

= 2007 ? 08 Sunderland A.F.C. season =

The 2007 ? 08 season was the 113th full season in Sunderland A.F.C. ' s history , their 107th in the league system of English football and 7th in the Premier League . After finishing 1st in the Championship during the 2006 ? 07 season , Sunderland were promoted to the Premier League as champions . Sunderland had been relegated in the 2005 ? 06 season with the record low points tally at the time of 15 . The 2007 ? 08 season was Roy Keane ' s first as a manager in the Premier League having won the Championship in his debut season .

Keane introduced 12 new signings in pre @-@ season and allowed seven players to leave the club . They won their first game of the season , but subsequently started to struggle for points , winning just two games in their first 16 . Their longest winning streak came towards the end of the season as they won three consecutive games . This late run helped Sunderland finish 15th , though they only managed to win two away games , of which the first came in late March . The team suffered first round exits in two of the cup competitions they entered : in the second round of the League Cup and the third round of the FA Cup . Kenwyne Jones was the club ' s top goalscorer , recording 7 goals in the league . Left @-@ back Danny Collins was named as Sunderland ' s player of the season , while on loan centre @-@ back Jonny Evans was named as the club ' s young player of the season for the second season running . The club ' s average attendance of 42 @, @ 728 was the fifth highest in the division .

= = Background = =

Discussions of takeover were held over the summer involving an Irish group , the Drumaville Consortium , led by Niall Quinn . They completed the takeover in July for £ 10 million as Quinn ' s group took 72 @. @ 59 % of the club ' s shares . During the 2006 ? 07 season , Roy Keane took over as manager from chairman Niall Quinn , who served as manager for the first six games of the season . Keane had a successful start to his managerial career with a 2 ? 1 win over Derby County on 11 September 2006 . On transfer window deadline day , Keane signed new players ; Dwight Yorke , Liam Miller , Ross Wallace , Stanislav Varga , Graham Kavanagh and David Connolly . A 2 ? 0 win over Leicester City on 1 January 2007 sparked an 18 @-@ game unbeaten streak for Sunderland , which was eventually ended on 21 April 2007 after a 3 ? 1 defeat at the hands of Colchester United .

Sunderland reached the top of the Football League Championship for the first time in the season with a 2 ? 1 win over Southampton , which included an 87th @-@ minute winner from Grant Leadbitter . Their promotion was confirmed as third placed team Derby County lost 2 ? 0 to Crystal Palace , as a result Birmingham City were also promoted . On the last day of the season , the Championship title would be decided . Sunderland won their game 5 ? 0 against Luton Town , while Birmingham suffered a defeat against Preston North End thus crowning Sunderland as champions .

= = Review = =

= = = Pre @-@ season = = =

Sunderland ' s pre @-@ season was busy with transfer activity , seeing eight players come in , and five players leave . Kenny Cunningham retired , Tommy Miller , William Mocoquet , Kevin Smith were released , while Robbie Weir , Jamie Chandler and David Dowson were all promoted to the first team from the club ' s youth system . Their first signing of the season was of Greg Halford from Charlton Athletic , and their first transfer out of the club when Stephen Elliott moved to Wolverhampton Wanderers . On 13 July 2007 , Sunderland signed the former Newcastle United player Michael Chopra from Cardiff City for £ 5 million and Manchester United midfielder Kieran Richardson on 16 July .

Fellow north east team Darlington was Sunderland ' s first pre @-@ season friendly , Sunderland

won the game 2 ? 0 with goals from Ross Wallace and Anthony Stokes at The Darlington Arena . This was followed up by a shock defeat to Scunthorpe United on 21 July where they were beaten 1 ? 0 . Sunderland went on a tour of Ireland , where they would play Bohemians , Cork City and Galway United . They beat Bohemians 1 ? 0 on 28 July thanks to a Stern John goal , but were held to a 1 ? 1 draw at Cork City as Liam Miller scored the Sunderland goal . Their final game of the tour against Galway United ended as a 4 ? 0 win for Sunderland , with goals from Michael Chopra , Kieran Richardson , David Connolly and Stern John . Juventus travelled to the Stadium of Light to commemorate its ten @-@ year anniversary . The game ended 1 ? 1 as Daryl Murphy scored , but the Italian side scored with two minutes remaining to draw the game .

Sunderland signed Dickson Etuhu from Norwich City for £ 1 @.@ 5 million on 17 July , and Paul McShane from West Bromwich Albion on 26 July for £ 2 @.@ 5 million . With the start of the Premier League season looming , Sunderland broke their transfer record to buy Scottish international goalkeeper Craig Gordon from Heart of Midlothian for £ 9 million . The club 's last signing before the start of the season was Roy O 'Donovan from Cork City for an undisclosed fee .

= = = August = = =

Sunderland 's season started against Tottenham Hotspur on 11 August 2007 . Sunderland won the game through a last minute goal from Michael Chopra in front of an attendance of 43 @,@ 967 . Their second game of the season was an away fixture to Birmingham City , a Paul McShane own goal had put Sunderland behind in the 28th minute , but Michael Chopra scored his second goal of the season to equalise . Birmingham took the lead again through Garry O 'Connor but Sunderland scored another last minute goal , this time from Stern John to save a point . On 24 August ex Manchester United and Newcastle United striker Andy Cole joined the club on a free transfer from Portsmouth . Sunderland travelled to the JJB Stadium unbeaten on 18 August but lost 3 ? 0 to Wigan Athletic . On 25 September Liverpool beat Sunderland 2 ? 0 to give them their second consecutive defeat . On the same day , Tobias Hysén returned to his native Sweden with IFK Göteborg after he and his wife were suffering from home sickness . Luton Town produced a league cup shock as they beat Sunderland 3 ? 0 at Kenilworth Road . Sunderland signed three more players before the transfer deadline ; Ian Harte from Levante on a free transfer , Danny Higginbotham from Stoke City for £ 3 million , and Kenwyne Jones from Southampton for £ 6 million with Stern John going in the opposite direction .

= = = September = = =

Sunderland opened the month with a 1 ? 0 defeat away to Manchester United on 1 September , Louis Saha scored the winner 18 minutes from full @-@ time . Roy Keane said " I 'm delighted with the overall performance . It would have been nice to test their goalkeeper a bit more but overall I 'm delighted with the players ' efforts . " about the team 's display . Jack Pelter signed for Sunderland on 8 September , from New Zealand team Canterbury United , on a free transfer in an original one @-@ month deal . Two weeks after the defeat to Manchester United , Sunderland beat Reading 2 ? 1 on 15 September . Kenwyne Jones and Ross Wallace scored the Sunderland goals in a game which was overshadowed by the tribute paid to 1973 FA Cup Final scorer Ian Porterfield who died on 11 September 2007 . Sunderland met Middlesbrough on 22 September in their first north east derby of the season . Grant Leadbitter scored in the 2nd minute to put Sunderland in front , but two ex @-@ Sunderland players ; Julio Arca and Stewart Downing put Middlesbrough into the lead . Liam Miller scored an 89th minute volley to save a point for Sunderland . Grant Leadbitter scored his second goal in as many games on 29 September as Blackburn Rovers beat Sunderland 2 ? 1 .

= = = October = = =

October started with an away fixture against Arsenal at the Emirates Stadium on 7 October . Sunderland went 2 ? 0 down within the first 14 minutes . However , Sunderland levelled the score at

2 ? 2 with goals from Ross Wallace on the 25th minute and Kenwyne Jones on the 48 minute . Arsenal won the game 3 ? 2 after a late Robin van Persie goal . Sunderland suffered back @-@ to @-@ back defeats when they lost 3 ? 1 away to West Ham United on 21 October . Kenwyne Jones got the goal for Sunderland . Fulham came to the Stadium of Light on 27 October , Fulham took the lead in the 32nd minute with a 30 yard free kick from Simon Davies . Sunderland snatched a point when Kenwyne Jones scored an 86th @-@ minute equaliser . The wearsiders had gone down to ten men in the 67th minute when Greg Halford was sent off .

= = = November = = =

Sunderland lost 1 ? 0 away to Manchester City on 5 November after a goal from Stephen Ireland . Manager , Roy Keane , expressed his frustration in a post match interview saying " We didn 't deserve anything . I don 't feel we did enough to get anything out of the game . I don 't think their keeper had too many saves to make , did he ? " . 10 November was the first Tyne ? Wear derby of the season . Danny Higginbotham put Sunderland into the lead shortly after half time , but James Milner drew Newcastle level on the 68th minute after his cross beat goalkeeper Craig Gordon into the far post . Sunderland had a chance to win the game when ex @-@ Newcastle forward Michael Chopra headed against the bar minutes from full @-@ time . Sunderland ended the month on a low as they were beaten 7 ? 1 away to Everton on 24 November . Dwight Yorke scored Sunderland 's only goal just before half time . Roy Keane said " It 's hard to take , but we lose as a team and I picked the team and sorted the tactics so I have no problem taking responsibility for what happened . "

= = = December = = =

On 1 December Sunderland beat Derby County 1 ? 0 . The defeat against Everton led to Craig Gordon being dropped from the side . He was replaced by Darren Ward who made a save to push Kenny Miller 's strike onto the post . With the game looking to be heading towards a draw , Anthony Stokes scrambled to ball in to win the game . On 8 December Sunderland travelled to Stamford Bridge to play Chelsea . Sunderland went behind in the 23rd minute through an Andriy Shevchenko goal . Chelsea won the game 2 ? 0 after Liam Miller was sent off whilst giving a penalty away , which Frank Lampard scored . Sunderland played Aston Villa on 15 December , Danny Higginbotham put Sunderland ahead with a 10th @-@ minute header . Villa midfielder Shaun Maloney equalised when he scored a from a 71st minute free kick . Sunderland could have won the game late on , but Danny Collins ' header was ruled out by referee Steve Bennett for a foul . Roy Keane displayed his annoyance at Bennett saying " It sums up (the referee 's) day . He was giving everything against us and to say we 're disappointed would be an unbelievable understatement . You could sense he was waiting to blow his whistle . It would be nice to see him later . "

Reading reversed their defeat to Sunderland previously in the season by winning 2 ? 1 on 22 December . Reading had led 1 ? 0 after a 69th @-@ minute goal from Ívar Ingimarsson . Michael Chopra levelled the match by scoring an 82nd @-@ minute penalty . A goal by Stephen Hunt in the 90th minute sparked controversy as it appeared not to have crossed the line . Sunderland met Manchester United on Boxing Day at the Stadium of Light , they were beaten 4 ? 0 in a game where Sunderland striker Martyn Waghorn made the step up from the club 's Youth system to the first team . Martyn Waghorn promoted to first team from Youth system . Sunderland ended 2007 with a 3 ? 1 home win to Bolton Wanderers on 29 December , Kieran Richardson , Kenwyne Jones and Daryl Murphy were the scorers .

= = = January = = =

Sunderland began the new year with a 1 ? 0 away loss to Blackburn Rovers on 1 January . Dean Whitehead had the chance to put Sunderland in the lead , but missed his penalty kick . Minutes later , Blackburn won a penalty of their own ; Benni McCarthy converted the penalty before Dwight Yorke

was sent off late on . Jonny Evans returned to Sunderland on loan for the second time for the remainder of season from Manchester United . Sunderland met Wigan Athletic in the FA Cup third round as they lost 3 ? 0 on 5 January . On 12 January Kieran Richardson scored a double to beat Portsmouth 2 ? 0 at the Stadium of Light . Sunderland made their first permanent signing of the January transfer window when Frenchman Jean @-@ Yves M 'voto signed from Paris Saint @-@ Germain on 15 January for an undisclosed fee . M 'voto said " This is a big opportunity for me , I 'm pleased to be at Sunderland . "

On 19 January Sunderland played Tottenham Hotspur . An early Aaron Lennon goal saw Spurs take the lead , and Robbie Keane 's 100th goal for the club in the 90th minute won the game for Tottenham at White Hart Lane . Phil Bardsley signed for the club on 22 January from Manchester United for £ 2 million , the next day Rade Prica also signed for the club , from AaB Aalborg for £ 2 million . New signing Rade Prica scored a goal on his debut for Sunderland to wrap up a 2 ? 0 win at home to Birmingham City on 29 January . Daryl Murphy scored the first goal in the 15th minute . Andy Reid signed for the club on the last day of the January transfer window deadline from Charlton Athletic for £ 4 million .

= = = February = = =

Sunderland had a poor start to the month , as they lost 3 ? 0 away to Liverpool on 2 February . They had two penalty appeals turned down , prompting Roy Keane to comment , " We felt they were penalties . But I didn 't feel we were going to get those decisions today . " Following a recent heart attack in a League Cup game between Leicester City and Nottingham Forest , Clive Clarke had his Sunderland contract terminated on 5 February due to the event while on loan at Leicester . Sunderland bounced back from the defeat to Liverpool with a 2 ? 0 win against Wigan Athletic on 9 February . Dickson Etuhu put them in the lead before Daryl Murphy scored a 25 yard strike in off the bar . Sunderland , however , lost their next game 1 ? 0 to Portsmouth on 23 February at Fratton Park .

= = = March = = =

On 1 March Sunderland drew 0 ? 0 away to Derby County . Michael Chopra could have put the team in the lead , only for it to be ruled out for offside . Sunderland 's manager said , " He [Chopra] was clearly onside and we are always told that the advantage goes with the attacking player . " An Andrew Johnson goal on the verge of half time helped Everton to a 1 ? 0 win at the Stadium of Light on 8 March . Sunderland lost consecutive games when Chelsea beat them 1 ? 0 on 15 March due to a Didier Drogba goal . Andy Reid came close to putting Sunderland in front as his free kick was plucked from the top corner by Carlo Cudicini . Sunderland 's first away win of the season came on 22 March when they won 1 ? 0 at Villa Park against Aston Villa . An 83rd minute Michael Chopra scored the winning goal for Sunderland . A 2 ? 1 win at home to West Ham United on 29 February helped Sunderland to their first consecutive wins of the season . Kenwyne Jones ' first goal since late December levelled the score at 1 ? 1 and a 95th minute Andy Reid goal won the game .

= = = April = = =

A 3 ? 1 away win to Fulham on 5 April helped Sunderland to nine points in three games , as goals came from Danny Collins , Michael Chopra and Kenwyne Jones . They lost 2 ? 1 at home to Manchester City on 12 April . Manchester City were awarded a dubious penalty given by Mike Riley , and Elano converted it in the 79 minute . Dean Whitehead equalised with a near post volley after Andy Reid crossed the ball . Manchester City , however , still had time to win the game and Darius Vassell scored an 89th minute scuffed shot to beat Craig Gordon . On the return fixture of the Tyne and Wear derby on 19 April Sunderland were defeated 2 ? 0 away to Newcastle United . The next game was another derby for Sunderland , this time the Tees ? Wear derby on 26 April . Sunderland won the game 3 ? 2 at home to Middlesbrough , with goals from Danny Higginbotham , Michael

Chopra and an Emanuel Pogatetz own goal , thus securing their safety and staying in the Premier League .

=== May ===

After ensuring their own safety , Sunderland travelled to Bolton Wanderers on 3 May , who were not yet safe from relegation . Sunderland lost the game 2 ? 0 at the Reebok Stadium . On 11 May , the last game of the Premier League season , Sunderland played Arsenal at the Stadium of Light . Arsenal won the game 1 ? 0 through a Theo Walcott goal . Sunderland also recorded their highest home attendance of the season , when the match was watched by 47 @, @ 802 people . Sunderland finished the season with 39 points in 15th place , with Kenwyne Jones as top goal scorer with seven goals . Left @-@ back Danny Collins was named as Sunderland 's player of the season , while on loan centre @-@ back Jonny Evans was named as the club 's young player of the season for the second season running . They finished with an average home attendance of 42 @, @ 728 which was the fifth highest in the league .

== Match results ==

=== Legend ===

=== Pre @-@ season ===

=== Premier League ===

=== FA Cup ===

=== League Cup ===

== League table ==

Source : Barclays Premier League