

*There have been some well known and respected figures in football management in charge at Sunderland AFC. Steve Bruce, Lawrie McMenemy, Sam Allardyce, Howard Wilkinson, Peter Reid, Gus Poyet and Bob Stokoe among them but today Pete Sixsmith remembers another, who has only recently been appointed to succeed two other ex Sunderland managers.*

## **Mick McCarthy**



Mick was probably the most down to earth manager we have had in all the time I have been watching Sunderland. His broken nose epitomised the footballing culture of the 1970s and 1980s, an era when there were very few pretty boys in the back fours of Barnsley, Manchester City and Celtic.

As a manager he built a decent team at Sunderland, bringing in players like Stephen Elliott, Dean Whitehead, Danny Collins and Steve Caldwell, all players like him – honest, hard working and committed to the cause.

The promotion side that he put together for the 2004-05 season gave me a couple of very fond memories. The sight of 7,000 Sunderland fans packing two sides of the ground at Wigan will last long in the memory and then there was a wonderful night at Upton Park where we clinched the title thanks to goals from Julio Arca and Stephen Elliott. The West Ham crowd that night were the most sullen and hostile I have ever been in.



*West 'am innit!  
No wonder I'm miserable*

His season in the Premier League was curtailed early but with the limited finances he had available, not even Alex Ferguson could have put a competitive team together.

When you go into the top league with the likes of Andy Gray, Christian Bassila and Kelvin Davies, you are heading for trouble.

He always speaks well of Sunderland and when he was sacked, he said that it had been a privilege to be at such a fine football club. He even looked upset at the state of the club last season as Ipswich demolished us twice.

A fine example of a true son of Barnsley, Mick would be a good man to have a pint with – although local journalists might not agree.

Still - "Tha'll do for me, Macca."