



The development and progression of English players in the Premier League



The Elite Player Performance Plan

The Elite Player Performance Plan (EPPP) is a youth development scheme initiated by the Premier League. It is the result of consultation between the Premier League and its clubs, representatives of the Football League, the Football Association and other key football stakeholders.

One of its six fundamental principles is...

“To increase the number and quality of Home Grown Players gaining professional contracts in the clubs and playing first-team football at the highest level”.

From the FA's perspective, this has the potential to improve the England national team's long-term prospects.

Academies have been independently audited and given a Category status of 1 to 4, with 1 being the most elite. Up to 10 different factors were considered in the grading, including productivity rates; training facilities; and coaching, education and welfare provisions.

Categorisation

Category 1

- The top level category will require clubs to have an approximate budget of £2.325m.
- They are required to have at least 18 full-time members of coaching staff employed at any one time as well as residential provision for youngsters.
- They must provide at least:
 - 4-8 hours contact time within the Foundation Phase
 - 10-12 hours contact time within the Youth Development Phase
 - 12-14 hours contact time within the Professional Development Phase
- There is no minimum age at which clubs can recruit players.
- The current 90 minute travel rule will not apply for players over 16-years of age.

Category 2

- Clubs that cannot meet the required budget and staff level prerequisites demanded by Category 1, but still have an indoor training facility.
- Will require an estimated budget of £969k.
- They must provide at least:
 - 3-5 hours contact time within the Foundation Phase
 - 6-12 hours contact time within the Youth Development Phase
 - 12-14 hours contact time within the Professional Development Phase
- Will be allowed to take players from age four and sign players from the age of nine.
- The current 90 minute travel rule will not apply for players over 16-years of age.

Categorisation

Category 3

- Clubs in this category will not be permitted to register youngsters until they are U9.
- Will require an estimated budget of £315k.
- They must provide at least:
 - 3 hours contact time within the Foundation Phase
 - 4-6 hours contact time within the Youth Development Phase
 - 12 hours contact time within the Professional Development Phase

Category 4

- Clubs in this category will be used to pick up youngsters that are late developers or have been released from other Academies or Centres of Excellence.
- Players will be 16 years of age or above.
- Will provide at least 12-14 hours contact time with their players.

The higher a club's Category the more funding will be available to it and the EPPP will see the Premier League and FA invest more central income than ever before in Youth Development programmes across the country.

“Home-grown” players

- This study takes a look at the EPPP category that each of the 20 Premier League clubs has been awarded and the number of “home-grown” English players that have made a first team appearance in the 2013/14 season to date (21/12/2013).
- An appearance (start or used substitute) is acknowledge in any of the four major competitions: Premier League, League Cup, Champions League and Europa League (at the time of writing The FA Cup has yet to reach the third round, at which point all Premier League clubs enter).
- Whilst the Premier League defines a “home-grown” player as...

“one who, irrespective of his nationality or age, has been registered with a club affiliated to the Football Association or the Football Association of Wales for a period, continuous or not, of three entire seasons or 36 months prior to his 21st birthday (or the end of the Season during which he turns 21)”

...for the purpose of this study, a “home-grown” player is classified by the following factors:

- He has spent some stage of his development within the Youth Academy of the club who he has represented at senior level (for example, the majority of Jordan Ibe’s development took place at Charlton Athletic and Wycombe Wanderers, but when he signed for Liverpool on 20th December 2011, aged 17, he was placed in the Academy for the 2011-12 season. He is therefore considered a “home-grown” player).
- He is eligible to play for England through birth, ancestry, has represented England at youth level and / or has not been capped at senior level by any other national team (for example, Newcastle’s Sammy Ameobi is deemed a “home-grown” player as he has represented England at U21 level, however, Shola Ameobi, despite also progressing through Newcastle’s Youth Academy and representing England at U21 level, has represented Nigeria at senior level and is therefore ineligible). Players who currently represent other national teams at youth level (e.g. Southampton’s Sam Gallagher) and those who could potentially attain British citizenship (e.g. Manchester United’s Adnan Januzaj) have not been included.

EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Jack Wilshere	21	11	4	1	0	5	1	14	19
Kieran Gibbs	24	14	0	0	0	6	1	3	25
Chuba Akpom	18	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	25
Isaac Hayden	18	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	16

Arsenal



EPPP

Category:

1

Aston Villa



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Gabriel Agbonlahor	27	12	1	1	0	-	-	3	16
Nathan Baker	22	11	0	1	0	-	-	0	16
Marc Albrighton	24	2	2	1	0	-	-	0	10
Callum Robinson	18	0	0	0	1	-	-	0	18



EPPP

Category:

2

Cardiff City



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
John Terry	33	16	0	1	0	5	0	78	9
Ryan Bertrand	24	1	0	2	0	0	0	2	31

Chelsea



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Alex Wynter	20	0	0	1	0	-	-	0	0
Kyle De Silva	20	0	0	0	1	-	-	0	0

Crystal Palace



EPPP

Category:

1

Everton



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Ross Barkley	20	13	2	1	0	-	-	3	35
Leon Osman	32	12	4	1	0	-	-	2	5
Tony Hibbert	32	0	0	1	0	-	-	0	0



EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Matthew Briggs	22	0	2	0	0	-	-	0	30

Fulham



EPPP

Category:

3

Hull City



EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Steven Gerrard	33	15	0	2	0	-	-	108	4
Jon Flanagan	20	7	0	0	0	-	-	0	6
Martin Kelly	23	0	3	0	1	-	-	1	17
Raheem Sterling	19	6	6	1	1	-	-	1	31
Andre Wisdom	20	1	1	1	0	-	-	0	27
Jordan Ibe	18	0	0	1	0	-	-	0	6

Liverpool



EPPP

Category:

1

Manchester City



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Micah Richards	25	2	0	2	0	3	0	13	19



EPPP

Category:

1

Manchester Utd



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Danny Welbeck	23	8	3	1	1	1	0	20	35
Tom Cleverley	24	11	2	2	0	1	2	13	17





Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Steven Taylor	27	1	0	0	0	-	-	0	57
Sammy Ameobi	21	0	5	2	0	-	-	0	5



*Shola Ameobi – represented England up to U21 level before making his senior debut for Nigeria in November 2012

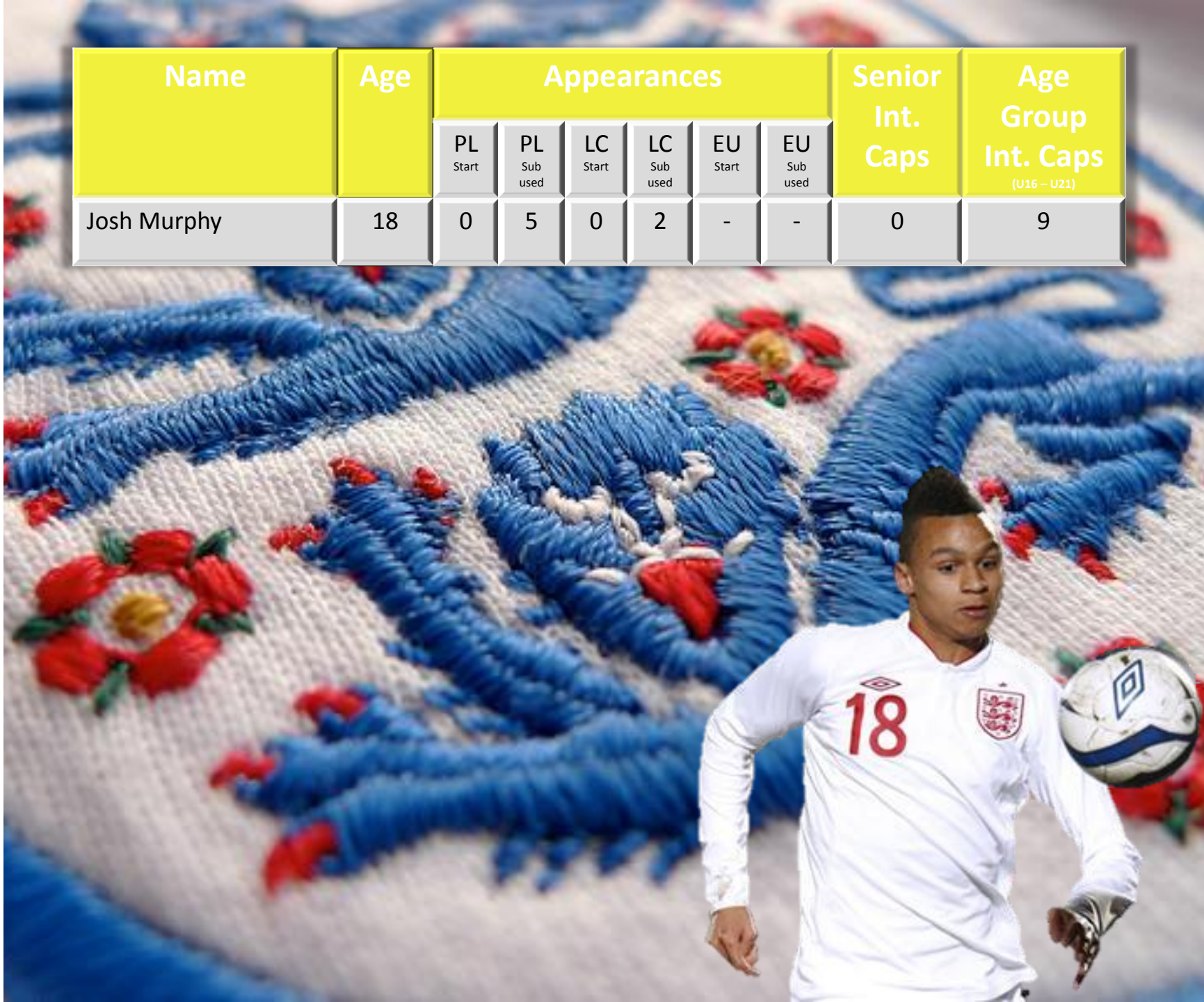
EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Josh Murphy	18	0	5	0	2	-	-	0	9

Norwich City



EPPP

Category:

1

Southampton



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
James Ward-Prowse	19	11	5	1	1	-	-	0	20
Adam Lallana	25	15	1	0	1	-	-	2	3
Callum Chambers	18	5	1	2	0	-	-	0	19
Luke Shaw	18	14	0	0	0	-	-	0	17
Jake Sinclair	19	0	0	0	1	-	-	0	0
Omar Rowe	19	0	0	0	2	-	-	0	0
Harrison Reed	18	0	1	1	2	-	-	0	0



EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Andy Wilkinson	29	1	1	1	0	-	-	0	0

Stoke City



EPPP

Category:

1

Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Jack Colback	24	13	2	3	0	-	-	0	1

Sunderland



EPPP

Category:

2

Swansea City



EPPP

Category:

1

Tottenham



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Andros Townsend	22	10	4	1	0	3	0	4	18
Harry Kane	20	0	1	1	1	0	3	0	24
Tom Carroll	21	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	7
Ryan Fredericks	21	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Shaquile Coulthirst	19	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2



EPPP

Category:

1

West Brom



Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
Saido Berahino	20	3	9	2	0	-	-	0	37
Luke Daniels	25	0	1	2	0	-	-	0	2



EPPP

Category:

1

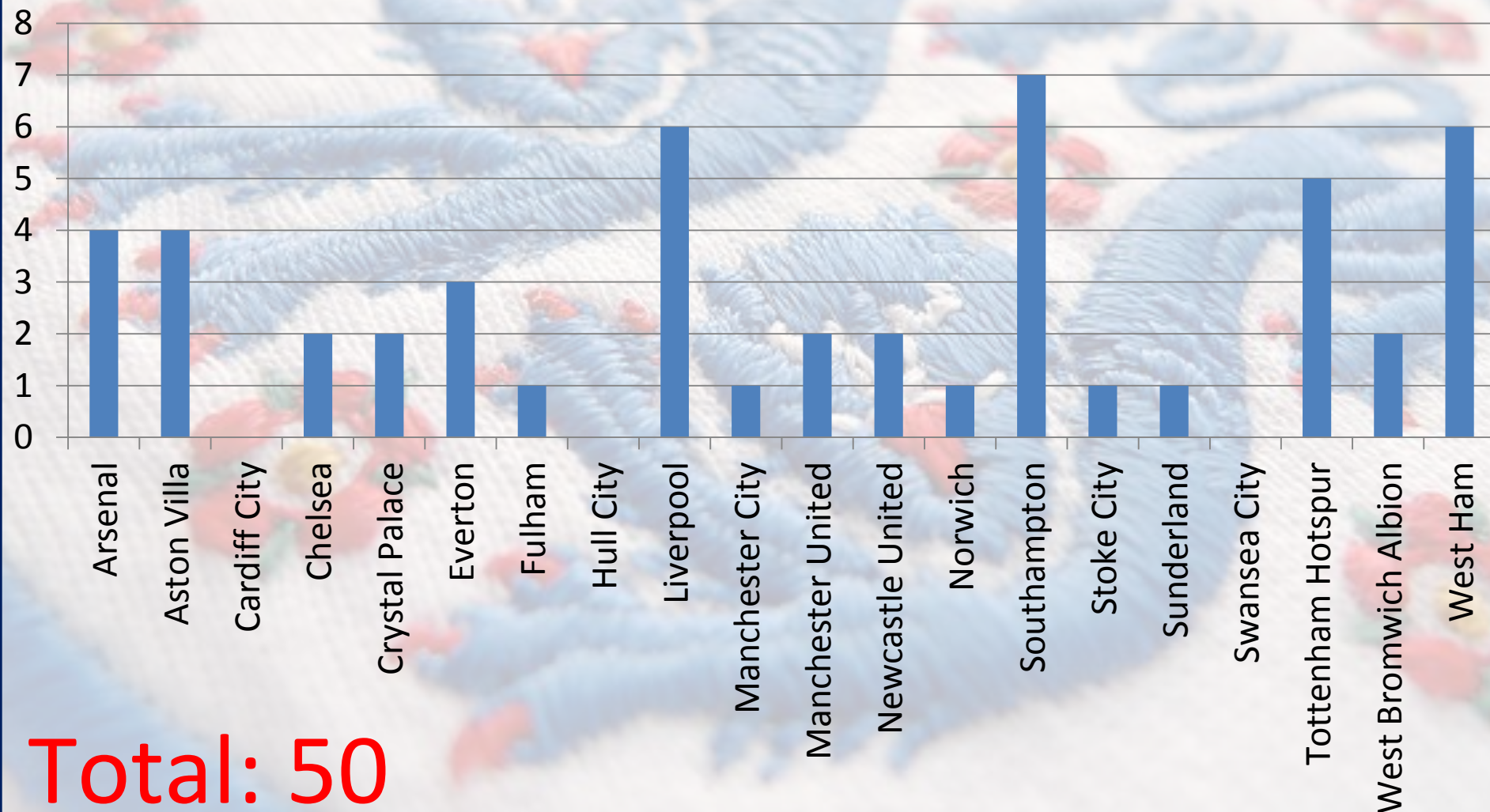
West Ham



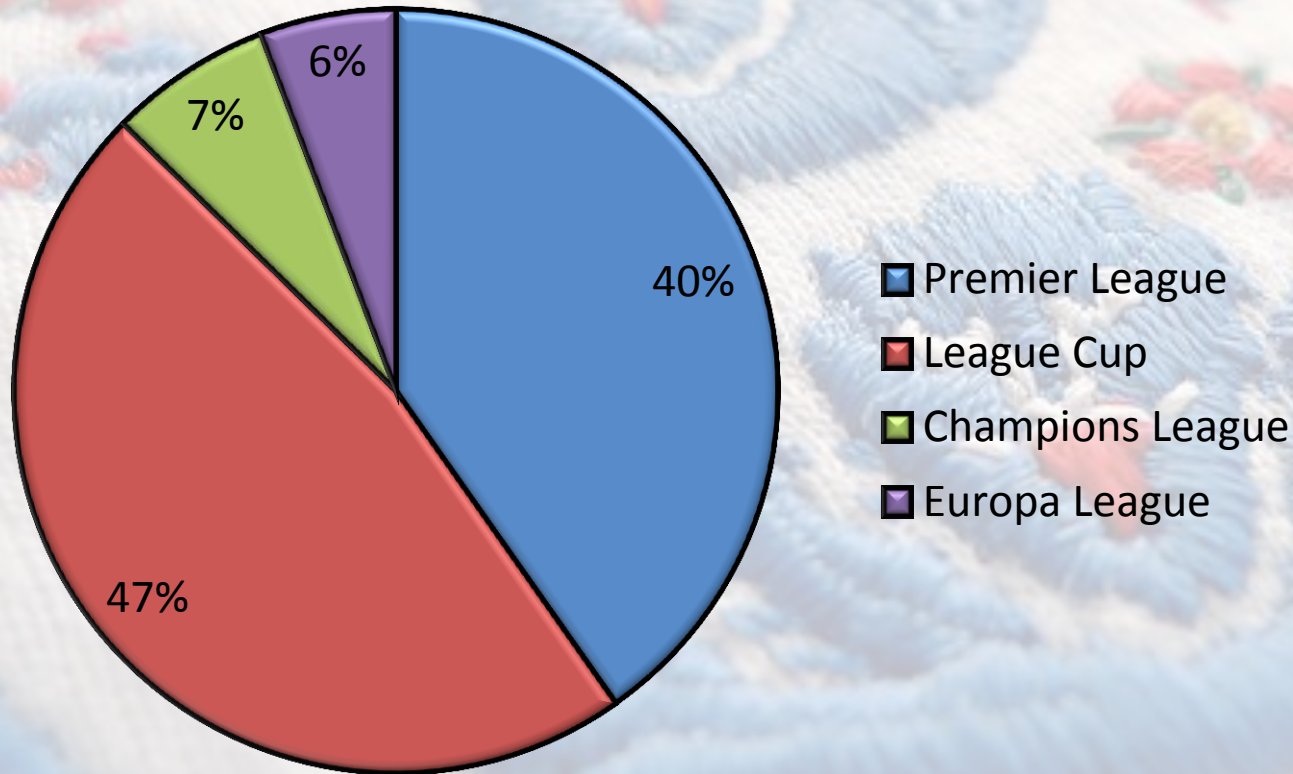
Name	Age	Appearances						Senior Int. Caps	Age Group Int. Caps (U16 – U21)
		PL Start	PL Sub used	LC Start	LC Sub used	EU Start	EU Sub used		
James Tomkins	24	12	0	3	0	-	-	0	37
Mark Noble	26	17	0	0	0	-	-	0	47
Joe Cole	32	4	7	3	0	-	-	56	17
Daniel Potts	19	0	0	1	0	-	-	0	6
Pelly Ruddock	19	0	0	1	0	-	-	0	0
Leo Chambers	18	0	0	3	0	-	-	0	13



Number of “home-grown” English players to have appeared in their clubs’ first team during the 2013/14 season to date



Appearance by competition

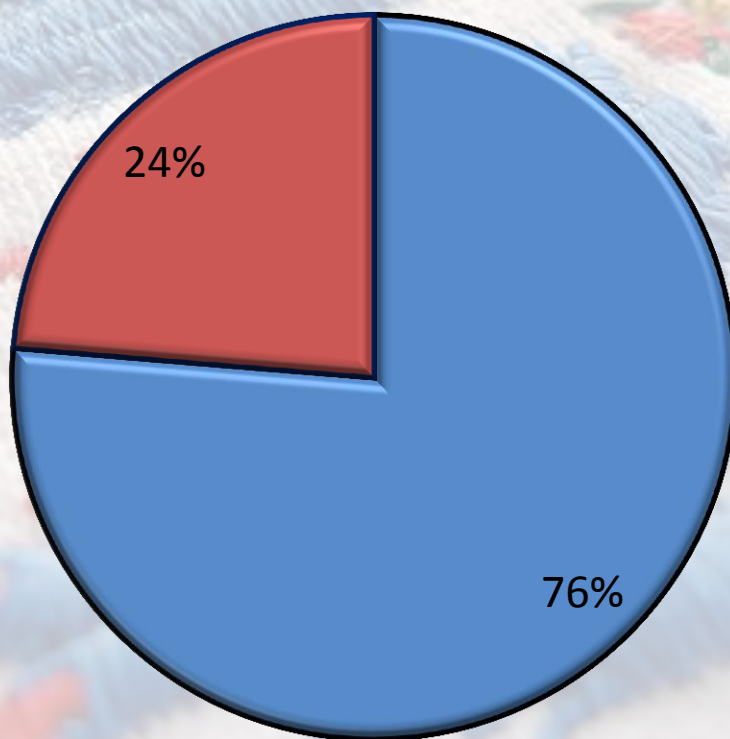


Of the 50 players to have appeared in their clubs' first team during the 2013/14 season to date;

- **35** have appeared in the Premier League
- **41** have appeared in the League Cup
- **6** have appeared in the Champions League
- **5** have appeared in the Europa Cup

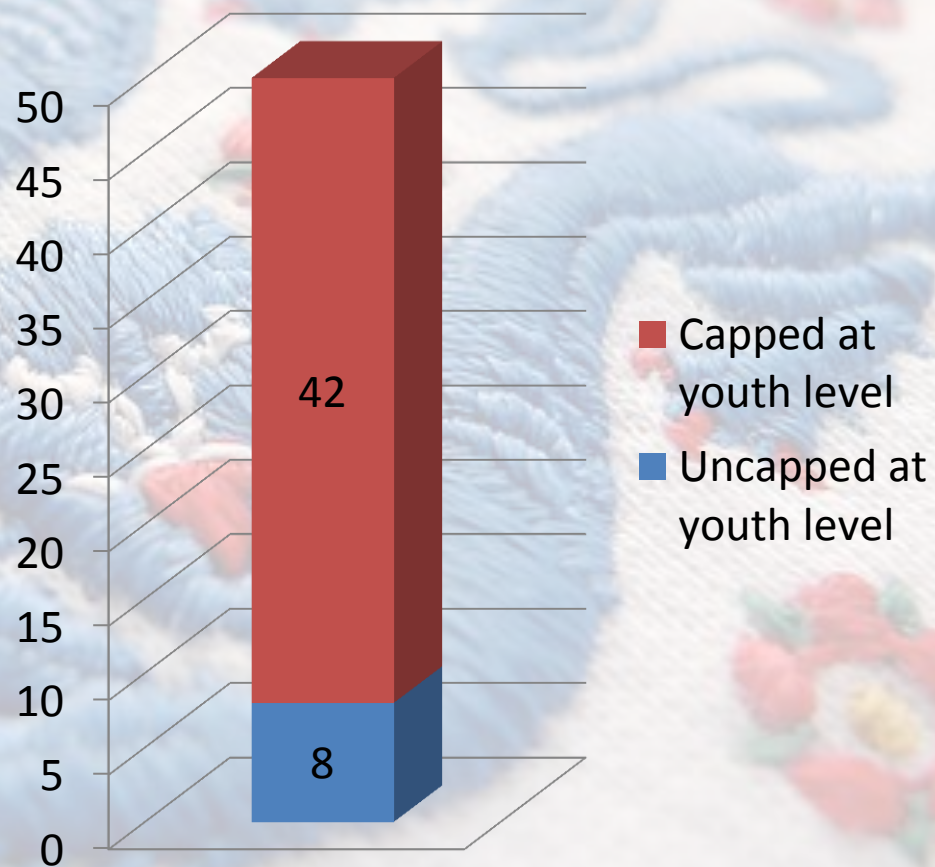
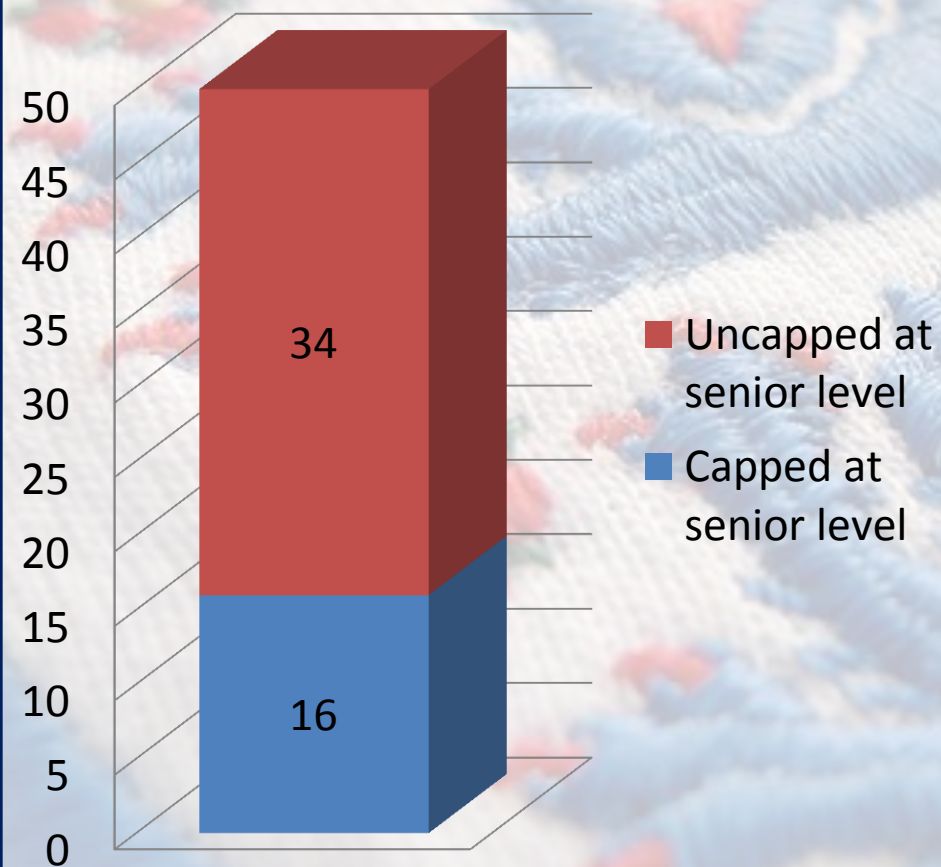
Nature of appearance of English “home-grown” players to have appeared in their clubs’ first team during the 2013/14 season to date

■ Start ■ Used substitute

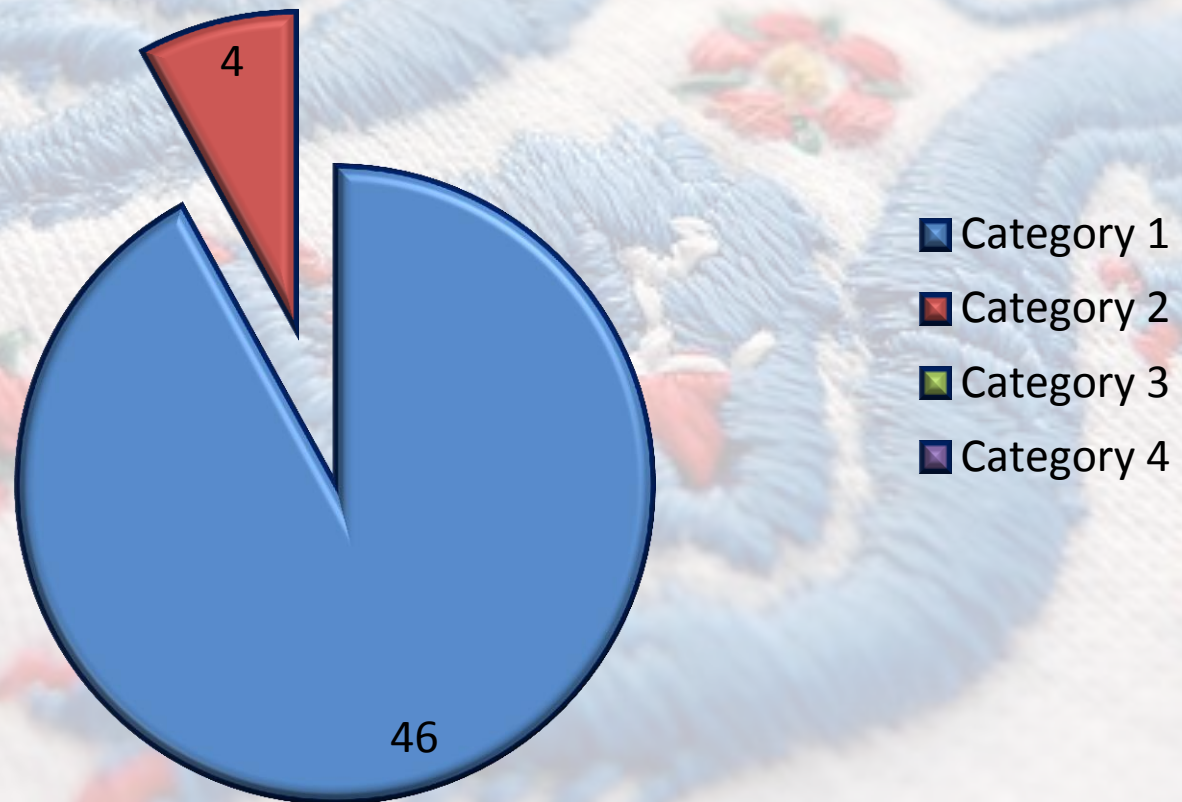


The majority of starts were made by senior professionals such as John Terry, Steven Gerrard and Mark Noble.

Number of those players to have gained international representation



Number of English players produced and to have appeared in their clubs' first team during the 2013/14 season to date by EPPP category



Comparison

At almost the halfway stage in the Premier League, the semi-finals of the League Cup and the knockout stages of the European competitions, 50 English “home-grown” players have made at least one first team appearance for the club in which they were developed.

By contrast, here are three recent fixtures in which six of the top clubs in Europe (according to their development of “home-grown” players) played one another. In just those three games alone, a total of **33** players that have been developed by each club and are eligible to play for the country’s national team made an appearance.

Top eight clubs to have produced home-grown players that are currently starring in their first team squad

1. Athletic Bilbao
2. Barcelona
3. Real Sociedad
4. Montpellier
5. Sochaux-Montbéliard
6. Lyon
7. Bordeaux
8. Manchester United



Athletic Bilbao vs. Barcelona



Primera La Liga - Sunday 1st December 2013

15



Sochaux vs. Montpellier



Coupe de la Ligue – Wednesday 30th October 2013

10



Lyon vs. Bordeaux



Ligue 1 – Sunday 20th October 2013

8

Conclusion

Of the 467 players that have made an appearance in the Premier League this season (to date), only 50 are English players representing the club whose Academy they were developed in.

Contributing factors may include...

- Decreased loyalty in modern professional sport; too many young players (and agents) are striving to gain lucrative contracts and think they need a big club behind them, pushing their name.
- The best players are increasingly cherry picked by the larger, richer clubs. The biggest clubs are able to stockpile the brightest young talent on the off-chance that one day they might turn into superstars.
- Increased pressure on managers to obtain short-term results, therefore trying to find room in their side to develop young players is deemed to be a difficult (and risky) juggling act.
- Squads are becoming too heavily saturated with foreign players, thus restricting the amount of top flight game-time English players are exposed to.
- Abuse of the loan system by some Premier League clubs in which young players are not allowed to develop in the top leagues. Already wealthy clubs are able to manipulate the loan system which can be damaging to youth development and the national team. Whilst loans can be beneficial (e.g. Jack Wilshere, Danny Welbeck, Andros Townsend) successes are too rare and the cost to the integrity of the game is too high.

Suggested areas for future analysis

It is believed that the area of research would benefit from...

- A detailed analysis of wider factors and determinants that influence player development within a Club in order to gain a greater insight of the processes and opportunities specific to each distinctive environment (for example, what are the Clubs' Board Level directives – does the board expect the manager in charge to give youth players a chance in the first team?; What are the Clubs' selection and recruitment processes – what age are players recruited at and promoted to the senior side, what are the 'coaching', 'sociological', 'psychological' factors etc. within that?; What is the philosophy, vision and mission of the Club, its policy-makers and decision-makers, and what is the effect that this may have on the Academy and player development).
- A study of the progression of players from Football League Clubs and the correlation to their EPPP categorisation. Again, a detailed analysis of contributing and variable factors (such as those above) would provide the opportunity to discuss the important and directly relevant topics of such a broad issue in depth, enabling us to deepen our understanding of the elements required for 'home-grown' players to improve and the opportunities / pathways that are essential for them to progress (to higher club level and / or international representation).

It is however acknowledge that the main limitation of the study area is the fact that it is rather complex and information may be difficult to obtain. There are also no 'easy' answers, and it is inevitable that long-term recording processes will be required in order to obtain accurate and reliable outcomes.



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