

= Phil Edwards (footballer) =

Philip Lee " Phil " Edwards (born 8 November 1985) is an English footballer who currently plays for League One side Burton Albion as a defender .

Edwards started his football career at Wigan Athletic , progressing through the club 's youth system before signing a professional contract at the age of 18 . In September 2004 , Edwards joined Morecambe on a month 's loan , playing one game before returning to his parent club . He was loaned out again during the 2005 ? 06 season , this time to Accrington Stanley in October 2005 . He subsequently signed for the club permanently in January 2006 , helping the club win the Conference National . He spent five years at Accrington , playing over 250 games for the club in all competitions . In June 2011 , Edwards signed for Stevenage on a free transfer . In March 2012 , Edwards joined Rochdale on loan until the end of the 2011 ? 12 season . Edwards was released by Stevenage in May 2012 , and subsequently signed for Rochdale on a permanent basis in August 2012 . After a season of regular first @-@ team football at Rochdale , Edwards signed for Burton Albion in June 2013 .

= = Career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Edwards started his career at Wigan Athletic , signing a professional contract with the club at the age of 18 in 2004 . He was sent out on a one @-@ month loan to Morecambe in September 2004 in order to gain first @-@ team experience . However , Edwards made just one appearance for the club , playing in a 2 ? 2 draw away at Northwich Victoria , with Edwards coming on as a substitute in the 36th minute . He returned to Wigan in October 2004 , playing regularly for the reserve side , although he failed to make a first @-@ team appearance for the club .

= = = Accrington Stanley = = =

Edwards signed for Accrington Stanley on loan in October 2005 , making his debut in a 3 ? 3 Football League Trophy draw away at Rotherham United . He made his league debut on 29 October 2005 , playing the whole match as Accrington beat York City 2 ? 1 at the Crown Ground . During Edwards ' first six games at Accrington , the club had won all six fixtures , conceding just two goals . This form had propelled the club to the top of the Conference National . His loan was later extended until the end of the 2005 ? 06 season in November 2005 . In January 2006 , the opportunity arose for Accrington to sign Edwards on a permanent basis , and he signed for the club on a free transfer on 12 January . Edwards was part of the side that clinched promotion to the Football League following a 1 ? 0 away victory at Woking in April 2006 , playing the whole match . He played a total of 27 times for Accrington during the club 's successful campaign . Edwards was an unused substitute in Accrington 's first two games back in the Football League , both of which resulted in 2 ? 0 defeats . He came on as an 85th @-@ minute substitute in the club 's 2 ? 1 home win against Barnet in the following game , Accrington 's first win of the 2006 ? 07 season . Edwards started his first game of the season on 9 September 2006 , a 3 ? 2 away defeat to Notts County . He started in the club 's next five games , before suffering an injury in a 2 ? 2 draw away at Bury , meaning that he missed the next three games . Edwards returned to the first @-@ team on 17 October 2006 , starting in a 1 ? 1 draw against Carlisle United in the Football League Trophy . He scored his first ever professional goal in a 3 ? 3 home draw with Shrewsbury Town in December 2006 , scoring a header in the 55th minute to restore parity after Accrington were trailing 2 ? 1 . Edwards ' last game of the 2006 ? 07 season was in a 3 ? 2 home win against Macclesfield Town , a win that ultimately secured the club 's Football League status for another year . He played a total of 39 games in all competitions , scoring one goal .

Edwards opted to remain at Accrington ahead of the 2007 ? 08 season , signing a contract

extension in May 2007 . He played his first game of the campaign in late August 2007 , a 2 ? 0 defeat at Lincoln City . Following Accrington 's 4 ? 1 home win against Grimsby Town in September 2007 , a game in which Edwards appeared as a 90th @-@ minute substitute , he did not feature in the first @-@ team for two months . He returned to first @-@ team action on 17 November 2007 , playing in the club 's 1 ? 0 home defeat to Rotherham United . Following a spate of late substitute appearances , Edwards was ever present in the first @-@ team from December 2007 onwards . He scored his first goal of the 2007 ? 08 season on 4 April 2008 , scoring the winner in a 1 ? 0 win against Dagenham & Redbridge . The goal all but guaranteed League Two survival for Accrington . It was Edwards ' only goal of the season , playing 32 games in all competitions . Edwards started in Accrington 's first game of the 2008 ? 09 season , a 1 ? 0 home loss to newly promoted Aldershot Town . In October 2008 , Accrington manager John Coleman praised Edwards for his form during the start of the season , " I couldn 't pay him enough compliments . I think the last six months he has been absolutely magnificent . I am convinced if he was three inches bigger he would be playing in the Premier League . He is our best defender and hopefully he 'll continue to be a great player for us for a long time " . Edwards remained ever present in the Accrington first @-@ team , but was taken off after 17 minutes in Accrington 's 2 ? 1 win against Shrewsbury Town . Despite needing eight stitches in his knee , Edwards played in Accrington 's following league match four days later , a 1 ? 0 home defeat to Wycombe Wanderers . He provided the assist for Paul Mullin 's goal in a defeat at Wycombe Wanderers , as well as assisting Jamie Clarke 's second goal in a 3 ? 1 home win over Grimsby Town . Edwards played in every one of Accrington 's 50 games during the 2008 ? 09 season , with the club finishing 16th in the league table .

In June 2009 , Edwards signed a new two @-@ year contract at Accrington . He scored his first goal of the 2009 ? 10 season on 22 August 2009 , " bundling " the ball into the net from John Miles ' corner kick in a 3 ? 1 loss at Aldershot Town . Ten days later , Edwards doubled his goal tally for the season , scoring a low drilled effort from 14 yards out in Accrington 's 2 ? 1 away win at Oldham Athletic in the Football League Trophy . His third goal of the campaign came in a 2 ? 2 draw away at Port Vale , with Edwards scoring from the penalty spot in the 82nd minute . He scored another penalty in a 4 ? 0 win against Cheltenham Town on 10 October 2009 , and also found the net in a 2 ? 2 draw at Grimsby Town to take his goal tally to five for the season . Edwards added to his goal tally when he scored from the penalty spot in a 4 ? 2 win against Torquay United on 5 December 2009 . He missed a penalty a week later in Accrington 's game against Notts County , with Kasper Schmeichel saving his penalty , although Accrington went on to win the match 2 ? 1 , ending Notts County 's unbeaten home record . He made amends by scoring twice in Accrington 's next league match , a 2 ? 1 away win at Morecambe on 26 December 2009 , scoring the first goal with a header and then netting from the penalty spot after Bobby Grant was fouled in the area . Edwards scored in another away victory in March 2010 , scoring a header from Luke Joyce 's corner to give Accrington a 2 ? 1 win at Barnet . The goal meant that Edwards had scored nine goals during the 2009 ? 10 season , again being ever present in the side , playing all 57 of the club 's matches as Accrington finished in 15th place in League Two .

During the start of the 2010 ? 11 season , Edwards was key in Accrington 's strong defensive record , with the team conceding just one goal in their first seven league fixtures . In October 2010 , Edwards scored his first and second goals of the season when he scored twice from the penalty spot in Accrington 's 7 ? 4 home win against Gillingham . He scored his third goal of the 2010 ? 11 season in a 4 ? 2 home defeat to Cheltenham Town , scoring a penalty in the 88th minute , only serving as a consolation with Accrington 4 ? 1 down at the time . Three days later , on 2 November 2010 , Edwards scored from the penalty spot again , this time in a 5 ? 2 away defeat at eventual champions Chesterfield . His fifth goal of the season came courtesy of a 21st @-@ minute penalty in a 1 ? 1 draw at Bradford City , before he scored another goal at Morecambe in a 2 ? 1 away win on 1 January 2011 . A month later , on 1 February , Edwards scored yet again against Morecambe , this time in a 1 ? 1 home draw , salvaging a point by scoring a late penalty . His eighth goal of the campaign came three weeks later , scoring a header from Charlie Barnett 's cross in the 82nd minute to give Accrington a 2 ? 1 away win at Wycombe , their first win in five league matches . Edwards took his goal tally into double figures when he scored two first @-@ half penalties in a 3 ?

0 home win against Stockport County on 8 March 2011 . He missed a penalty in a 3 ? 1 defeat at Gillingham four days later , before scoring three days later in a 3 ? 1 home win against Burton Albion ? scoring from six yards out following good work from Terry Gornell . He scored his twelfth goal of the season with an 82nd @-@ minute penalty in a 3 ? 1 win against Southend United on 5 April 2011 , moving Accrington into the play @-@ off places in League Two . Three days later , Edwards scored again from the penalty spot , scoring a 79th @-@ minute penalty to give Accrington the lead against ten man Macclesfield Town , although a late goal courtesy of Vinny Mukendi earned Macclesfield a point . Accrington cemented a place in the League Two play @-@ offs after finishing fifth , Edwards played in both of the semi @-@ final matches against Stevenage , which Accrington lost by a 3 ? 0 aggregate scoreline . Edwards scored a total of 13 goals from defence in 51 appearances during Accrington 's 2010 ? 11 campaign , finishing as Accrington 's joint top goalscorer for the season alongside Terry Gornell and Sean McConville . He was offered a two @-@ year contract extension at the end of the season . Accrington assistant manager Jimmy Bell stated " Phil has been offered a good deal and we 're quietly confident , although there have been a few rumours about one or two clubs being interested . But Phil has been here since he was young , he can 't drive , he gets looked after by the club and he gets lifts in to training , so he feels quite settled here " . Edwards played 257 games for Accrington , scoring 24 goals .

= = = Stevenage = = =

Edwards signed for League One side Stevenage on 27 June 2011 . He joined the club on a free transfer , rejecting a contract extension at Accrington . He signed a one @-@ year deal with Stevenage , with the option of a second year . On joining the club he said " I wasn 't particularly looking for another club and I didn 't have any interest in any other clubs at the time , so I thought I 'd still be at Accrington next season . However , the manager got in touch with my agent and discussed the offer and when I thought I had the chance of playing League One football I decided to sign for Stevenage " . Edwards was assigned the number six shirt ahead of the 2011 ? 12 season . He made his Stevenage debut on the first day of the 2011 ? 12 season , playing the whole match in a 0 ? 0 home draw against Exeter City . Edwards made 13 starting appearances for the club , as well as a further 14 appearances from the substitute 's bench , during the first half of the club 's first ever League One campaign .

= = = Rochdale = = =

Edwards joined Rochdale on loan until the end of the 2011 ? 12 season in March 2012 . The move re @-@ united him with manager John Coleman , who had managed Edwards for six years at Accrington Stanley . He made his first appearance for Rochdale a day after signing for the club , on 10 March , coming on as a 61st @-@ minute substitute as Rochdale came back twice to draw 2 ? 2 against Huddersfield Town . Edwards made just three appearances for Rochdale during his loan spell due to a knee injury . At the end of the season , Edwards was released by Stevenage when his contract expired , after just one year at the club . He made 27 appearances during his time at Stevenage .

In August 2012 , Edwards signed for Rochdale , plying their trade in League Two , on a free transfer . He signed a one @-@ year deal with the club . Edwards was a regular fixture throughout the 2012 ? 13 season , making 48 appearances in all competitions as Rochdale finished the campaign in a mid @-@ table position .

= = = Burton Albion = = =

After his first full season at Rochdale , Edwards opted to leave the club at the end of the campaign , subsequently joining fellow League Two side Burton Albion on a free transfer on 29 June 2013 . On securing Edwards ' signature , Burton manager Gary Rowett stated ? " In Phil we have a player who knows what it takes to be successful at this level as well as the league above and he is a very

consistent performer . At 27 he 's also at a good age to continue progressing and I 'm sure he 'll prove to be a big asset to the club " .

= = Personal life = =

Edwards is a supporter of Everton .

= = Career statistics = =

As of 29 June 2013 .

= = Honours = =

Accrington Stanley

Conference National (1) : 2005 ? 06

Burton Albion

Football League Two (1) : 2014 @-@ 15