



# Professional Training Year at West Ham United

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## West Ham United and the Premier League

- West Ham United is a premier league club located in East London, as with all premier league clubs it is a highly prestigious, competitive and scrutinised environment.
- Interpersonal dynamics are especially important with players and staff both within West Ham and the football world.
- Due to a challenging season in 2017-18 where many of the matches were spent battling relegation, a new manager was appointed to change the club's direction.
- By the time I arrived at the club, 11 new players had been signed and an entirely new coaching staff and Head of Medical had been brought in.



## Academic Development

Due to the nature of the environment, I was rarely challenged academically as a result of my role. However I did learn a great deal from the exceptionally knowledgeable medical team.

- I was regularly involved and invited to participate in scientific discussions on a variety of topics from skill acquisition, the nature of football for a player, gameplay, injury prevention and rehab as well as general strength and conditioning.
- In such a challenging environment, the translation from best theoretical practice into what is reasonably physically achievable is significant and takes a great deal of thought.
- They have clearly represented a practical application of the theory learned at university, which I believe, is the main purpose of the placement year.

## Role and Professional Development

Initially my role was simple, but still crucial to the training week. As I proved my competence and gained the trust of the staff and players my role was expanded to include:

- Being responsible preparation and delivery of all nutritional supplementation and training drinks, weighing the players every morning and managing the spreadsheet of bodyweights to track changes.
- Monitoring and running a section of the team gym sessions. Typically this would involve coaching players through a pair of exercises in a larger circuit.
- Designing and delivering a supplementary strength and conditioning programme for one of the players.
- Leading the pre training activation of one of the players, and leading or assisting with the delivery of football drills within the session.
- Taking players for one to one sessions in the gym when required.
- Assisting in the force testing of players and their rehab on return from injury.
- I was also involved with the selection and education of the interns that followed me into the role.

I was successful enough that West Ham took two interns on this season and both would've been from the University of Surrey if one hadn't fallen through at the last minute.



## Challenges Presented

- The authority to force changes lies only with the manager. This means that the medical staff are responsible for delivering interventions but must use persuasion as the primary mechanism.
- Finding the balance between having the players respect but also being able to respond to their 'banter' is therefore crucial.
- A combination of player attitude and pressure from higher-ups mean that 'best practice' is rarely possible.
- Everything is of secondary importance to getting 3 points on the Saturday because at season's end one point or even one goal difference can impact a club's future for several years

Club Name	Div	Club Value	Facility Cost	Player Payment	Interpreted TV	Central Commercial	Total Payment					
Manchester City	26	34,365,519	33,884,876	36,270,360	43,134,688	4,965,370	126,966,255					
Liverpool	29	34,365,519	13,661,795	34,451,860	43,134,688	4,965,370	132,429,186					
Chelsea	26	34,365,519	30,985,574	34,333,324	43,134,688	4,965,370	144,288,234					
Tottenham Hotspur	26	34,365,519	33,554,476	32,034,906	43,134,688	4,965,370	141,239,861					
Arsenal	26	34,365,519	28,084,273	36,694,288	43,134,688	4,965,370	142,871,886					
Manchester United	27	34,365,519	31,221,579	28,727,770	43,134,688	4,965,370	142,212,268					
Wolverhampton Wanderers	18	34,365,519	17,794,343	34,895,253	43,134,688	4,965,370	127,468,114					
Everton	18	34,365,519	21,111,052	24,940,734	43,134,688	4,965,370	128,463,765					
Leicester City	25	34,365,519	17,794,343	23,529,216	43,134,688	4,965,370	122,288,914					
West Ham United	16	34,365,519	18,921,846	23,305,498	43,134,688	4,965,370	122,698,463					
Watford	10	34,365,519	12,198,028	29,285,130	43,134,688	4,965,370	113,895,227					
Crystal Palace	12	34,365,519	14,617,034	17,266,563	43,134,688	4,965,370	114,213,215					
Nottingham Forest	19	34,365,519	22,270,755	35,246,141	43,134,688	4,965,370	126,126,413					
AFC Bournemouth	10	34,365,519	12,198,028	15,424,409	43,134,688	4,965,370	108,139,973					
Brentford	12	34,365,519	13,227,281	21,212,130	43,134,688	4,965,370	107,945,568					
Southampton	10	34,365,519	12,256,858	9,592,790	43,134,688	4,965,370	104,262,927					
Brighton & Hove Albion	12	34,365,519	13,554,137	7,474,072	43,134,688	4,965,370	105,461,228					
Cardiff City	12	34,365,519	14,427,024	5,733,554	43,134,688	4,965,370	102,704,107					
Reading	13	34,365,519	13,554,137	5,837,236	43,134,688	4,965,370	101,904,462					
Huddersfield Town	10	34,365,519	12,198,028	1,913,518	43,134,688	4,965,370	96,628,845					
All figures in £							987,232,189	402,487,144	422,898,270	103,497,140	95,327,819	2,064,026,136

Taken from [www.premierleague.com](http://www.premierleague.com) accessed 03/02/2020

## Further Advancement

- Upon completion of the Premier League season I was invited back to train the new interns and to help run the preseason training.
- I also was able to secure a summer placement working with the English Institute of Sport, coaching the GB Rowing Team in strength and conditioning.
- At the start of this year, myself and a fellow student set up a Sports Science Department at Bracknell Town Football Club.
- My research question for my dissertation was also formulated in discussions with the medical department.