special could be happening began to grow within the group during a three-match spell over Christmas and the New Year.

“We had Cardiff, Stockport and Huddersfield during the festive period, and they were all direct rivals in the league at that time. We took seven points from a possible nine and performed really well.



"It set us up going into the new year and gave us the platform to have a really good crack at winning the league. Towards the end of the season, we literally felt unbeatable."

The Lincolnshire club have turned to a data-driven approach in recent years, proving that if you evolve with the game, find edges through data analysis, and align your coaching, recruitment, and game model with it, you give yourself a real chance of success. Despite having the seventh-lowest budget in the third tier going into the campaign, this new-found formula allowed the Imps to construct a perfectly balanced squad.

"It's an incredible squad," said Darikwa. "I think the season before, I was the oldest player in the squad up until we signed James Collins in January, and at a few moments it was a little bit difficult to manage in terms of finding that balance."

"But last summer, the club went out and recruited really well. They brought in a few more experienced heads who have a proven track record of winning titles and promotions. We've got so much talent in the squad and a really nice blend of experience and youth. Combine all of that with our togetherness and hard work, and it all shines through on matchday."

It's not the first time the full-back has captained a League One title-winning team. In 2022, Darikwa was part of the Wigan Athletic squad that won promotion to the Championship. He admits that being able to draw on his experience with the Latics helped this time around.

"I'm proud of the two achievements and to be the leader who wears the armband. Having experienced it before definitely helps, but I like to think I've always led through the way I play."

"It was important throughout the season to reiterate to the lads how important it is to take each game as it comes, focus on ourselves, and keep doing what we are doing. There might have been games where we needed a certain result to secure promotion, or games where dropping points could have cost us, but it was important not to break our habits because what we were doing was working. Now we're here as champions on 103 points."

Individually, Darikwa, by his own admission, enjoyed what was perhaps the best season of his career to date. The 34-year-old was part of a defensive unit that conceded the fewest goals in the division and chipped in with nine goal contributions going forward.



WE'RE ALL VERY PROUD TO PLAY FOR LINCOLN AND REPRESENT THIS CITY. IT'S A VERY MULTICULTURAL AREA WITH A LOT OF DIFFERENT RACES AND BACKGROUNDS, AND WE CAN ACT AS A HEARTBEAT FOR ALL COMMUNITIES IN THE CITY



“I’ve been around a long time, but from a personal perspective, it’s definitely up there. I’ve managed to get a few goals and assists and got myself into the EFL League One Team of the Season, which is the first time I’ve achieved that. It’s only really made possible by the people I have around me, though - my teammates, coaching staff and everyone connected to the club.”

It’s not just his on-field exploits that were recognised in the 2025/26 campaign. At the club’s end-of-season awards evening, Darikwa was named the club’s Community Player of the Year for his work with the Lincoln City Foundation.

“That was nice, but it’s not just me. All of the lads and staff at the football club have played their part. We’re all very proud to play for Lincoln and represent this city. It’s a very multicultural area with a lot of different races and backgrounds, and we can act as a heartbeat for all communities in the city. There is so much negativity and so many bad things going on in the world right now, and sometimes people - especially the younger generation - need someone to look up to. In Lincoln, we might be that someone.

“We have a duty of care to help and inspire people. We get involved with all kinds of initiatives, such as going into schools and hospitals, but a project I’ve been working closely on this season is helping children in care and from disadvantaged backgrounds - creating opportunities and positive experiences for them through the power of football. It’s something I’m really proud of, and I’m looking forward to seeing how far we can take the project.”

Looking ahead to next season - the Imps’ first taste of Championship football in over half a century - the club captain is under no illusions about the test that awaits.

“Look, it’s going to be a tough challenge,” he confesses. “We’re not naive enough to think we’re just going to go into the Championship and continue winning games at the rate we have been. There are a lot of big clubs in the division, but we’re not going up to that level just to be spectators and have a few days out - we want to be competitive and win football matches.

“We’ll have a break now, reset, and come back for pre-season ready to work harder than ever and give it our best shot. We want to keep this momentum going.”

DEBUTANTS

A selection of talented young apprentices and first-year professionals who have made their league and cup debuts in recent months.



Micah Olabiyi & Cameron Stones

WYCOMBE WANDERERS

After making their professional debuts for the Chairboys earlier in the campaign, first-year apprentices Micah Olabiyi and Cameron Stones were recently handed their first opportunities to impress in League One.

Manager Michael Duff gave Stones the final few minutes of a 2-0 win at Peterborough United in January, while Olabiyi made his League One debut on the final day of the season at home to Rotherham United. Introduced in the 78th minute, Olabiyi went on to score the winner in the 91st, capping off a fairytale League One bow.



Leon Scarlett

QPR

Winger Leon Scarlett made his senior debut for the R's on the final day of the Championship campaign, coming on for the final five minutes of their defeat at Ipswich Town.



Eddie Lake

PORT VALE

Young striker Eddie Lake entered the fray for the Valiants on the final day of the season, featuring for the final seven minutes plus stoppage time in a defeat to champions Lincoln City.

Cruz Allen & Owen Eames

DERBY COUNTY

Two first-year professionals have made their senior debuts for the Rams in recent months.

Midfielder Owen Eames was handed his first taste of senior football in an FA Cup clash with Leeds United in January, playing the final 17 minutes plus stoppage time. Cruz Allen, also a midfielder, earned his first minutes in a Championship match at Watford in February. Both players went on to feature on further occasions for John Eustace's side following their debuts.



Cruz Ibeh

MIDDLESBROUGH

Having made his first-team debut at Fulham in an FA Cup tie in January, first-year apprentice Cruz Ibeh was rewarded with his Championship debut in April, replacing Tommy Conway in the closing stages of Boro's clash with Portsmouth at the Riverside.



Robert Tankiewicz

CARDIFF CITY

Following on from his professional debut in the Vertu Trophy, 16-year-old midfielder Robert Tankiewicz made his first league appearance for the Bluebirds in April, coming on for the final few minutes of Cardiff's 5-1 victory over Northampton Town.



Seb Campbell

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE

Seb Campbell became Argyle's youngest-ever goalscorer when he netted on his professional debut against Tottenham Hotspur U21s in a 6-2 Vertu Trophy victory in September. The history maker has since gone on to make his League One debut for the club, seeing out the closing stages of a 3-0 win at Wigan Athletic in March.

Patryk Sykut

PETERBOROUGH UNITED

Midfielder Patryk Sykut made his senior bow for the Posh in a 2-0 victory away at Wycombe Wanderers in January, replacing Brandon Khela in the 82nd minute. The Ukrainian has since gone on to make a further six League One appearances.



Lenny Brown

STEVENAGE

After making his professional debut in the Vertu Trophy in October, second-year Stevenage apprentice Lenny Brown made his league debut away at Plymouth Argyle in March, coming on in the final minute of a 1-0 defeat at Home Park.



Tobias Ritchie

BOLTON WANDERERS

Midfielder Tobias Ritchie scored on his Bolton Wanderers debut in November, netting during a 6-2 Vertu Trophy win away at Oldham Athletic. In April, he was handed his first League One minutes, coming on for the final seven minutes plus stoppage time of the Trotters' 2-0 defeat at Cardiff City.

Harrison Duncan

ROTHERHAM UNITED

Towering centre-back Harrison Duncan made his first appearance in Rotherham United colours in an FA Cup clash against Swindon Town in November. He followed this up with a 30 minute outing off the bench at Leyton Orient in April, helping the Millers see out a 2-0 victory.



Will Etheridge

WALSALL

Young Saddlers midfielder Will Etheridge was rewarded with his first senior minutes on the final day of the League Two campaign, featuring in the closing stages of a defeat to champions Bromley.

Kian Osborne, Jack Burke, Marcel Guzynski, Simone Troso, Dylan Fry & Ben Nash

MK DONS

A whole host of apprentices made their senior debuts for MK Dons in the 2025/26 season, amplifying the club's growing commitment to developing their youth set up.

Debuts stated below:

Kian Osborne vs Reading (Vertu Trophy)

Jack Burke vs Swindon Town (Vertu Trophy)

Marcel Guzynski vs West Ham United U21s (Vertu Trophy)

Simone Troso vs West Ham United U21s (Vertu Trophy)

Dylan Fry vs Reading (Vertu Trophy)

Ben Nash vs Reading (Vertu Trophy)



Will Gray

SHREWSBURY TOWN

After making a couple of appearances in the Vertu Trophy earlier this season, Will Gray was handed his league opportunity with a two minute cameo away at Bristol Rovers in March. Since then, the Shrews' first year apprentice has featured in a further five League Two matches, starting four of them.



Sullivan Booth

GILLINGHAM

In relatively rare circumstances, first-year apprentice Sullivan Booth made his professional debut with a starting appearance in a league fixture away at Barnet. Despite the 6-2 defeat, Booth contributed both a goal and an assist in an impressive first outing in Gills colours.



DRU SPINKS

What is your role within LFE?

DS: I'm a Personal Development Mentor, working closely with players and learners at clubs to support their growth both on and off the pitch. Alongside this, I also work within the Player Care Team at LFE, helping to shape and develop the broader PD mentoring programme.

How long have you been with LFE?

DS: I've been delivering on the ground with LFE since the 2013/14 season, so I've had the opportunity to support players and programmes over a number of years within the football industry.

Could you describe your daily responsibilities?

DS: It's a varied role, which is something I really value. Much of my time is spent working with the mentor team to deliver the PD Mentoring programme and ensure we're making a meaningful impact on the ground.

Beyond delivery, I support the wider mentor workforce by sharing best practices, ideas, and resources, while also contributing to the day-to-day running of the programme. Building strong relationships with club staff, mentors, and colleagues across LFE is a key part of the role.

I'm also involved in the quality assurance of LFE's mentoring programme to help maintain high standards, as well as developing resources and CPD opportunities to support mentors in their work.

What do you enjoy most about your role?

DS: For me, it's the people and the shared purpose. Coming from a team-based sporting background, I really value being part of a team that's all pulling in the same direction - both within our Player Care department and across the wider LFE organisation.





Supporting players and learners to realise their potential is incredibly rewarding, particularly seeing how personal development can influence performance both on and off the pitch. It's also rewarding to be part of a programme that creates space for strong, trusting relationships to form.

The variety of environments and challenges keeps the role engaging - different clubs, different players, different personnel, and different challenges.

But the most powerful moments are when you see a genuine shift in someone's mindset - when they begin to believe in what they're capable of. Being part of that process is what makes the role so fulfilling.

What did you do prior to working at LFE?

DS: Before joining LFE, I competed and played basketball at a professional and international level. I have also worked as an Athlete Mentor with the Dame Kelly Holmes Trust, alongside coaching roles and experience in both community and high-performance environments, working with professional athletes and teams within the Men's National League.

How do you like to spend your time outside of work?

DS: Spending quality time with my family is really important to me.

Outside of work, you'll usually find me in a coffee shop somewhere, taking a bit of time to switch off.



I like to stay active and enjoy working out at the gym, as well as taking part in Parkrun when I can.

I also really enjoy helping others, which sees me continue to support and work with coaches at different levels. I would say I'm a very curious person who enjoys the continuous cycle of learning more about coaching, leadership, and high-performance environments.

What football team do you support?

DS: Growing up in North London (Finchley), I spent a lot of time watching Spurs when I was younger, so they've always been a team I follow.

Living in the Luton area now, I also keep a close eye on their results. For both clubs, it's been a bit of a tough period and a challenging watch recently!

Favourite holiday destination?

DS: One of my favourite places to visit is Boston and the wider New England area in the USA, which I've travelled to a number of times while my daughter was studying and playing basketball there. I would definitely love to go back and explore further.

Closer to home, a family favourite is Watchet in Somerset - a small harbour town we've been visiting for over 10 years. It's a place full of great memories, whether that's days at the beach, music festivals, or exploring the local area.

THE LONG WAY ROUND

WITH MAT HUDSON

Oldham Athletic's Mat Hudson has enjoyed a season to remember. At the start of the 2025/26 campaign, the Southport-born shot-stopper had just a single EFL appearance to his name - a brief outing as a substitute for Preston North End at Elland Road in 2015. The journey since has been anything but straightforward.



Now firmly back in the spotlight, Hudson sat down with LFE after being named in the EFL League Two Team of the Season to reflect on a remarkable and hard-fought return to prominence.

“I was with Preston from the age of 13 until I was 22, and it was a really great experience,” Hudson told LFE. “I was exposed to some brilliant opportunities coming through the system there and managed to make my debut at 17 too. I came on for Jordan Pickford in that game at Leeds, who’s now England’s number one, so I’ve learnt from some amazing goalkeepers.”

Hudson’s debut would prove to be his one and only appearance for the Lilywhites. He went on to remain with the Lancashire club until 2022 as a backup goalkeeper but found opportunities few and far between.

“I think when you’re a young keeper at a big club in the Championship, you’re not expecting to be playing. You need to go and get some experience on loan and earn your stripes, and I believe that if I’d done that properly at an earlier stage, I’d have been in a better position to push for more games.

“I travelled a lot with the squad, stayed in the hotels and took part in a lot of the matchday routines, which was a really good experience. But it comes to a point where you start thinking, ‘Right, I really need to go and play some football matches now.’”

Hudson left Deepdale upon the expiration of his contract, with both player and club believing it was time for a fresh start.

“A new manager came in and said it would be best for me to go out and try to forge a career elsewhere. It became quite clear that I was never going to play at Preston, so it made sense for me to move on.

“I went on trial with a few EFL teams, including Salford and Rochdale, but for whatever reason I couldn’t earn a contract. I think I assumed that, because I’d been at a Championship club, I’d walk into a full-time club elsewhere relatively easily. It was a bit of a shock to the system when that turned out not to be the case.

“Looking back, I’d had very little experience and only a handful of games under my belt, so it was perhaps a bit naive of me to think that.”

The Preston North End academy graduate eventually signed for National League North outfit Buxton.





THE JOURNEY BACK WASN'T EASY, AND I HAD TO WORK MY WAY UP AGAIN, BUT THAT'S FOOTBALL, ISN'T IT?



However, with the Derbyshire-based non-league side operating on a part-time basis, Hudson began to feel the pressure of no longer having a regular, reliable income.

"I was getting paid, but it wasn't enough to cover my mortgage, bills and support my family. It was panic stations," he admits. "I'd been earning an income from Preston for years, so as soon as that stopped, I had to think quickly about what I was going to do. I was applying for all sorts of jobs and was very open-minded. I just needed to bring some money in.

"I eventually got in touch with my old primary school headteacher, who was still at the same school, and asked if there were any jobs available. I got an interview and thankfully secured a role as a teaching assistant. I was working in a Year 6 class, primarily on a one-to-one basis with an autistic pupil, supporting him day to day. I would also step in as a supply teacher at times when other staff were absent.

"It really opened my eyes to the outside world, so to speak, and it was an incredibly fulfilling experience."

Reflecting on that period of his life, Hudson says he would encourage young players coming through the system to invest time in pursuits beyond football, helping them prepare for transitions or periods of uncertainty like the one he experienced.

"It's definitely something I should have thought about. You see a lot of players who get released and remain stuck in that football bubble for a long time. Of course, you should always give it your best shot at earning a contract elsewhere, but unfortunately, more often than not, it doesn't work out.

"I think it's so important to be open-minded while you are still playing, so that you're prepared for that next step, whenever it may come. Whether it's studying for a degree or starting a small business on the side, just have something there that you can fall back on."

After four months of balancing his role as a teaching assistant, coaching, and his non-league football commitments, an opportunity arose that Hudson could not turn down.

"I got a call from Steve Thompson, who was the assistant manager at Preston when I was there. He'd moved to Oldham Athletic as Head of Recruitment and told me there was a chance for me to go in as a number two goalkeeper.

"He obviously knew all about me and my character, and I think that's what made him consider me, along with my ability as a goalkeeper, of course.

"Oldham were in the National League at the time, which meant they were full-time, and I would have to leave my role at the school.

"Thankfully, the school were brilliant with me and told me that if an opportunity came along to return to full-time football, they would be very happy for me to go and pursue it.

"Like I said, working at the school was amazing, but it also made me realise how much I missed the day-to-day routine of full-time football."

Hudson joined the Latics midway through the 2022/23 campaign and, by the following season, had cemented himself as the club's number one.

"I just went in there, got my head down and worked really hard to try to earn the opportunity to impress. When it came, thankfully I managed to take it."

In his third season at the club, Oldham ended their three-year hiatus from the Football League, beating Southend United 3-2 in the play-off final at Wembley Stadium, with Hudson between the sticks.

"I think that day put it all into perspective for me. A couple of years prior, I was working in a school, out of full-time football and just about earning enough to cover my bills. I was down and out, really.

"To lift that trophy at Wembley and secure a return to the EFL was an amazing feeling - not just for the club and our supporters, but also on a personal level after everything I'd gone through to get there."

After the euphoria of promotion at the home of English football, Hudson's hard work was rewarded further when he signed a new three-year deal at Boundary Park.

"It was a really nice feeling to sign that and know I've got that security for my family. I've got a young family - a little boy who is 10 months old - so to

know you've got a solid income for three years, whether you're playing, out of the team or injured, is reassuring."

Oldham ended last season in 10th place in League Two - a more than respectable finish on their return to the EFL. Hudson believes the momentum gained from promotion out of the fifth tier was key to their success.

"We were full of confidence going into the new season. Getting promoted can do so much for a club and its fanbase, and there was such a massive feel-good factor around the place.

"We really had no expectations. We just said, 'Let's roll with it, have no fear and see how far it takes us.'"

It was a successful season collectively for Micky Mellor's side, with Hudson a cornerstone of their achievements. The 27-year-old kept the joint-highest number of clean sheets in the league (19), alongside Cambridge United's Jake Eastwood, and was subsequently named in the EFL League Two Team of the Season.

"That was a really proud moment," Hudson said. "Winning at Wembley the season before was a great feeling, but this felt extra special.

"It was great to look back at how far I'd come from dropping out of full-time football after leaving Preston - a club I'd been at for so long. The journey back wasn't easy, and I had to work my way up again, but that's football, isn't it?

"Being recognised on that stage has given me so much belief and has left me hungry to come back next year and be even better."



THE 11



League Football Education has recognised eleven apprentice footballers for their outstanding efforts on and off the pitch in the latest edition of 'The 11.'

The accolade acknowledges performance on the pitch and in the classroom, as well as assessing other factors, including involvement in community or charity-based initiatives. 'The 11' for June 2026 is as follows:

2

Billy Clarke
Swansea City

Second-year Swans apprentice Billy Clarke has demonstrated outstanding dedication, achieving Distinction* grades in his Extended BTEC in Sport, Fitness, and Personal Training. He has balanced academic and football commitments with discipline and resilience, while also earning his UEFA C Licence and beginning a Level 4 Financial Advisory course.

On the pitch, Billy has been consistent and influential, showing strong technical and tactical ability alongside excellent work ethic and maturity. Off the pitch, he has contributed to school coaching, developing leadership and communication skills while inspiring young participants, reflecting a proactive approach to his personal and professional development.

1

Kahlil Steele
Norwich City

Canaries first-year apprentice Kahlil Steele has shown outstanding dedication, maturity, and enthusiasm throughout the programme. He achieved distinctions in Professional Sports Performance and Careers in his BTEC Extended Diploma, demonstrating strong work ethic and commitment. His positive attitude has supported both his own development and that of his peers, with additional praise from his maths tutor.

On the pitch, Kahlil contributed consistently to the Under 21s, performing effectively in all roles. Off the pitch, he played a key role in community initiatives, supporting over 160 young people, while acting as a professional and confident role model in school settings.

3

Alfie Drayton
Leyton Orient

O's first-year apprentice Alfie Drayton has shown excellent attitude and intensity, developing into a leader within the group. He started 21 of 24 competitive fixtures, consistently performing at a high level, and was the only U17 to start in the FA Youth Cup while featuring throughout the EFL Youth Alliance League Cup run to the semi-finals. Tactically strong, he reads the game well and uses the ball effectively.

Academically, Alfie is focused and engaged, achieving Distinction grades in all assessments. He fully embraces the apprenticeship, contributing to community initiatives and life skills sessions, demonstrating maturity, reliability, and a strong commitment to development.

THE 11 is continued on the next page

4**Dawid Gawel**
Luton Town

Former Everton Academy striker Dawid Gawel enjoyed an outstanding first season with the Hatters, scoring 50 goals across the Under-18 and Under-21 sides while adapting quickly to a new environment. He has also excelled academically and is on track to achieve strong grades in BTEC Sport and A Level Biology.

A dedicated apprentice, Dawid has earned recognition from first-team manager Jack Wilshere, training with the senior squad. Coaches praise his maturity, work ethic, and passion for scoring. His tutor highlights his strong organisation, focus, and positive attitude, describing him as a credit to the club.

5**Bolu Shofowoke**
Peterborough United

First-year Posh forward Bolu Shofowoke enjoyed an outstanding season, breaking into Peterborough United's first team and starting the final six games on the right-hand side of attack. He has also performed strongly in his BTEC Extended Diploma and SEP while adapting to living away from home.

Head of Player Care Lewis Elsom praised Bolu's all-round development, highlighting his maturity and professionalism, particularly in media and social media training. His confidence, commitment, and continuous improvement have been evident throughout the season, demonstrating excellent progress both on and off the pitch.

6**Harry Bushell**
Peterborough United

Full-back Harry Bushell has impressed staff at Peterborough United Academy and Nene Park Academy with his attitude and commitment to learning. The first-year apprentice has shown steady progression, earning U21 starts despite injury challenges, while excelling in his BTEC Extended Diploma. He leads by example among his peers.

Coaches praise his strong mentality, willingness to learn, and ability to apply feedback to his performances, alongside his physical commitment. Academically, he demonstrates focus, professionalism, and dedication. Harry's continued development both on and off the pitch highlights his potential and reflects his outstanding approach to the apprenticeship programme.

7**Connor Thorley**
Wrexham

Connor Thorley has had a positive first year with Wrexham, overcoming injury setbacks to contribute to the club's historic FA Youth Cup run to the fifth round. He also earned international recognition, representing Wales at U17 level in UEFA qualifiers.

A committed and technical left-back, Connor is a strong communicator and team player who leads by example. Despite injuries, he remained engaged and supportive, maintaining a positive attitude throughout. Off the pitch, he contributes through community work, his role as Player Voice representative, and active involvement in life skills sessions, reflecting his maturity and commitment to development.

8**Seb Mason**
Carlisle United

Second-year apprentice Seb Mason gained valuable experience on loan at Queen of the South, developing his understanding of senior football, performance demands, and the importance of discipline and independence away from home.

He maintained high standards throughout, successfully completing his SEP with a distinction and exceeding his BTEC target grades, showing strong communication and commitment to his education. Seb managed his workload effectively during this period, demonstrating maturity and drive.

His progress has been rewarded with his first professional contract, reflecting his hard work, professionalism, and dedication both on and off the pitch.

9**Josh Brian**
AFC Wimbledon

First-year apprentice Josh Brian shows an excellent attitude across all areas of the AFC Wimbledon Academy. He is consistently punctual, well prepared, and produces high-quality work, demonstrating strong engagement that positively influences his peers. He communicates effectively with staff and supports classmates, showing reliability and teamwork throughout.

Josh has also handled a recent ankle injury with great maturity. Despite missing important finals, he has remained positive and supportive of his teammates. His resilience, professionalism, and commitment during a challenging period highlight his strong character and make him a valued member of the programme.

10**Oscar Jorgensen**
Coventry City

Oscar Jorgensen has enjoyed a strong first year as an apprentice, performing well both academically and on the pitch. He progressed from the Diploma to the Extended Diploma, exceeding his target grades with consistent merits and distinctions.

Having been with the Academy since Under 9, Oscar has shown commitment and resilience throughout his development. This has continued during his scholarship, where he has demonstrated maturity, respect, and a strong desire to improve. He has featured regularly for the Under 18s and gained valuable experience with the Under 21s, consistently embracing challenges and maintaining high standards for himself and his teammates.

11**Tobias Ritchie**
Bolton Wanderers

Toby Ritchie has been an exceptional performer both on and off the pitch, earning first-team appearances and demonstrating strong technical ability, composure, and professionalism. His progress was recognised with his first professional contract in January.

Academically, Toby achieved outstanding results, securing an overall DDD* in his BTEC and a Distinction in his SEP. His strong work ethic and ability to apply his knowledge effectively underpin his success. Intelligent and adaptable, he shows a deep understanding of football and his development. Reliable, motivated, and driven, Toby represents Bolton superbly and has a very bright future ahead.

A man in athletic gear is running on a wooden pier. He is wearing a dark jacket, light blue shorts, white socks, and dark sneakers. The background features a large body of water and a forested mountain range under a clear blue sky. The scene is captured in profile, showing the runner's motion.

Rewriting the Dream

Jaz Goundry

Football wasn't at the forefront of Jaz Goundry's mind growing up. As a teenager, he tried his hand at many different sports, with football being just another hobby.

"I liked kicking a ball around, but I never really took it seriously," Goundry told LFE. "I did some boxing and played a bit of rugby too, but it got to the point where I didn't really have time for all of them, so I chose to focus on football from about 13 or 14 onwards."

Goundry's first experience of a professional environment came when he was invited on trial at Chesterfield - and with it came his first taste of disappointment.

"I was given a six-week trial there and, at the end of it, they pretty much told me that I wasn't what they were looking for. They also said I was overweight at the time, and that stuck with me. It gave me a bit of a chip on my shoulder and the motivation to go and prove them wrong."

The young defender eventually went on to join Sheffield United's Community Foundation college programme. It was this decision that led to his first big break in the game.

"I was only a few weeks into the programme when another defender and I were asked to play in a pre-season game at Preston for the academy team. I held my own, they saw something they liked, and I ended up being invited back for a trial."

Off the back of his trial, Grimsby Town showed interest, and he went on to sign a scholarship with the Lincolnshire club.

"I went into my first year just playing catch-up, really. I found it a struggle to get up to speed, but as the year went on, I got fitter and fitter and began to settle."

Discussing his first year at the Mariners in greater detail, Goundry admits that joining the academy system at a later age than most made his transition from grassroots football even tougher.

"It was difficult, and I think the club could see that. But I also think they signed me for my potential rather than for the player I was at the time. I was a left-footed centre-back, which is a bit of a rarity, and I think they liked the idea of the player I could grow into."

"The youth team manager at the time was big on running and making sure everyone was really fit. I remember doing all these running drills in pre-season, feeling absolutely knackered, and then going straight into technical drills where I could barely move my legs. That definitely made me realise the level the rest of the lads were operating at, and that I needed to really graft if I wanted to reach it."





“I can honestly say I got the runaround a few times when I first went in! I did a lot of work on my own away from the club to get myself fit and find the sharpness I needed to compete in academy football.”

And compete he did. After a challenging period of adaptation in his first year, Goundry kicked on in his second season and earned himself a professional contract at the end of it.

“It felt big,” he admits. “To be honest, there was probably an element of doubt from outsiders and maybe even some people within the club that I’d get a pro. I had my own doubts too, as I picked up quite a bad injury a few weeks before we got our decisions.

“The relief I felt when I walked into the office and the first-team manager offered me a deal was incredible. I think I earned it, though. I put so much into my second year as an apprentice.”

After returning from injury, Goundry enjoyed a positive pre-season with the first-team squad. However, the young, hungry defender was realistic about his chances of getting minutes in the upcoming season and pushed for a loan move.

“I knew I wasn’t really going to play for the first team when the season started, despite having a good pre-season. They had just been relegated to the National League, and their sole focus was to go straight back up.

“After a couple of short loans at Frickley and Bridlington, Matlock came in for me. They were in a higher league, and Grimsby were keen for me to go and test myself further. Matlock was my first real taste of proper non-league football. I had some good moments there, but it didn’t really work out for me in the long run. Because of the division they were in, the away games were really far, and it involved a lot of travelling. I eventually finished the season with Grimsby Borough and really enjoyed my time there.”

Goundry went into the second and final year of his deal at Grimsby eager to impress once again, but a head injury sustained during pre-season kept him out for a prolonged period.

“It kept me out for a few months. After that, I knew I was coming to the end of my time at Grimsby. To be honest, I was fine with that - I think I was ready for a change.

“At the end of that season, when the manager eventually informed me that I wasn’t getting a new contract, it felt like a huge sense of relief surged through my body. I was ready to go and chase my dream elsewhere.”

In the aftermath of his departure from the League Two club, and while continuing to ply his trade in non-league, Goundry launched his own football coaching business - a decision that would eventually leave him with a difficult choice to make.

“The business grew pretty rapidly within that first year after leaving Grimsby, and it quickly started to feel difficult to balance it with my own football. All the travelling to games and training sessions became very time-consuming.

“I wanted to give my all to the business, and I think it’s super important to do that, especially right at the very beginning. Sometimes other things have to take a back seat, and as time went on, I began to feel that I might have to choose between the two sooner rather than later.”

It was in the following season, after joining Stocksbridge Park Steels, that Goundry made the decision to put all of his eggs in one basket.

“It was a club and a manager that I really wanted to play for. They were Step Three as well, which was a bonus.

“However, after a few games, I realised that with my business commitments, it just wasn’t going to work long term. I gave the manager a call one weekend and told him that I’d play for as long as he needed me, as I know it’s not ideal for him if I were to leave midway through the season, but I wanted to call it a day.

“It wasn’t fair on him or the rest of the lads for me to be there and not fully invested. I made the decision to retire and go all in on the business - it just felt like the right decision.”

The Grimsby Town Academy graduate’s business, ‘Player Performance UK’, has grown exponentially over the past 12 to 18 months, even picking up an award for ‘Best Start-up Business 2025’ at a local Mansfield awards ceremony.

“We currently coach over 250 kids in the local area, and that number is continuing to grow. I’m really pleased with how well everything has gone so far.”

The 22-year-old now owns his own indoor football facility in the Mansfield area, where he hosts all of his coaching sessions for children of all ages.

“There are hundreds of kids in Mansfield who dream of one day becoming a professional footballer, and my job is to help them improve - but more importantly, to help them enjoy it, because that’s the main thing.”

Having been out of the professional game and fully invested in his business for a couple of years now, Goundry is adamant that seeing the kids he coaches flourish goes some way towards replicating the buzz he used to get as a player.

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I WANTED TO GIVE MY ALL TO THE (FOOTBALL COACHING) BUSINESS, AND I THINK IT’S SUPER IMPORTANT TO DO THAT, ESPECIALLY RIGHT AT THE VERY BEGINNING.



“That feeling I used to get from making a tackle or scoring a goal - this definitely gives me that feeling to a certain degree. It’s so rewarding seeing a kid progress, maybe go on to sign for an academy, or getting a message from their parents at the weekend saying they’ve scored in their local grassroots match. It’s amazing.

“Of course, I miss playing sometimes - that’s natural - but this is one hundred percent the next best thing for me. This doesn’t feel like work; it’s a passion that I get to enjoy every day. I can honestly say that, day to day, I’m probably the happiest I’ve ever been in my life.”

Alongside his coaching endeavours, Goundry is passionate about fitness and is currently training for his first IRONMAN - one of the most demanding endurance challenges in the world.

“I first discovered a passion for running while I was still playing football. I’d often go for runs on Sundays, but I soon came to the realisation that it’s pretty counterproductive to go on a long run the day after a game!

“As soon as I stopped playing football, I wanted to find something to keep me focused and locked in, so I decided to throw myself into IRONMAN training and sign up for one. I’m now working towards my first event in Barcelona this October.

“For anyone who doesn’t know what it is, it’s a triathlon consisting of a 2.4-mile swim, a 112-mile bike ride, followed by a full marathon.

“I’m currently training six days a week.

The former Grimsby man has also taken a keen interest in social media, hoping to inspire other young athletes by documenting his story and transition out of the professional game.

“I think it’s important to tell my story and show other young footballers that there is a life away from football.

“People see the end goal of becoming a professional footballer and think nothing else could come close to it. And of course, being in that world is great, and a lot of luxuries come with it - especially if you’re lucky enough to reach a high level - but believe me, there are other things in life that are just as fulfilling.

“I made the decision myself to leave the game I love at just 22, and I’ve found that there’s so much more to life. I think a lot of people can learn from that. I’m not doing this to become famous on social media or to gain interactions - I’m doing it because I want to help others who are in the position I was once in.”

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GOAL OF THE MONTH

LFE's Goal of the Month competition recognises the best strikes from across the academy leagues. From individual moments of brilliance to excellent team goals, the season so far has been filled with memorable strikes.

Here are the winners since the turn of the year...



LUCAS SWANN
JANUARY WINNER

SCAN HERE
TO WATCH



OLLIE WILLIAMS
FEBRUARY WINNER

SCAN HERE
TO WATCH



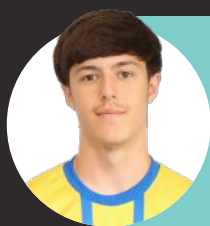
ASHLEY TRUJILLO
MARCH WINNER

SCAN HERE
TO WATCH



BOBBY HASSELL
APRIL WINNER

SCAN HERE
TO WATCH



JOSHUA WALTERS
2025-2026 SEASON WINNER

SCAN HERE
TO WATCH







STRONG LFE PRESENCE IN ENGLAND'S WORLD CUP SQUAD

Nine LFE academy graduates have been called up by England manager Thomas Tuchel for the 2026 FIFA World Cup, which is currently taking place in the US, Canada, and Mexico.

LFE Academy graduates involved:

Jude Bellingham – Real Madrid
(Birmingham City Academy graduate)

Ollie Watkins – Aston Villa
(Exeter City Academy graduate)

Jordan Henderson – Brentford
(Sunderland Academy graduate)

John Stones – Manchester City
(Barnsley Academy graduate)

Ivan Toney – Al-Ahli
(Northampton Town Academy graduate)

Ezri Konsa – Aston Villa
(Charlton Athletic Academy graduate)

Eberechi Eze – Arsenal
(Millwall Academy graduate)

Djed Spence – Tottenham Hotspur
(Fulham Academy graduate)

Dan Burn – Newcastle United
(Darlington Academy graduate)

We wish them all the very best of luck!

Apprentices and Graduates Honoured at EFL Awards

Three current apprentices who excelled both on and off the pitch last season were recognised at the star-studded EFL Awards in London back in April.



LFE APPRENTICE OF THE SEASON AWARD



LOUIS PAGE



EFL Championship

Leicester City's Louis Page was named EFL Championship Apprentice of the Season. The 17-year-old made over 15 league appearances for the Foxes in a breakout season for the local lad, while also maintaining high standards off the pitch in his education.



SULYMAN KRUBALLY



EFL League One

Sulyman Krubally of Burton Albion took home the EFL League One Apprentice of the Season award after enjoying a terrific campaign on a personal level.

The midfielder became the youngest-ever appearance maker for the Brewers back in August when he made his debut at just 16 years and 355 days old. He has since turned out a further 27 times in all competitions, including a standout performance against West Ham in the FA Cup.



OLLIE DEWSBURY



EFL League Two

Bristol Rovers' Ollie Dewsbury was crowned EFL League Two Apprentice of the Season.

The Gas forward made 15 senior appearances for the South West outfit this season before joining National League South side Weston Super-Mare on loan in January.

Scan here to hear from the winners themselves



Elsewhere, four LFE academy graduates picked up other awards on the night, with several more being named in the EFL Teams of the Season.



HAYDEN HACKNEY



Middlesbrough's Hayden Hackney was named **EFL Championship Player of the Season**. The all-action midfielder spearheaded Boro's promotion push last season, establishing himself as the main man for the North East side and contributing 13 goal involvements from midfield.



JORDAN JAMES



In the same division, Leicester City's Jordan James picked up the **EFL Championship Young Player of the Season** award.

The Birmingham City academy graduate, who was on loan at Leicester from French side Stade Rennais, enjoyed an impressive campaign on a personal level despite the Foxes' collective struggles.



DANIEL KANU



Walsall's Daniel Kanu enjoyed a fantastic season in front of goal for the Saddlers and, as a result, was presented with the **EFL League Two Young Player of the Season** award.

The young forward, on loan from Charlton Athletic, found the back of the net on 15 occasions in League Two – a fantastic return for a 21-year-old.



WILL VAULKS



Finally, Oxford United's Will Vaulks was recognised as the **EFL Player in the Community** for the fourth time in his career.

The Tranmere Rovers academy graduate has continued to carry out exceptional work around suicide prevention, having tragically lost both of his grandfathers to suicide during his teenage years.

Coping with Illness and Injury

Ways to help yourself

COPING STRATEGIES



Confidence building

Your thoughts can influence your feelings and behaviours during recovery from illness and injury. Stay positive and focused on what YOU can do to support your own progress.



Your rehab environment

Know what environment best supports your rehab. You might want to remain involved by watching training and matches.



Use your support network!

Your family, friends, coach and physio are just a few people around who can support you.



Remain positive and pro-active!

Your thoughts can influence your feelings and behaviours during recovery from illness and injury. Stay positive and focused on what YOU can do to support your own progress.



Research how you can help yourself

If you're a problem-focused copier, you might want to read into your injury and how others have coped.



Motivation

To have the best chance of recovering fully, you need a strong purpose to do so. Identify what motivates you to recover.

TRANSITION

Careers

LFE learners can take advantage of employment opportunities thanks to LFE's partnerships with a variety of different organisations.

Scan the QR code to browse our range of exciting pathways.



LFE Transition Officer

Academy players can seek information, advice and guidance regarding alternative options at any time from LFE's Transition Officer, Anthony Cato.

Contact him at acato@lfe.org.uk



Higher Education

All LFE apprentices can pursue a route to university in the UK or abroad if they achieve the required academic qualifications.

Scan the QR code to view our informative guides to Higher Education or USA Scholarships.



PORT VALE APPRENTICES EMBRACE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH CREP PROTECT PARTNERSHIP



Port Vale Academy recently welcomed Crep Protect to their Vale Park home for a sustainability workshop with the club's first-year apprentices, continuing the ongoing partnership between the Staffordshire club and the industry-leading trainer care brand.

In a sporting world where boots and trainers are often treated as disposable, the workshop encouraged the apprentices to adopt a more sustainable mindset. During the session, the under-18s learned practical cleaning and restoration techniques using the full Crep Protect product range. Research shows that proper shoe care can significantly extend the life of footwear, with stain protection treatments increasing a shoe's lifespan by an average of 25% compared to untreated shoes.

In today's market, where trainers and football boots have become a major expense for young people and their families, most elite-level football boots alone cost, on average, between £220 and £280, while lasting only five to ten months with regular use. The techniques and skills acquired in the workshop will go a long way in saving Port Vale's youth team players valuable money.

The project teaches more than just shoe cleaning; it encourages:

- Pride and responsibility in caring for personal belongings
- Environmental awareness in a "throwaway" society
- Money-saving habits to support life as a young footballer
- Practical entrepreneurial skills through restoration and resale

After the workshop, Crep Protect's Jack Jobling, who delivered the session, said: "It's a key life skill around sustainability. It's a really important skill set to have, and it means they won't need to keep going out and buying new boots and trainers every six months."

The club's partnership with Crep Protect has also raised money for the Douglas Macmillan Hospice, which provides hospice services for local people with life-limiting conditions in the Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire area.



The hospice and Crep Protect have been donating a regular supply of pre-loved footwear to the young Valiants, who in return have been restoring them using the shoe care brand's products and then reselling them to raise funds for the hospice. This commendable initiative has already raised an incredible £2,000, with the club aiming to surpass £5,000 in total by the end of the year.

Discussing the project, Academy and Foundation Tutor at the club, Robert Hare, said: "Teaching life skills goes far beyond the classroom, and our partnership with Crep Protect has given us the perfect platform to show both our academy and first-team players how small actions can make a big environmental impact. With millions of pairs of trainers ending up in landfill every year, initiatives like this extend the lifespan of boots and trainers, keeping them looking and smelling fresh while reducing waste.

"Seeing footballers champion the message has made the project even more engaging, and the workshops have been fantastic – hands-on, fun, and genuinely eye-opening for the players.

"Crep Protect have been brilliant supporters not only of our foundation but also local charities such as Dougie Mac, where together we've helped raise over £2,000. It's proof that when education, community, and sustainability come together, real change happens."

Head of Education Matthew Meredith added: "Our collaboration with Crep Protect has created an exciting and practical life skills experience for our younger scholars, helping them understand both product care and environmental responsibility. Far too many trainers – thousands every day – are discarded long before they need to be, ending up in landfill and contributing to a growing waste problem. By showing players how simple care routines and recycling initiatives can extend the life of their boots and trainers, we're actively reducing that statistic, and other football clubs across the country could easily replicate this impact.

"At club level, our next aim is to educate our younger players and create more meaningful life skills with practical elements, supporting a greener future."

FOLLOW LFE



League Football Education ✓

@LFEonline

🎉 Congratulations to Lincoln City, and in particular the eleven LFE academy graduates, on their promotion back to the EFL Championship after a 65-year wait! After a record-breaking season and a 24-game unbeaten run, the Imps sealed their promotion with a 2-1 win at Reading on Easter Monday.

Zach Jeacock, Tendayi Darikwa, Adam Reach, Adam Johnson, Ryley Towler, Tom Hamer, Deji Elerewe, Tom Bayliss, Reeco Hackett, Alfie Lloyd, and Freddie Draper all progressed through the LFE Apprenticeship Programme and played their part in Lincoln City's historic achievement.



League Football Education ✓

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🇬🇧 Nine LFE Academy graduates have been called up by England manager Thomas Tuchel for the upcoming World Cup, which will take place in the US, Canada, and Mexico.

We wish them all the very best of luck!



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