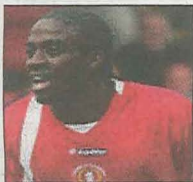


It's head on the block time

Five to keep an eye out for this season:

Clayton Donaldson, striker, Brentford:

Perhaps a predictable choice for one to watch, but you can't ignore someone who scores 29 goals in a single season and has everyone scrambling around trying to find their chequebooks. A lethal finisher who put Wanderers to the sword in January, an already impressive looking Brentford side will be boosted by his signing. Expect the Bees to be challenging at the top.



Jordan Rhodes, striker, Huddersfield Town:

Town are hotly tipped to win the title this season and they'll be looking to the big man as a source of goals. Still only 21, he scored 22 last season and 17 the year before that, in addition to netting one every other game during a 2009 loan spell at Brentford. Two years ago he set a new Football League record for the fastest headed hat-trick, beating the mark set by Dixie Dean 80 years previously by scoring three times in eight minutes against Exeter.



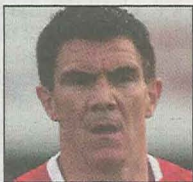
Jimmy Ryan, midfielder, Scunthorpe United:

Blues fans will have an early chance to see Ryan in action when he arrives at Adams Park on the opening day of the season. A skilful midfielder who can create, score and take a mean free-kick, Ryan almost single-handedly dragged Accrington Stanley into the League Two play-offs and his talents deserve a higher stage. Can easily play in the Championship, whether that's with Scunty or not.



Chris Morgan, defender, Sheffield United:

Blades' surprise relegation from the Championship probably coincided with their captain and inspiration being injured in November. As tough as they come, Morgan's absence left United bereft of leadership and without the steel you'd expect of a side from Sheffield. Has been sent off six times in his United career and courted controversy by fracturing Barnsley striker Iain Hume's skull in an aerial challenge in 2008.



Danny Whitaker, midfielder, Chesterfield:

The Spireites' front two of Jack Lester and Craig Davies made most of the headlines last season as they romped to the League Two title, but they wouldn't have scored as many goals without the creative influence of Whitaker behind them. Also scored a season's best 15 goals from midfield last season, including a hat-trick in a 4-0 win over Hereford in August that sent out a message to the rest of League Two that Chesterfield meant business. He'll be looking for more of the same this season.



Agree? Disagree?
Tweet us at BFP_Sport

BFP reporter *Andy Carswell* risks his reputation with his 2011/12 predictions – mark his card as the season goes on

STRENGTHS:

Continuity, team spirit and defence. Wanderers have managed to keep together most of the side that were promoted last season – only Lewis Montrose could be considered a regular starter from those on the released list – and many of the new players have already played together at other clubs. That will have helped them settle in much more easily and get used to the team spirit that played such a key part in Wycombe's success last season. Midfielder Matt Bloomfield said it was crucial to their promotion and the new players will have cemented that, in addition to improving the side. The arrival of James Tunncliffe has strengthened a defence that kept 17 clean sheets last season. He could be one of the stars of the season.

ONE TO WATCH:

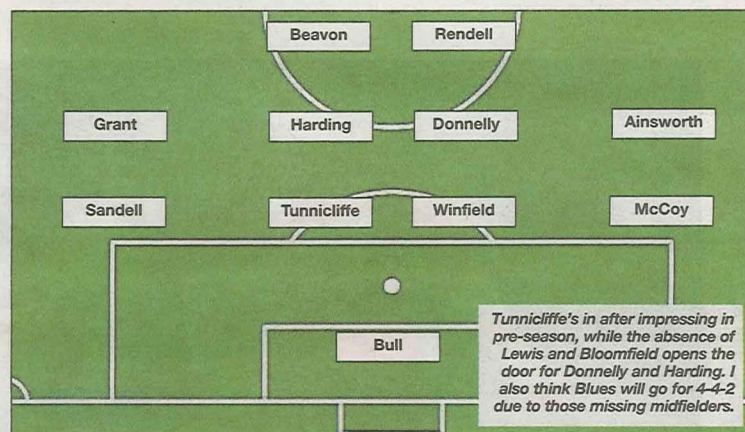
Gareth Ainsworth knows a thing or two about wing play and he likes what he's seen from former Crewe and Aldershot wide man Joel Grant. The club captain said: "He's good going forward, he can open up defences. You always think something might happen with Joel on the ball. He's a really good addition to have. He's an impact player as well. Whatever way the gaffer uses him I'm sure he'll cause problems in League One." He made a slow start to the pre-season campaign but grew more prominent as he gained match fitness. The Hammersmith-born Jamaica international was voted man of the match against West Ham and was even better against Northampton Town, where his intelligent passing and direct running caught the eye. Gary Waddock said of the 23-year-old

after his display against the Cobblers: "If he can perform like that consistently throughout the season he'll be a very good signing for us. He'll improve as the season goes along. He's a handful when he's on his game – at times he's

unplayable." With Kevin Betsy unavailable for the season's curtain-raiser Grant will have the perfect opportunity to make an instant impact.



CARSWELL'S TEAM TO FACE SCUNTHORPE:



FINAL VERDICT:

Opinion among Wanderers players ranges from a relegation scrap to promotion push – I think the truth is somewhere in the middle. Wycombe are better than quite a few teams in this division but there are plenty more who have the budget, the set-up and the players to battle it out for promotion. This is the fourth season in a row where Blues have kicked off in a new division and the biggest aim has to be consolidation. I believe they will achieve this comfortably. Whereas Wanderers have kept together pretty much the whole squad that took them up, the sides who finished above them have both lost key players – Chesterfield will miss the goals of Craig Davies and Deane Smalley while Bury no longer have Kyle Bennett and loanee Nicky Ajose, nor the presence of manager Alan Knill in the dugout. In fact Wycombe's squad is stronger than it was this time last year. The defence is better for having James Tunncliffe in it, Joel Grant looks a good prospect on the wing and in Elliot Benyon Wanderers have a proven goalscorer. The rest of the new signings, when taken in isolation, may not be 'big' names but they are individual parts of a solid midfield unit that will make Blues tough to beat. They already have one of the division's best goalkeepers in Nikki Bull and an impressive defence that not many League One teams will get the better of. This division should hold no fears for Wycombe.

WEAKNESSES:

Scoring goals and a lack of experience at this level. Wanderers scored 69 goals last season, compared to the 82 netted by Bury and the 85 champions Chesterfield plundered. It's also the same number Peterborough scored in their home matches alone in League One last season. Scott Rendell scored a creditable 19 goals but strike partner Stuart Beavon managed just five and Ben Strevens seven – the same number as full-back Andy Sandell. League One will also be the highest level some of these players will have played at. As fantastic a season as Nikki Bull had in goal last season, he has only ever played six league games in the third tier.

FINAL LEAGUE ONE TABLE

1	Huddersfield
2	Preston NE
3	Brentford
4	Sheffield United
5	MK Dons
6	Charlton Athletic
7	Scunthorpe
8	Leyton Orient
9	Bournemouth
10	Chesterfield
11	Sheffield Wed
12	Wycombe Wanderers
13	Carlisle United
14	Exeter City
15	Colchester United
16	Oldham Athletic
17	Hartlepool United
18	Rochdale
19	Tranmere Rovers
20	Notts County
21	Bury
22	Walsall
23	Stevenage
24	Yeovil Town

Four key questions answered:

Who will Wanderers be playing this season?

Fans will be mightily sick of the M1 come the end of the season as a sizeable proportion of the teams in League One are up north. Anyone attending every away fixture will have to travel 6,619 miles to places like Carlisle, Hartlepool and Sheffield – twice. That's quite a lot of petrol.

How long can Gareth Ainsworth go on for?

Wycombe's captain and talisman will be 39 come the end of the season – but he's said he still wants to play in League One next year. He said: "I'm not brilliant on the training ground but I live for Saturdays and Tuesday nights. I'm looking forward to it." Don't expect his role to diminish.

Does Dave Winfield need to calm down?

The big defender picked up ten League Two yellow cards and one red last season, but that aggression and no-nonsense attitude went a long way to helping Blues keep 17 clean sheets as he threw himself at everything with no regard for his own safety. More of the same please Dave!

How good is Jordan Ibe?

His goal against Staines will live long in the memory of anybody who saw it, but his pace and direct running against the likes of Championship sides Crystal Palace and West Ham showed that that goal wasn't a flash in the pan and he's capable of making his first team debut despite being aged just 15.

What the players think:

Gareth Ainsworth:

"I don't want to say any position. What I will say is we want to stay in League One – that's the priority. Maybe we might want to re-address our targets halfway through the season. I want to be a League One player in 2012-13 – that's the aim."

Andy Sandell:

"The main thing is to be in that league next season, whether we finish 17th or 7th. There's a lot of teams that have come up from League Two and found themselves riding high in League One – that's definitely where we want to be."

Matt Bloomfield:

"With the ability and the talent we've got in the squad, and equally the togetherness, team spirit, camaraderie and competitiveness of the lads, I do honestly believe this is the best squad since I have been here at the club."

Nikki Bull:

"I'm realistic and I believe there are only eight sides that could go down. We are in a mini-league for survival – anything else is a bonus. People will say that's a lack of ambition but we're going to have one of the smallest budgets. Survival will be a good achievement."