

Issue 14 - April 2011
News from
League Football Education

Timeline

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Kelty flying at Killie



LFE is a partnership between The Football League and The Professional Footballers' Association.



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Leonardo 2011

Pre-Season Tours 2011

The decision for this year's Leonardo Pre-Season Tours opportunity was made in February after receiving 29 applications for the four available spaces.

After careful consideration the successful Clubs chosen to take part in this year's Pre-Season tours are as follows: Scunthorpe Utd, Watford, Walsall, Wycombe Wanderers.

LFE would like to extend our congratulations to these Clubs and look forward to planning the trips with them very soon.

A further application has been made to the Leonardo Programme for funding in 2012-13. Should this be successful we expect to be in a position to provide a similar opportunity in 2012.



Craig Gladwin & Lee Bennett will head back to Friska Viljor at the start of the new season after both players scooped a contract from the Ornskoldsvik Club.

Placements 2011

Two of last year's player placements taken by Jamie Steele and Tom Burgin have proved successful after Solleftea offered them both a contract to stay for another season.

Jason Woods, Jordan Trott and Toby Davis will also start the new season in Sweden at Junsele IF.

Eight new placements have now been filled for April-May in Sweden for up to 12-weeks and a further 21 new placements for 12-weeks will be available from July 2011 onwards.

Top Goal Scorers Chart

In October 2010 LFE introduced a Top Goal Scorers Chart to the website homepage to sit alongside the YA and Academy League Tables.

Populated by data provided by The Football League, it charts the top scorers from all Clubs in the four Youth Alliance Leagues and those from Football League Clubs in the four Academy Leagues.

As of the 25th March 2011 the top scorers were:



Youth Alliance & Academy League Round-Up



The 2010-11 season is heading for an exciting climax, with every division likely to go down to the wire.

In the North West Conference it's a three-way scrap at the top with Burnley leading Rochdale on goal difference and Port Vale in contention to take over as leaders providing they win their game in hand.

In the North East Conference Chesterfield hold a slender one point advantage over second placed Notts County. Third placed Darlington could enter the mix should they earn maximum points from their game in hand.

Swindon Town top the South West table, currently holding a healthy seven point lead whilst also having a game in hand over their closest rivals Exeter. Elsewhere, QPR hold an eight point lead in the South East conference, but with

four of the next five teams having at least two games in hand, it should make for an intriguing finish to the campaign.

In the Academy Leagues, it's a lot closer in Group A with just five points separating leaders Norwich from fifth placed Arsenal.

Leicester hold top spot in Group B, with Watford and Aston Villa sitting in second and third place respectively. Meanwhile, Everton hold a five point advantage over

Merseyside rivals Liverpool in Group C. But with three games in hand the Reds will be hoping to eclipse the men from Goodison Park.

Finally, Nottingham Forest will be hoping to maintain their slender lead at the top of Group D with Sheffield Utd, Sunderland and Newcastle all in the chasing pack.

Apprentice of the Month

Congratulations go to Gerald Mulholland of West Bromwich Albion who was named February 2011 Apprentice of the Month.

Gerald has impressed throughout his Apprenticeship, successfully achieving both the NVQ and Coaching qualifications ahead of schedule. Due to his exceptional commitment to education, Gerald advanced from the National Certificate to the National Diploma and is expected to achieve a triple distinction grade.

On the pitch, 'Gez' has been labelled as one of the quickest players in the Academy and was called up to the Northern Ireland U17 squad in the first year of his Apprenticeship. He also

expressed an interest for working in the media and has gained valuable experience working voluntarily in the Club's Media Department conducting interviews and writing match reports for the website. All of this is done in his own time and further showcases his desire to succeed.

West Brom's Education & Welfare Officer Mike Scott added: "I'd like to thank LFE for acknowledging Gez's commitment to the apprenticeship programme. I am really pleased that his hard work has been recognised."

Previous Apprentice of the Month winners for the 2010-11 season are:

- January – Connor Goldson, Shrewsbury Town
- December – Mauro Vilhete, Barnet
- November – Haydn Hollis, Notts County
- October – Dale Jennings, Tranmere Rovers
- September – Adam Thompson, Watford



From left to right:
Haydn Hollis, Adam Thompson,
Gerald Mulholland, Connor
Goldson, Dale Jennings,
Mauro Vilhete.



Development Fund

Set up in 2006 to provide Clubs with an opportunity to invest in the delivery and support of the ASE programme, the Development Fund is once again available this season.

During the last 4 years Clubs have used the fund in a variety of ways to enhance their programmes and the Apprentice Journey. Expenditure has included laptops, video cameras, performance analysis equipment, heart-rate monitors, smart boards, outward bound days, tours and even mini-buses.

By the end of the 2010-11 season the minimum requirement will be for all Clubs to have acquired one laptop for every two Apprentices on programme. By the end of the 2011-12 season, Clubs will be expected to have obtained one laptop for each Apprentice on programme. LFE will also expect Clubs with in-house provision to utilise the fund to fill any gaps in resources or equipment.

Please ensure that you submit your applications before the deadline to maximise the funding available. If you need any further help or advice in relation to the Development Fund or have any ideas on how the scheme could be developed in future years please do not hesitate to contact Alan Sykes.

*The deadline for the Development Fund for the 2010-11 season is 31st May 2011.

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Website

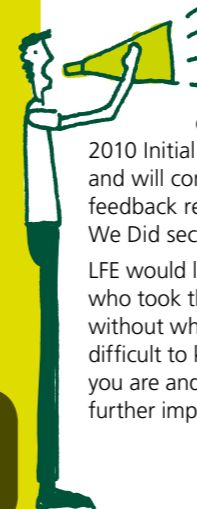
LFE is pleased to announce that a new section has been added to the website which lets you know how we've analysed your feedback.

LFE is committed to continuous improvement for the benefit of Apprentices and Clubs and listening to the views of Apprentices, Clubs and Education Providers is a critical part of this.

You Said, We Did is where we will post a summary of the results gathered in stakeholder feedback questionnaires.

We are now pleased to share the results of how you viewed the 2010 Initial Assessment & Induction and will continue to share further feedback results in the You Said, We Did section.

LFE would like to thank all those who took the time to respond, without which it would be difficult to know how satisfied you are and to know what needs further improvement.



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LFE Opportunities Board

Three months has passed since the launch of the Opportunities Board and it continues to provide former Apprentices with relevant and more importantly realistic opportunities.

Every week new listings are posted on to the online facility to ensure the content is fresh and up to date so viewers have access to the very latest opportunities in sport, education, employment and training.

The Opportunities Board has been fantastically received and this is reflected by over 1,300 views between January and February, this is added to the vast amount of interest that has been submitted for specific listings.



www.lfe.org.uk/progression/recruitment



A star
in the
making

Wickham

“PLAYERS OF CONNOR’S STATURE ARE HARD TO COME BY, THE SORT OF STRIKER WHO CAN LEAD THE LINE SO EFFECTIVELY. HE IS IN THE MOULD OF ANDY CARROLL, A BIG, POWERFUL STRIKER WHO IS VERY MOBILE. THEY ARE SHORT IN SUPPLY.”



Since becoming the youngest ever player to play for Ipswich Town in April 2009, aged 16 years and 11 days, Connor Wickham has had a weight of expectation on his shoulders.

Much of this is due to the national press’ enthusiasm to identify the next English wonderkid, who has the raw tools to become a major star. While Jack Wilshere is establishing himself as real talent at Arsenal, the last forward player to receive such a media fanfare to herald the start of a career was Manchester United man Wayne Rooney just under a decade ago.

Wickham’s meteoric rise is also of course allied to fantastic natural ability which good judges will tell you he has shown in abundance at both Portman Road and while representing England at various youth levels. Just last season he spearheaded

England U17’s to European Championship glory, scoring the winner against Spain in the final and in the process picking up the tournament’s ‘Golden Player’ award.

He has since gone on to feature for the U21s and has picked up a treble of awards in recent months for his displays for the Tractor Boys. These include the npower Championship Player of the Month for February, The Football League Young Player of the Year Award and the Apprentice Player of the Year.

With some of the Premier League’s top clubs reportedly already circling for his signature this summer, Wickham just wants to concentrate on his football. “I don’t really read the papers, I just see it if it comes on the news or TV or if



my mates from school tell me,” said Wickham. I’m happy here, I signed a contract to keep me here another few years and that’s the way it is at the moment, I want to keep playing football at Ipswich Town.”

However while Ipswich boss Paul Jewell has expressed his delight at working with the ‘level-headed lad’, club legend Mick Mills has compared Wickham with £35million man Andy Carroll.

Mills, who played 591 times for the Tractor Boys and also represented England on 42 occasions, said: “Players of Connor’s stature are hard to come by, the sort of striker who can lead the line so effectively. Connor is in the mould of Andy Carroll, a big, powerful striker who is very mobile. They are short in supply”.

And Jewell himself admits it will be hard to hang on to the teenage forward if someone comes in with a crazy bid.

“I am hopeful he will stay but, let’s be honest, we are all at the mercy of the big clubs. If Liverpool or Tottenham come in with money that is going to help us plough back into the team – silly money if you like – we have to listen to it.

He continued, “Personally, I think it would be best for him to stay here for another year, hopefully get us some goals and into the Premier League. But it is going to be difficult for any club at this level to turn down a big offer from one of the top teams.

“If it is one of the smaller Premiership clubs I don’t think Connor would want to go but if it is one of the big boys it would be hard to say no”.





DOUBLE OLYMPIC CHAMPION DAME KELLY GIVE'S CREATE YOUR LEGACY A BIG THUMBS UP!

The Dame Kelly Holmes Legacy Trust worked in partnership with LFE to make the events happen and Holmes insists that they have proved invaluable in helping athletes plan for the future:

"The events have given these youngsters the chance to look at what life might be like if they don't achieve their aspirations and dreams in the world of football. In sport your journey can be cut short quite quickly whether that be through injury or not being selected for the team.

The careers events give them an insight in to all the different jobs, education and placements that they could think about in the future."

Members of the Legacy Trust's team (themselves ex elite athletes) operated across the two events as mentors to

the younger athletes and this was an arrangement that offered mutual benefits according to Holmes.

"A lot of the sports people we work with are trying to transition into new careers themselves and have become qualified mentors that work within all of the Trust's programmes. Like myself they want to give something back to young people so we tell them our story."

"We want to pass that on because skills in sport transition into life and you've got to have both. Seeing my guys interact with the young footballers is great and we get a lot out of them. Hopefully the boys can use these events to learn more about who they are and take that into their lives further down the line."



create your **LEGACY**

DKH
Legacy Trust

FORMER VILLA DOUBLE ACT HAIL CAREERS EVENT

Former Aston Villa team-mates Gareth Southgate and Dion Dublin have saluted the Create Your Legacy events at The Madejski Stadium and Manchester Velodrome after close to 1000 elite athletes came face to face with over 40 exhibitors.

Southgate and Dublin proved popular with the predominantly football audience as well as elite athletes from other sports including motor racing and swimming.

And while their styles were different they both offered one resounding message – 'work hard and plan ahead for your future'.

Southgate currently The Football Association's Head of Elite Development gave a fascinating presentation talking through his own career, the highs and lows and his beliefs on what it takes to succeed in both sport and business

"What I tried to convey to those attending is that you have to work hard to succeed in any walk of life, said Southgate.

"If you apply it to football, the likes of Barcelona, David Beckham, Alan Shearer and Paul Scholes are at or have been at the

top of the game not just because of their skill but because they work hard and apply themselves.

"It's the same in everything you do whether it's sport or business, in fact a lot of the skills you pick up in sport are transferable but you have to be prepared to apply yourself and keep picking up new skills."

Meanwhile at the Manchester event, Dublin who had himself lived in the city when a player at Manchester United hosted a Q&A alongside LFE's own Roger Gibbins in the morning before he was joined on stage for an impromptu repartee with PFA Chairman Clarke Carlisle. Both men were keen to challenge the listening youngster's to create their own legacy for future success in their chosen careers.

"I wish that this type of event had been around when I was playing, said Dublin.

"The opportunities that are on offer around some of these stands are fantastic and this type of event offers so much.

"If you make it in football great, if you don't it's not a failure you're just opening up another part of you that perhaps hasn't had a chance to come to the fore yet ahead of football commitments.

"For me it's music, I've got a band now and my instrument (The Dube) out. These are my passions that when I was playing I couldn't devote time to. I'd tell any youngster who has attended pick up the phone, speak to the people who have been exhibiting at these events, they are here to help you."

Discover more at www.createyourlegacy.co.uk



Boro Boys On The Rise

The amazing victory over Newcastle Utd in the FA Cup raised Stevenage's profile earlier this season and the Hertfordshire club look fully settled in to life within The Football League after their promotion from the Blue Square Premier last term.

However while Graham Westley's men push towards the League Two play-offs, behind the scenes, Boro have also been trying to familiarise themselves with life on the ASE programme and playing in the Football League Youth Alliance for the first time.

When most clubs started pre-season training in the first week of July last year, Stevenage did not have a single apprentice signed on. An open trial saw hundreds of hopefuls descend on the club's Shephalbury training ground as the newly appointed youth team staff searched for sufficiently-talented players to whom they could offer an apprenticeship.

Within a fortnight they had the eight apprentices they needed, including three local Stevenage boys: goalkeeper Jake Knight and midfielder duo Harley Kelly and Louis Perry, who

was previously with Brentford. The other five came from further afield: midfielder Akin Abiola-Daramola from Hackney, centre-back Luis Morrison-Derbyshire from Crystal Palace, former Ipswich trialist Wilson Carvalho from Barnet, striker Ade Yussuf from Dartford, and centre-back Farai Hallam, who played for coach Jimmy Gilligan's successful Barking Abbey and Essex Schools teams.

Meanwhile, North Herts College geared up for their arrival and appointed former Stevenage midfielder Dave Bass as their lead tutor. Mark Jones was appointed Centre of Excellence manager and took on the NVQ delivery and Alan Jackett (brother of Millwall manager Kenny) brought great experience as Youth Administrator.

Gilligan, Jones (both at Watford) and Bass (Reading) all being former

apprentices, has helped them relate to what the current youngsters are experiencing.

Stevenage supplemented the apprentices with Under-18 players from the region but, not surprisingly, they found life tough to start with, exiting the FA Youth Cup at the first hurdle. Despite training at a variety of venues, an intense regime of double sessions looks like it is paying off. Boro had reached the southern semi-final of the FL Youth Alliance Cup and had won almost half their games by the time Gilligan left the club in April. Several apprentices have played at Reserve team level and will hope to follow the likes of Scotland duo George Boyd and Craig Mackail-Smith and Wales striker Steve Morison in becoming professional players at Stevenage, the Football League and LFE's newest club.

STEVENAGE APPRENTICES HAVE ALL STEPPED UP TO THE CHALLENGE OF LIFE IN THE FOOTBALL LEAGUE



Tranmere Rovers boss Les Parry has paid tribute to 18 year-old wide-man Dale Jennings after the youngster was named the League One Apprentice of the Year.

Jennings nipped ahead of Southampton's Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain and MK Dons' George Baldock to receive the prize at the glitzy Football League Awards bash on 20 March in London.

Jennings has made great strides during his two-year apprenticeship and became a regular member of Manager Les Parry's first-team at the start of the season.

Speaking about the accolade Parry said: "This is a great achievement for Dale and it goes to show the hard work he has put in over the last two years. He deserves to be congratulated on it.

"I think it also reflects on what a fantastic job our youth department do. The award is about development. It is about taking in someone - in Dale's case about two years ago - and working on the raw material.

"It's not just about working on the boy's football ability, it is on the social skills and education work that's done as part of the Apprenticeship".

Parry's view was echoed by Head of Youth, Shaun Garnett who believes that Jennings has benefitted from the opportunities that signing for a club like Tranmere has presented him with.



Parry delighted by Dale

"He's worked hard at his game, his lifestyle and he deserves the award, said Garnett. "Dale came to us as a 15 year-old after he had been released by Liverpool and we could see he had potential right away. He's a great story for any boy who suffers from a rejection but the thing is we've been able to give him the chance to go out an express himself".

While Rovers have already turned away the attentions of at least one Premier League club interested in the youngster Garnett insists that the club are reliant upon developing players 'like Dale' who want to progress up the football league ladder.

"That's one thing that we offer the boys at Tranmere Rovers, they're not going to be a millionaire, but what we can offer is the pathway to our first team," said Garnett. "That leads to bigger and better things.

"If you're good enough for our first team and a big club come in, there's a pathway to play at a higher level - Premier League, Championship, who knows?

With five goals this term including a stunning strike at Bristol Rovers and a wonderful solo effort against Plymouth Argyle it might not be too much longer before Jennings hits the big time.



Assessment Trials

The Assessment Trials 2011 offers footballers (who have been released following their AASE programme or after one year as a professional) the opportunity to showcase their talents in front of representatives from Premier League, Football League and Non League Clubs in the UK, European Clubs and Further and Higher Education institutions both in the UK and abroad.

This year's trials will take place:

28 April Staines Town FC

10 May Hartpury College

11 May Walsall FC

12 May Oldham Athletic FC

Register for any of the four trials www.lfe.org.uk/progression/trials



Can you afford not to be there?

Kelly flying at Killie



Liam Kelly's dream of becoming a professional footballer was nearly over before it started after he was one of several apprentices to be offered a professional deal by MK Dons only for the club to withdraw that offer at the last minute.

Despite the initial trauma of this experience Kelly bounced back with an eye catching display at LFE's 2008 Assessment Trials which led to a trial and then the offer of a contract at Kilmarnock.

He made his debut for the club during the 2009 – 10 season and now two years on from his move to Rugby Park, Kelly has cemented his place in the Killie line-up with a string of industrious midfield displays.

And with the youngsters performances going from strength to strength it was no surprise

when he was recently offered a new two-and-a-half year deal which will see him stay north of the border until 2013.

"I'm delighted. As soon as the club came to me about extending the contract, I was more than happy to do so. Hopefully over the next two-and-a-half years we will take the club forward and I will improve as a player," said Kelly.

Yet despite his progress on the park Kelly is adamant that he will not erode the good work he started on his apprenticeship programme and plans to go on to Higher Education while he is still playing.

"It's just a case of planning for the future and staying one step ahead while you can, he added. "If I can keep my options open by continuing my education it's got to be worth it hasn't it. It's a safeguard if things don't work out as a player but more importantly I'm hoping it'll be something I can use and rely on when my playing days come to an end many years from now".



"HOPEFULLY OVER THE NEXT TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS WE WILL TAKE THE CLUB FORWARD AND I WILL IMPROVE AS A PLAYER"



Establishing a Partnership

Since its launch in October, LFE's Goal of the Month competition has really taken off and proved a resounding success with votes cast and social media interaction building each month.

Showcasing the talents of Apprentice footballers playing in the Youth Alliance and Academy Leagues, the competition allows all Clubs to provide footage of their best goals scored each calendar month. It also allows Clubs to utilise the Gamebreaker software and Mac laptops provided by LFE as part of the Video Analysis project.

The latest monthly instalment had 4,092 votes cast in total which surpassed all previous voting on the competition. And as a welcome addition to the compilation of clips streamed on LFE TV each month, The Establishment have agreed to provide the backing music to the competition.

Formed in 2006 by former Nottingham Forest and Republic of Ireland U21 player John Burns, The Establishment is a rapidly rising band who recently gigged with Ocean Colour Scene at the University of East Anglia.

Based in Nottingham, the bands connection with professional football is part of their make-up through Burns, Manager Dion Dublin and extending to The Professional Footballers' Association who helped to fund their first four-track CD.

The songs released on that disc include the track 'Be That Way', which has attracted widespread media attention after Des Walker, Stuart Pearce, Les Ferdinand and Teddy Sheringham appeared in the video (featured below) alongside Coronation Street actor Chris Gascoyne. It is this song that will now become the signature music that accompanies LFE's Goal of the Month and Burns is delighted at the prospect.

"We're delighted to provide the music to what really is a groundbreaking competition. Looking at the previous month's goals there's no doubt that our music will complement a really good product and hopefully win LFE and ourselves even more admirers for our work," said Burns.

With the launch of their new website www.theestablishmentband.com, a tour with OCS on the horizon and a more intimate gig lined up in front of some big names from the world of football and showbiz at the prestigious PFA dinner this month, Burns is hoping his journey from footballer to musician is now close to reaching its final destination.

"As a kid my dream was always to be a professional footballer, which I managed for a time. But now it's about pushing on with the music and trying to get that next big break that will firmly establish us in the industry," he added.



listen at www.myspace.com/theestablishmentnottingham

WWW.LFE.ORG.UK

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Gatting goes from boots to batting



April is usually a make or break time for most footballers but for Joe Gatting it is the start of a new season.

That is because the former Brighton & Hove Albion player will be hoping to line-up for Sussex County Cricket Club when they face Lancashire in their opening game of the LV County Championship on 8 April to complete his metamorphosis from footballer to cricketer.

Gatting had chosen football rather than cricket at 16 after taking the advice of his dad, Steve, an ex professional at Arsenal, Brighton and Charlton Athletic, who had told him he could return to cricket if things did not work out.

And for a time it looked as though that back-up plan would not be needed. A successful apprenticeship included a first-team debut at Southampton in January 2006 and 11 other first-team appearances that term. A three-year professional deal followed and 27 appearances in the 2006-07 season augured well for the future.

Unfortunately this was the high point of his time at Brighton. A change of manager saw him out of the first-team picture and shipped out on loan. With his enjoyment of football diminishing he came to a stark conclusion one morning before training.

"I realised I wasn't looking forward to it. I'd lost all enthusiasm and because of my circumstances I just wasn't enjoying playing anymore. My only options were to move clubs or give cricket a go," said Gatting.

The Withdean and County Ground's are separated by little over a mile but Gatting suddenly found a huge cloud had been lifted when he moved to join Sussex for winter training ahead of the 2009 season.

As if symbolic of his change of fortune, a pre-season trip to Abu Dhabi that he originally wasn't even scheduled to go on saw him secure a professional deal after he hit a century against Surrey – this after stepping in for injured opener Chris Nash at the last minute.

The youngster hasn't looked back since becoming a mainstay of the club's limited overs teams and Sussex's Cricket Manager, Mark Robinson admits to being startled by his progress.

"Joe was obviously in our academy so we knew him quite well. We gave him access to the coaches, physio and second team and then when he was given the chance to open in the first XI he took it in a very forceful way, said Robinson.

"He hits the ball in the same way as his uncle and has a good pair of hands like him. But he is also fitter. Mike wasn't much of a trainer," he added.

With many tipping 2011 to be a big year for J.S Gatting the expectation that he could follow in the footsteps of his uncle seem to go with the territory but the youngster is not fazed by this.

"I'm proud to have an uncle who has captained England at Cricket but it adds no pressure, I was used to it as a footballer with Dad. All I'm focussed on is training hard, improving my concentration and trying to take opportunities when they come along, he added.



Achieving Hind's goals

In football, medals are usually given out in May but Sheffield Wednesday defender Richard Hinds has already received his first honour of the season in the form of a first class honours degree from The Open University.

And while the League One table would suggest that it might be his last, for this season anyway, Hinds is still delighted that the title of 'Bachelor of Law' has been conferred upon him after four years hard work.

During that time the level-headed Yorkshire man has juggled his studies alongside the demands of full-time football and his achievement is all the more remarkable considering that he has had to contend with a troublesome heel injury, which followed on from a battle back to fitness after a badly broken left leg. More recently Hinds became a father for the first-time and daughter Abigail's arrival coincided exactly with him sitting his final University exams!

Known as a disciplined but versatile defender Hinds has had to apply some of those talents to his studies often finding his day's off and spare time eaten up by University commitments. Despite the obvious demands that has placed upon him Hinds remains an advocate of the notion that it is better to prepare for a future away from football while you are still in it.

"Football's really a very short career and it can



THE OPEN UNIVERSITY WHO RECENTLY ATTENDED CREATE YOUR LEGACY HAS BECOME A POPULAR ROUTE FOR PLAYERS

end at any moment. It might be a bit of a cliché but it really struck home when I broke my leg a couple of years ago, said Hinds.

"At the time I'd already started my Law degree and to be honest it just cemented my view that you should retrain for the future while you're still playing.

"If I'd had to finish playing at that time I'd have been 2 – 3 years off finishing the course and that would've been time wasted in terms of not



being qualified, having no job and having no income coming in."

The OU who recently attended Create Your Legacy has become a popular route for players; others to benefit from their flexible programmes include John Curtis (Ex Man Utd & Blackburn Rovers), Fabrice Muamba (Bolton Wanderers) and Jason De Vos (Ex Wigan Ath & Ipswich Town). And Hinds believes studying with the OU is an attractive proposition for a number of reasons; "It offers lads who are playing the opportunity to go out and get a degree while to a certain extent allowing you to work at your own pace, he said.

"The level of support and quality of online materials they provide is different class. It's just a case of building on that good work now and looking at the next phase of legal training so I'm fully prepared for life after football."

Careers advice that delivers for the whole season

Whether you're an apprentice, tutor or part of a football club then U-Explore has the right move for you. Using rich, interactive media, U-Explore takes you behind the scenes of industry, helping to guide you down your career path.

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