

Peter Shilton's agonisingly narrow failure to steer Plymouth to promotion last season has made him doubly determined to ensure the West Country Pilgrims hoist full sail to the top of the Endleigh League Second Division this term.

But two vastly more experienced characters in the business of building for success from the bottom could block his ambitions again.

Barry Fry, the colourful wheeler-dealer who took Barnet out of non-League football and pointed them towards unprecedented success before a famous fall-out with chairman Stan Flashman, is under even more pressure than the former England goalkeeping hero.

The reviving miracle Fry was expected to achieve at Birmingham last season did not materialise and, after relegation, there seems no prospect of another chance for him if he cannot claim instant restoration of higher

by BILL PIERCE

status for the Blues this time around.

And Lennie Lawrence, the former schoolteacher who took Charlton to the top-flight on a shoestring before switching to Middlesbrough where he also plotted a successful promotion path, is now charged with the responsibility of guiding Bradford back to better times.

Where former Arsenal, Manchester United and Ireland star Frank Stapleton failed, Lawrence — a man with no football pedigree as a player — has been asked to succeed, and guide the famous old Yorkshire club back to the first division from which they were demoted two years ago.

Moved out to make way for Bryan Robson in the Middlesbrough hot seat, Lawrence is still held in high esteem throughout the game and — in contrast to his last season at Ayresome Park

— has already been given the scope at Valley Parade to make some useful signings.

Bristol Rovers' top-scorer John Taylor and stylish 'Boro defender Richard Liburd have been snapped up to aid his task.

Transfer-market manoeuvring is, of course, the bubbly Fry's trademark and, even after an unproductive flurry of buying and selling in his first few months at Birmingham, you can bet he will continue to scour the sales lists to bring about the formula for success at St Andrew's.

The question is how patient his employers — chairman David Sullivan, who has poured profits from his controversial publishing empire into the club, and Karren Brady, the League's most glamorous managing director — can afford to be with his seemingly trial-and-error methods.

Fry's transfer gambles have paid some handsome dividends in the past for both Barnet and Southend but now he is on a different plane of expectancy. He certainly would find a use for the £310,000 Plymouth gave Shilton to strengthen his defence this summer with the signing of Peter Swan from Port Vale, one of the clubs which pushed Argyle out of the promotion jostle behind runaway champions Reading.

High-earners Fry and Shilton, whose club missed the promotion boat in the play-offs after gathering 85 points, come under obvious pressure to succeed every time their employers sign the monthly pay-cheques. It certainly makes the job no easier, especially with useful new competition around.

Dario Gradi's promoted Crewe, famous in the lower divisions for their progressive football and providers David Platt and

Geoff Thomas to the international scene in recent years, could find more reward after their well-earned promotion last year.

And third division champions Shrewsbury should also slot back comfortably into the higher grade.

Wycombe Wanderers have matched Barnet, moving from the Vauxhall Conference to division two in successive seasons and they might go even higher, although losing star winger Steve Guppy to Newcastle is a big blow for manager Martin O'Neill.

Chester, the other team to go up, will do well to consolidate after a painful summer break in which the development company which paid for the move to a new ground, have since put the club up for sale. Then manager Graham Barrow's resignation made way for the appointment of two former Everton stars, Mike Pejic and Kevin

Ratcliffe at the helm.

Blackpool have shown their commitment by paying out £165,000 for Preston goalscorer Tony Ellis while Neil Warnock's Huddersfield are being well tipped to finally tap the potential which did not emerge last term.

The Welsh trio, Cardiff, Swansea and Wrexham could all struggle while relegated Peterborough and Oxford certainly won't find it easy to regain lost status at the first attempt.

Stockport, who like Plymouth, also missed out on promotion in the play-offs — Burnley beating them at Wembley — might have already lost their best chance again with the £350,000 sale of striker Andy Preece to Crystal Palace. There will be much pressure on Martin Chalk, his £40,000 replacement from Derby.

But the chances of Liam Brady's Brighton and David Webb's Brentford have got to be respected.

Walsall's new player-coach, Kevin Wilson, has joined the international set at Bescot Stadium determined to lead the club out of the Third Division.

The former Notts County, Derby County, Ipswich and Chelsea striker made 40

appearances for Northern Ireland, scoring seven goals.

Wilson, who has scored 156 league and cup goals in over 500 appearances for his previous clubs, was offered another two-year contract by Notts County.

But they wanted

to halve his wages because they thought, at 33, he was approaching the end of his playing career.

So he approached the Football League who approved a free transfer, and Kenny Hibbitt was in like a shot for the man who could help bring better times to Bescot.

Wycombe Wanderers, Mansfield, Northampton and Port Vale were all interested, but Banbury-born Wilson chose Walsall.

Birmingham	(Relegated 22nd)	Despite relegation, Blues' crowds went up last season. Expect crowds of 20,000 at St Andrews if they launch a promotion challenge	Only a fool would bet against Brum	7/2 Fav
Blackpool	20th	Captures of striker Tony Ellis and Bolton defenders Phil Brown and David Burke give them a better look than last season	Relative calm waters of mid-table	25/1
Bournemouth	17th	The talent drain from Dean Court makes survival tough. Great 'keeper in Vince Bartram, but they need more goals	All those sales could finally take their toll	40/1
Bradford	7th	Lennie Lawrence is a shrewd replacement for Stapleton. Already £200,000 full-back Richard Liburd from Boro is a great purchase	The major threat to Birmingham. Will go very well	12/1
Brentford	16th	Dave Webb will need all his salesman's patter to convince us Brentford are ready for a promotion push	Safety is the most they can expect	25/1
Brighton	14th	Liam Brady performed miracles last season. Now former Arsenal striker Raphael Meade has joined, the good times could well return	Play-offs are a realistic target	12/1
Bristol Rovers	8th	Squad has a well-balanced look, with experienced Gary Waddock in midfield. John Ward knows what it takes to build a promotion side	A repeat of last season	22/1
Cambridge	10th	A glut of goals towards the end of last season, most of them scored by Steve Butler, augurs well. Should keep more clean sheets	Entertaining season, but no promotion	20/1
Cardiff	19th	City will have to sort out their attack post-Nathan Blake. Garry Thompson and Phil Stant are too similar to play together	With five going down, they could be in trouble	28/1
Chester	Promoted (2nd)	Following the resignation of Graham Barrow, Mick Pejic is in charge and former Wales skipper Kevin Ratcliffe has joined on a free	Could survive if morale is kept high	50/1
Crewe	Promoted (3rd)	Scouts will flock to Gresty Road. Our money is on striker Rob Savage, signed from Manchester United, to impress this season	Comfortable first season back in the division	28/1
Huddersfield	11th	It's worth taking note of Neil Warnock's optimism. Most promising young striker in the division in Andy Booth. And what a ground	There or thereabouts come May	14/1
Hull City	9th	Dean Windass is a natural goalscorer and the defence is well-organised. Manager Terry Dolan will be hoping for improved home form	A let-down after last season, but won't go down	25/1
Leyton Orient	18th	New management team have vowed to change the club's playing style from the long-ball game used by predecessor Peter Eustace	Change of style not enough. Orient for the drop	33/1
Oxford	Relegated (23rd)	No Joey Beauchamp but manager Denis Smith is no mug and striker John Byrne will look a classy customer in this company	Will make a good attempt to bounce straight back up	14/1
Peterborough	Relegated (24th)	New manager John Still has waited a long time to manage a League club and has already made sweeping changes at London Road	Transitional season as Still makes his mark	20/1
Plymouth	3rd	Peter Shilton remains manager and still has Steve Castle and Kevin Nugent to fire in the goals to continue the Pilgrims' progress	Another nailbiting season in store near the top	10/1
Rotherham	15th	Haven't added to a squad that struggled last season. Still too reliant on veteran Imre Varadi to score goals	Will be sucked into the relegation dogfight	33/1
Shrewsbury	Promoted (Champs)	Have the best golden oldies around. Kevin Summerfield is a class midfielder and the rest of his side have the consistency they'll need	Will survive this season, then impress next	20/1
Stockport	4th	County have lost striker Andy Preece to QPR and manager Danny Bergara will need all of his motivational powers now	Anti-climax after several near misses	10/1
Swansea	13th	The Swans will once again have old stalwarts Roger Freestone, John Comforth and Colin Pascoe to rely on	It could be a long, cold winter	28/1
Wrexham	12th	Manager Bryan Flynn worked wonders with an inexperienced team last season and Gary Bennett is the best goalscorer in Wales	Target must be survival	33/1
Wycombe	Promoted (4th)	Have lost winger Steve Guppy to Newcastle for £150,000 but compensation in the return of giant centre-half Terry Evans	Won't sustain rapid rise of past few seasons	16/1
York	5th	Reached the play-offs last season. Well-balanced team and winger Jon McCarthy is capable of causing problems	Will continue to surprise and win friends	16/1

CLUB-BY-CLUB GUIDE TO THE ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE LEAGUE

Watford

Manager: Glenn Roeder (July 1993).
Transfers: In: Jamie Moralee/Geoff Pitcher (Millwall, joint fee £450,000), Kenny Sansom (Chertsey Town, free), Tommy Mooney (Southend, player exchange), Derek Payne (Southend, player exchange), Dominic Ludden (Leyton Orient, £100,000), Kevin Miller (Birmingham £250,000). Out: Perry Suckling (Doncaster, free), Keith Dublin (Southend, player exchange), Paul Furlong (Chelsea, £2.3million), Jason Drysdale (Newcastle, £425,000), James Meara (Doncaster, free), Kevin Slinn (Stockport, free).
Championship odds: 50-1.

West Bromwich Albion

Manager: Keith Burkinshaw (June 1993).
Transfers: In: Mike Phelan (Manchester United, free). Out: none.
Championship odds: 50-1.

Wolverhampton

Manager: Graham Taylor (Mar 1994).
Transfers: In: Tony Daley (Aston Villa, £1.25m), Steve Froggatt (Aston Villa, £1m), Neil Emblen (Millwall, £600,000). Out: Derek Mountfield (Carlisle, free), Mark Turner (Northampton, free), Darren Roberts (Chesterfield, free), Danny Collier (Crewe, free), Kevin Ashley (Peterborough, free).
Championship odds: 5-1.

SECOND DIVISION

Birmingham City

Manager: Barry Fry (appointed Dec 1993).
Transfers: In: Jatto Ceasey (Wallidan, Gambia, £12,500), Ryan Price (Stafford, £20,000), Dave Regis (Stoke, player exchange), Mark Ward (Everton, £480,000). Out: Keith Downing (Stoke, free), Kevin Miller (Watford, £250,000), Paul Peschisolido (Stoke, player exchange plus £200,000).
Championship odds: 4-1.

Blackpool

Manager: Sam Allardyce (July 1994).
Transfers: In: Phil Brown (Bolton, free), David Burke (Bolton, free), Tony Ellis (Preston, £165,000), Les Sealey (Manchester United, free). Out: none.
Championship odds: 28-1.

Bournemouth

Manager: none.
Transfers: In: none. Out: none.
Championship odds: 40-1.

Bradford City

Manager: Lennie Lawrence (May 1994).
Transfers: In: Wayne Jacobs (Rotherham, free), Chris Kamara (Sheffield United, free), Richard Liburd (Middlesbrough, £200,000), John Taylor (Bristol Rovers, tribunal). Out: Colin Hoyle (Notts County, free), Graeme Tomlinson (Manchester United, £100,000),

Paul Reid (Huddersfield, £70,000), Craig Lawford (Hull, £70,000).

Championship odds: 14-1.

Brentford

Manager: David Webb (June 1993).
Transfers: In: Nick Forster (Gillingham, £100,000). Out: none.
Championship odds: 25-1.

Brighton and Hove Albion

Manager: Liam Brady (Dec 1993).
Transfers: In: Junior MacDougald (Tottenham, free), Jeff Minton (Tottenham, free). Out: none.
Championship odds: 12-1.

Bristol Rovers

Manager: John Ward (Mar 1993).
Transfers: In: none. Out: Gavin Kelly (Scarborough, free), John Taylor (Bradford, tribunal), David Mehew (Walsall, free).
Championship odds: 22-1.

Cardiff City

Manager: Eddie May (Aug 1991).
Transfers: In: Charlie Oatway (Yeading, free), Andy Scott (Blackburn, free). Out: Mark Grew (Stafford, free), Kevin Ratcliffe (Chester City, free).
Championship odds: 28-1.

Chester City

Manager: Mike Pejic (July 1994).
Transfers: In: Don Page (Doncaster, free), Kevin Ratcliffe (Cardiff, free), Jason Burnham (Northampton, free), Ray Newland (Plymouth, free). Out: Colin Greenall (Lincoln, free), David Pugh (Bury, £22,000), David Thompson (Rochdale, £6,000), Mark Came (Exeter, free), Billy Stewart (Northampton, free).
Championship odds: 50-1.

Crewe Alexandra

Manager: Dario Gradi (June 1983).
Transfers: In: Billy Barr (Halifax, free), Danny Collier (Northampton, free), Ian Hart (Manchester United, free), Andy Savage (Manchester United, free). Out: Graham Abel (Altrincham, free), Tony Naylor (Port Vale, £150,000).
Championship odds: 25-1.

Huddersfield Town

Manager: Neil Warnock (July 1993).
Transfers: In: Tom Cowan (Sheffield United, £200,000), Kevin Gray (Mansfield, player exchange), Paul Reid (Bradford, £70,000), Robbie Ryan (Belvedere, free). Out: Ifem Onuora (Mansfield, player exchange), Mark Wells (Scarborough, free),

Brendan Aspinall (Mansfield, player exchange).

Championship odds: 18-1.

Hull City

Manager: Terry Doan (Jan 1991).
Transfers: In: Jimmy Graham (Rochdale, free), Craig Lawford (Bradford, £70,000). Out: Lee Warren (Doncaster, free).
Championship odds: 28-1.

Leyton Orient

Managers: Chris Turner and John Sitton (May 1994).
Transfers: In: Mark Dempsey (Gillingham, free), Andy Gray (Reading, free). Out: Mark Cooper (Barnet, free), Warren Hackett (Doncaster Rovers, free), Dominic Ludden (Watford, £100,000), Paul Newell (Barnet, free).
Championship odds: 25-1.

Oxford United

Manager: Denis Smith (Sept 1993).
Transfers: In: Mark Deakin (Hollywell Town, free), Stuart Massey (Crystal Palace, free), Dave Smith (Norwich City, £100,000), Steve Wood (Southampton, free). Out: Joey Beauchamp (West Ham United, £1m), David Penney (Swansea City, £20,000), Paul Reece (Notts County, free).
Championship odds: 12-1.

Peterborough United

Manager: John Still (May 1994).
Transfers: In: Kevin Ashley (Wolverhampton Wanderers, free), Gary Breen (Gillingham, £50,000), Sean Farrell (Fulham, £120,000 depending on appearances), Greg Heald (Enfield, free), Neil le Bihan (Tottenham Hotspur, free), Liburd Henry (Gillingham, free), Tony Lormor (Lincoln City, free), Paul Moran (Tottenham Hotspur, free), David Morrison (Chelmsford, £50,000), Ashley Warner (VS Rugby, free). Out: Tony Adcock (Luton Town, £20,000), Lee Howarth (Mansfield Town, £10,000), Dominic Iorfa (Southend United, £15,000), Fred Barber (Luton Town, £25,000).
Championship odds: 22-1.

Plymouth Argyle

Manager: Peter Shilton (Mar 1992).
Transfers: In: Martin Hodge (Rochdale, £10,000), Peter Swan (Port Vale, £300,000). Out: Dwight Marshall (Luton Town, £150,000), Ray Newland (Chester City, free), Darren Garner (Dorchester, free).
Championship odds: 9-1.

Rotherham United

Manager: Phil Henson (Jan 1991).
Transfers: In: Martin James (Stockport County, £50,000), Martin Pike (Fulham, free). Out: Wayne Jacobs (Bradford City, free), Ian Banks (Darlington, free).
Championship odds: 25-1.

Shrewsbury Town

Manager: Fred Davies (Feb 1994).

Transfers: In: Mark Hughes (Tranmere, free), Ray Woods (Coventry, free). Out: none.

Championship odds: 22-1.

Stockport County

Manager: Danny Bergara (Mar 1989).
Transfers: In: Alun Armstrong (Newcastle United, £25,000), Martyn Chalk (Derby County, £22,500), Dean Connolly (Wigan, free), Tony Dinning (Newcastle United, free), Jeff Eckhardt (Fulham, £50,000), Deiniol Graham (Barnsley, free), Michael Oliver (Middlesbrough, tribunal), Kevin Slinn (Watford, free). Out: Tony Barras (York City, £25,000), Martin James (Rotherham United, £50,000), Andy Preece (Crystal Palace, £350,000), Darren Ryan (Rochdale, free), Alan Simley (Runcorn, free).
Championship odds: 10-1.

Swansea City

Manager: Frank Burrows (Mar 1991).
Transfers: In: David Penney (Oxford, £20,000). Out: none.
Championship odds: 28-1.

Wrexham

Manager: Brian Flynn (Nov 1989).
Transfers: In: Deryn Brace (Norwich City, free). Out: Mark Morris (Runcorn, free), John Paskin (Bury, free), Mark Sertori (Bury, free).
Championship odds: 28-1.

THIRD DIVISION

Wolverhampton Wanderers

Manager: Martin O'Neill (Feb 1990).
Transfers: In: Cyrille Regis (Wolverhampton Wanderers, free). Out: Steve Guppy (Newcastle United, £150,000).
Championship odds: 16-1.

York City

Manager: Alan Little (Mar 1993).
Transfers: In: Tony Barras (Stockport County, £25,000). Out: Ray Warburton (Northampton Town, £35,000).
Championship odds: 16-1.

Barnet

Manager: Ray Clemence (appointed Jan 1994).

Transfers: In: Mark Cooper (Leyton Orient, free), Dougie Freedman (QPR, free), Shaun Gaie (Portsmouth, free), Linvoy Primus (Charlton, free), Paul Newell (Leyton Orient, free). Out: Paul Haylock (Colchester, free).
Championship odds: 22-1.

Bury

Manager: Mike Walsh (Dec 1990).
Transfers: In: James Mulligan (Stoke City, tribunal), John Paskin (Wrexham, free), David Pugh (Chester City, tribunal), Peter Reid (no club, free), Mark Sertori (Wrexham, free). Out: Luther Blissett (Fakenham Town, free).
Championship odds: 14-1.

HOW THEY FINISHED LAST SEASON

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	42	27	11	4	80	38	92
Blackburn	42	25	9	8	63	36	84
Newcastle	42	23	8	11	82	41	77
Arsenal	42	18	17	7	53	28	71
Leeds	42	18	16	8	65	39	70
Wimbledon	42	18	11	13	56	53	65
Sheff Wed	42	16	16	10	76	54	64
Liverpool	42	17	9	16	59	55	60
QPR	42	16	12	14	62	61	60
Aston Villa	42	15	12	15	46	50	57
Coventry	42	14	14	14	43	45	56
Norwich	42	12	17	13	65	61	53
West Ham	42	13	13	16	47	58	52
Chelsea	42	13	12	17	49	53	51
Tottenham	42	11	12	19	54	59	45
Man City	42	9	18	15	38	49	45
Everton	42	12	8	22	42	63	44
Southampton	42	12	7	23	49	66	43
Ipswich	42	9	16	17	35	58	43
Sheff Utd	42	8	18	16	42	60	42
Oldham	42	9	13	20	42	68	40
Swindon	42	5	15	22	47	100	30

FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Crystal Palace	46	27	9	10	73	46	90
Nottm Forest	46	23	14	9	74	49	83
Millwall	46	19	17	10	58	49	74
Leicester	46	19	16	11	72	59	73
Tranmere	46	21	9	16	69	53	72
Derby	46	20	11	15	73	68	71
Notts County	46	20	8	18	65	69	68
Wolves	46	17	17	12	60	47	68
Middlesbrough	46	18	13	15	66	54	67
Stoke	46	18	13	15	57	59	67
Charlton	46	19	8	19	61	58	65
Sunderland	46	19	8	19	54	57	65
Bristol City	46	16	16	14	47	50	64
Bolton	46	15	14	17	63	64	59
Southend	46	17	8	21	63	67	59
Grimsby	46	13	20	13	52	47	59
Portsmouth	46	15	13	18	52	58	58
Barnsley	46	16	7	23	55	67	55
Watford	46	15	9	22	66	80	54
Luton	46	14	11	21	56	60	53
West Brom	46	13	12	21	60	69	51
Birmingham	46	13	12	21	52	69	51
Oxford Utd	46	13	10	23	54	75	49
Peterborough	46	8	13	25	48	76	37

SECOND DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Reading	46	26	11	9	81	44	89
Port Vale	46	26	10	10	79	46	88
Plymouth	46	25	10	11	88	56	85
Stockport	46	24	13	9	74	44	85
York	46	21	12	13	64	40	75
Burnley	46	21	10	15	79	58	73
Bradford	46	19	13	14	61	53	70
Bristol Rovers	46	20	10	16	60	59	70
Hull	46	18	14	14	62	54	68
Cambridge Utd	46	19	9	18	79	73	66
Huddersfield	46	17	14	15	58	61	65
Wrexham	46	17	11	18	66	77	62
Swansea	46	16	12	18	56	58	60
Brighton	46	15	14	17	60	67	59
Rotherham	46	15	13	18	63	60	58
Brentford	46	13	19	14	57	55	58
Bournemouth	46	14	15	17	51	59	57
Leyton Orient	46	14	14	18	57	71	56
Cardiff	46	13	15	18	66	79	54
Blackpool	46	16	5	25	63	75	53
Fulham	46	14	10	22	50	63	52
Exeter	46	11	12	23	52	83	45
Hartlepool	46	9	9	28	41	87	36
Barnet	46	5	13	28	41	86	28

THIRD DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Shrewsbury	42	22	13	7	63	39	79
Chester	42	21	11	10	69	46	74
Crewe	42	21	10	11	80	61	73
Wycombe	42	19	13	10	67	53	70
Preston	42	18	13	11	79	60	67
Torquay	42	17	16	9	64	56	67
Carlisle	42	18	10	14	57	42	64
Chesterfield	42	16	14	12	55	48	62
Rochdale	42	16	12	14	63	51	60
Walsall	42	17	9	16	48	53	60
Scunthorpe	42	15	14	13	64	56	59
Mansfield	42	15	10	17	53	62	55
Bury	42	14	11	17	55	56	53
Scarborough	42	15	8	19	55	61	53
Doncaster	42	14	10	18	44	51	51
Gillingham	42	12	15	15	44	51	51
Colchester	42	13	10	19	56	71	49
Lincoln	42	12	11	19	52	63	47
Wigan	42	11	12	19	51	70	45
Hereford	42	12	6	24	60	79	42
Darlington	42	10	11	21	42	64	41
Northampton	42	9	11	22	44	66	38

Second Thoughts

By **STUART DUNN**

A LOOK AT LIFE IN DIVISION 2

As is customary at the beginning of a new season here is a preview of this season's Division Two field.

Listed in alphabetical order today we feature Birmingham to Huddersfield with the 12 remaining sides covered next week.

BIRMINGHAM CITY: The bookmakers 7/2 favourites for the championship and you can see why. Wheeler dealer Barry Fry, a man with a point to prove after last season's relegation, has strengthened an already strong an already strong squad by signing Everton midfielder Mark Ward, Stoke striker Dave Regis and Gambian international Jotto Cessay. Fry has also managed to hold on to Steve Claridge who you would expect to emerge as one of the division's most lethal strikers.

BLACKPOOL: A summer of change at Bloomfield Road with Sam Allardyce succeeding Billy Ayre as manager. The Seasiders only stayed up last season after a final day victory and to avoid any repetition have been busy in the transfer market. Goalkeeper Les Sealey has been snapped up from Man Utd, Bolton full back pair Phil Brown and David Burke have moved across Lancashire and most impressively so has Tony Ellis who finished top scorer in Division 3 last season with Preston. Blackpool could well be the surprise package this time.

BOURNEMOUTH: It's difficult to be anything but pessimistic when analysing Bournemouth's hopes. The recent sacking of manager Tony Pollis has only deepened the gloom at Dean Court. Former Wolves keeper Vince Bartram is the latest in a long line of star players to be sold — this time to Arsenal. Near certainties for one of the five relegation spots.

BRADFORD CITY: Another club under new management with former Middlesbrough and Charlton boss Lennie Lawrence taking over from Frank Stapleton. He has returned to Ayresome Park to sign full back Richard Liburd for £200,000 and swooped for Bristol Rovers striker John Taylor for £275,000 and his part-

nership with former Norwich hit man Lee Power is just one of the reasons Bradford should claim at least a play-off spot.

BRENTFORD: Dave Webb has made a shrewd signing in paying out what I consider a bargain £100,000 for young Gillingham striker Nicky Forster. Birmingham midfielder George Parris has moved to Griffin Park on loan. Difficult to envisage anything other than a mediocre season though for the West London club.

BRIGHTON: The appointment of Liam Brady in the Goldstone Ground's managerial chair last season saw a rapid improvement in the Seagulls form. No reason why the improvements shouldn't continue with former Arsenal striker Raphael Meade signed to partner the prolific Kurt Nogan. A play-off place likely.

BRISTOL ROVERS: Entering their ninth season as tenants at Bath's Twerton Park. Manager John Ward has lost four key players over the summer, Steve Cross, the aforementioned John Taylor to Bradford, long serving David Mehew to Walsall and talented striker Marcus Stewart. He still has talented players such as the experienced Gary Waddock and men of his calibre should ensure a mid-table finish.

CAMBRIDGE: Expect Cambridge to make a strong challenge under Gary Johnson, the man who has made John Beck's notorious long-ball reign at the Abbey Stadium a thing of the past. A host of young home grown talent combined with experienced men like defender Mickey Heathcote and striker Steve Butler give Cambridge and nice balance. Former Spurs striker Ollie Marsh has been signed over the summer with Neil Lyne and Richard Wilkins moving to Hereford and Michael Cheetham to Chesterfield.

CARDIFF City: Surprisingly struggled last season after going up as Third Division champions. Hard to see them doing much better this time, although strikers Phil Stout and ex Villa man Gary Thompson will prove a handful.

CHESTER CITY: Promoted Chester have been ripped apart following the resignation of manager Graham Barrow. Mike Pejic has succeeded him with Kevin Ratcliffe appointed player/coach. Four regulars from last year's side have departed — Colin Greenhall (Lincoln), Mark Game (Exeter), David Pugh (Bury) and Dave Thompson (Rochdale). Will do well to stay up.

CREWE ALEXANDRA: Tony Naylor's departure to Port Vale will be disappointing to Crewe fans, but boss Dario Gradi believes his replacement Ro Savage from Man Utd is a quality player with a bright future ahead of him. Crewe will need to tighten up at the back but should finish safely clear off the danger zone.

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN. A new era for the Terriers as they kick off a new season in their highly impressive and ultra modern Kirkstall Stadium. The change of scenery may have a positive affect on Neil Warnock's side who have added Bradford midfielder Paul Reid to a strong squad. Young striker Andy Booth may emerge as one of the division's best. Should mount a challenge.

■ **NEXT WEEK—** the 13 remaining teams from Hull-York.

Second Thoughts

By **STUART DUNN**

LOOK AT LIFE IN DIVISION

Last week I previewed in alphabetical order the first 12 teams participating in the Second Division this season from Birmingham to Huddersfield.

Here as promised are the 12 remaining teams and their chances of success.

HULL CITY: Difficult to envisage anything but a struggle against relegation for the Tigers. On extremely limited resources manager Terry Dolan did exceptionally well to lead Hull to ninth place last season with the outstanding goal-scoring of Dean Windlass a prime factor. But with Windlass set to leave Boothferry Park sooner rather than later things look bleak.

LEYTON ORIENT: Last Saturday's 2-1 win over Birmingham is destined to be one of the few high points of the O's season in my opinion. Under a new management team of former Man Utd keeper Chris Turner and John Sutton they have a difficult task to resurrect the decline that set in under Peter Eustace. Experience provided by the likes of Glen Cockerill and the classy Ian Bogle offers some hope but the East London side will do well to survive.

OXFORD UNITED: Keen to bounce straight back after relegation Oxford have certainly started well enough with two good home wins and shown no signs of missing Joey Beauchamp who moved to West Ham for £1,000,000 in the summer and has now moved on to Swindon. Denis Smith has made three useful signings — Southampton defender Steve Wood and midfielder duo Stuart Massey from Palace and Dave Smith from Norwich. Former Eire international John Byrne will guarantee goals and it should be an enjoyable season at the Manor ground although they may just miss out.

PETERBOROUGH UNITED: Another relegated side looking to do well. Have a new manager in John Still who has a good track record at non-league level and he's certainly rung the changes at London Road. Adcock, Howarth and Barber are among the men to move on with new signings including Spurs winger Paul Moran, Wolves full back Kevin Ashley, Gillingham centre half Gary Breen and Fulham striker Sean Farrell. May take time to get as a team and appear likely to finish mid table.

PLYMOUTH ARGYLE: Nothing but good times ahead for Peter Shilton's Argyle despite the shock of two heavy defeats in the first week of the season. Finished third last season and will be there or thereabouts again. Port Vale defender Peter Swan has moved to Home Park for £300,000 to boost what is already a very strong squad with Martin Hodge the veteran keep another summer signing.

ROTHERHAM UNITED: Troubled times at Millmoor with an pitch demonstration by over 200 fans after their opening game resulted in a 4-0 defeat by Shrewsbury. Manager Phil Henson must be given money to spend or the Millers will definitely go down. Imre Varadi and Bermudan Shaun Goofar will score their fair share but it won't be enough to save them.

SHREWSBURY TOWN: Have started the season promisingly and morale will be high after lifting the Third Division championship trophy in May. Fred Davies has assembled a hard working side at Gay Meadow with a nice balance between youth and experience. One of the most attractive sides in the division the Shrews have made three summer signings — Tranmere defender Mark Hughes, Coventry winger Ray Woods and Bury striker Ian Stevens. The strikeforce of Dean Spink and Wayne Clarke will trouble defences and a play-off place is not beyond them.

STOCKPORT COUNTY: Always the bridesmaid but never the bride is the Stockport story having remarkably missed out in the play offs for the last three seasons. Striker Andy Preece has joined Palace for £350,000, but big Kevin Francis remains at Edgeley Park at least for the time being. Danny Bergara has signed Derby striker Martyn Chalk and young Newcastle midfielder Alun Armstrong and is sure to inspire County to mount a challenge yet again.

SWANSEA CITY: A steady side, Swansea will undoubtedly finish the season largely unnoticed in mid-table with their home form preventing a relegation struggle. New signing David Penney from Oxford will chip in with a few goals as will the highly rated Jason Bowen who may well depart the Vetch Field before too long.

WREXHAM: Brian Flynn's men could be the dark horses for a play off place. Plenty of young talent at the Racecourse in the shape of Owen, Connolly, Croze and Watkin. Gary Bennett is sure to have another prolific season in front of goal while at the other end Andy Marriott is one of the division's best keepers.

WYCKHAM: Highly fancied by the pundits to win promotion for the third successive season. I feel a season of consolidation is more likely for Martin O'Neill's side. Plenty of experience up front with ex-Aldion pair Simon Garner and Cyrille Regis.

YORK CITY: Exceeded expectations by claiming play off last season and will cause few surprises once again. Paul Barnes is a highly useful striker who receives plenty of service from tricky winger Ian McCarthy. A good outside bet.

MY PREDICTIONS: Champions: Bradford City. Play offs Birmingham, Plymouth, Shrewsbury, Huddersfield. Relegation. Cardiff, Chester, Rotherham, Bournemouth and Leyton Orient.