

= Joey Barton =

Joseph Anthony "Joey" Barton (/ ˈdʒoʊi? ˈbɜːrtən / ; born 2 September 1982) is an English professional footballer who plays as a midfielder for Scottish Premiership club Rangers . He has made 240 appearances in the Premier League , including 130 for Manchester City .

Barton was born and raised in Huyton , Merseyside . He began his football career with Manchester City in 2002 after working his way through their youth system . His appearances in the senior side gradually increased over the following five years and he made more than 150 for the club . He earned his first cap for the England national team in February 2007 , despite his criticism of some of the team 's players . He then joined Newcastle United for a fee of £ 5 @. @ 8 million in July 2007 . After four years with the club , he joined Queens Park Rangers in August 2011 , from where he was loaned to Marseille in 2012 . He returned from his loan spell the following season , and helped QPR to promotion to the Premier League via the Championship play @-@ offs . However , QPR were relegated again , and Barton was released at the end of the season . He signed a one @-@ year deal to play for Burnley in 2015 , helping them win promotion to the Premier League , but left to join Rangers in May 2016 .

Barton 's career and life have been marked by numerous controversial incidents and disciplinary problems and he has been convicted twice on charges of violence . On 20 May 2008 he was sentenced to six months ' imprisonment for common assault and affray during an incident in Liverpool City Centre . Barton served 77 days of this prison term , being released on 28 July 2008 . On 1 July 2008 he was also given a four @-@ month suspended sentence after admitting assault occasioning actual bodily harm on former teammate Ousmane Dabo during a training @-@ ground dispute on 1 May 2007 . This incident effectively ended his Manchester City career . Barton has been charged with violent conduct three times by The Football Association : for the assault on Dabo , for punching Morten Gamst Pedersen in the stomach and for attacking three players on the final day of the 2011 ? 12 season .

= = Early life = =

Born in Huyton , Merseyside , Barton is the oldest of four brothers . His parents separated when he was 14 years old and consequently he lived with his father at his grandmother 's house on a different estate . He has said that his grandmother 's influence helped him to avoid getting caught up in a recreational drug culture and attributes his work ethic to his father . His father , also named Joseph , worked as a roofer and played football semi @-@ professionally for Northwich Victoria . Barton enjoyed physical education at his school , St Thomas Becket , which he represented in various sports and was a talented Rugby League prospect . He left school with ten GCSEs .

= = Club career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Barton pursued his dreams of becoming a professional footballer by joining Everton 's youth system , but played for Liverpool when he was 14 . He underwent trials at Nottingham Forest , but was rejected when it was decided he was too small to become a footballer . Barton said his rejection by clubs only made him more determined to succeed as a footballer and prove his detractors wrong . He made his first appearance for the club 's under @-@ 17s team in 1999 and played regularly at Academy level for three years . His first reserve team appearance came at the end of the 2000 ? 01 season , in his final year as a trainee . Uncertain about Barton 's future prospects , the club planned to release him , but reconsidered and gave him his first professional contract in the close season . Over the next two years , he successfully made the transition from the under @-@ 19s to regular reserve football . He was promoted to the first @-@ team squad in the 2002 ? 03 season .

= = = Manchester City = = =

Barton would have made his debut for the City first @-@ team in November 2002 against Middlesbrough , had he not lost his shirt after leaving it on the substitutes bench at half @-@ time . He eventually made his first @-@ team debut for the club against Bolton Wanderers on 5 April 2003 . His first senior goal came two weeks later in a 2 ? 0 win over Tottenham Hotspur on Good Friday . He ended the 2002 ? 03 season with a run of seven consecutive starts .

After impressing in his first season at City , Barton was offered a new one @-@ year contract at the club by manager Kevin Keegan , which he signed in April 2003 . He featured in the first @-@ team more regularly during the 2003 ? 04 season and , following a second Premiership goal , was rewarded with a call @-@ up to the England U21 squad for their 2004 European Championship qualifiers against Macedonia and Portugal .

An FA Cup match against Tottenham saw Barton receive the first red card of his career in unusual circumstances : at half @-@ time , with his club 3 ? 0 down , he argued with the referee and was sent off although the match was not in progress . In the second half , despite playing with 10 men , Barton 's team @-@ mates achieved an unlikely 4 ? 3 victory . Barton left the City of Manchester Stadium in anger on 17 April , after not being named in the team to play Southampton . However he featured regularly in the 2003 ? 04 season , which he completed with 39 appearances and one goal . His displays impressed City 's supporters , and at the end of the 2003 ? 04 season he was awarded with the club 's Young Player of the Year award .

Barton sparked a ten @-@ man brawl in a friendly match against Doncaster Rovers on 25 July 2004 after " hacking " at an opposition player . Although he signed a new contract on 22 September 2004 , which would keep him at City until 2007 , the club considered sacking Barton in December 2004 after an incident at their Christmas party . He stubbed out a lit cigar in youth player Jamie Tandy 's eye , after he had caught Tandy attempting to set fire to his shirt . Barton subsequently apologised for his actions and was fined six weeks ' wages (£ 60 @,@ 000) .

In May 2005 Barton broke a 35 @-@ year @-@ old pedestrian 's leg while driving his car through Liverpool city centre at 2 am . In the summer of 2005 , Barton was sent home from a pre @-@ season tournament in Thailand after assaulting a 15 @-@ year @-@ old Everton supporter who had provoked Barton by verbally abusing him and kicking his shin . Barton had to be restrained from attacking the boy further by teammate Richard Dunne . Barton underwent anger management therapy at the order of City manager Stuart Pearce and paid £ 120 @,@ 000 in club fines . In the autumn of 2005 , Barton began a seven @-@ day programme of behavioural management at the Sporting Chance clinic , a charity set up to help troubled sportsmen and women .

Barton handed in a written transfer request in January 2006 , which the club rejected . The following day , they also rejected a verbal offer for Barton from Middlesbrough , with Stuart Pearce asserting that a deal could still be made to keep him at the club . During the following week , Barton admitted that he was " a little bit impetuous " in making such a request and agreed to begin negotiations on a new contract at City . He was rewarded with a new four @-@ year deal , which he signed on 25 July , ending speculation about his future .

Barton 's behaviour appeared to improve after his participation at the Sporting Chance clinic . However , on 30 September 2006 , television cameras captured Barton exposing his backside to Everton fans , following City 's injury @-@ time equaliser in a game at Goodison Park . Barton had received abuse from Everton supporters throughout the match and the gesture has since been described as " light @-@ hearted " and " inoffensive " by people involved in football . Merseyside Police looked into the incident , but announced in October that no further action would be taken , although Barton was fined £ 2 @,@ 000 for bringing the game into disrepute and warned about his future conduct by The Football Association .

In December 2006 , Barton received the second red card of his career , for a late two @-@ footed tackle on Bolton Wanderers player Abdoulaye Faye .

Barton 's agent Willie McKay revealed in January 2007 that if any team offered at least £ 5 @.@ 5 million for Barton , it would trigger a release clause in his contract that would mean City would have to allow Barton to talk to the interested club . This reportedly prompted Everton manager David

Moyes to make an inquiry to City about Barton 's availability . However , the next day Barton said " People are trying to unsettle me but I 'm happy to stay here " .

Barton was arrested on suspicion of assault and criminal damage after an alleged argument with a taxi driver in Liverpool while going to his hotel after a match on 13 March 2007 . He was cleared of this charge in May 2008 .

Barton displayed his outspokenness once again on 22 April 2007 when he publicly criticised City 's performances during the 2006 ? 07 season , and described some of the players the club had signed as " substandard " . Following his comments , City 's manager Stuart Pearce banned him from speaking to the media .

Barton was fined £ 100 @, @ 000 and suspended by City until the end of the 2006 ? 07 season on 1 May 2007 , following an incident during training when he assaulted his team mate Ousmane Dabo . Dabo said that he had been hit several times , was left unconscious and had to go to hospital after suffering injuries to his head , including a suspected detached retina . Dabo requested that the police press charges against Barton , and as a result , Barton was arrested and questioned by Greater Manchester Police . This altercation effectively ended Barton 's time at City , although he later cited a " relationship breakdown " with Stuart Pearce as the main reason he left the club . Barton was bailed until August and was later charged with assault , to which he initially pleaded not guilty . He later changed this to a guilty plea and on 1 July 2008 was sentenced to a four @-@ month suspended prison sentence plus 200 hours of community service and ordered to pay £ 3 @, @ 000 compensation and Dabo 's court costs . Barton was also charged with violent conduct by the FA . Barton pleaded guilty and on 1 September 2008 was banned for six games with a further six game ban suspended for two years and fined £ 25 @, @ 000 .

= = = Newcastle United = = =

Following offers from Newcastle United and West Ham United , Barton joined Newcastle on 14 June 2007 for a fee of £ 5 @. @ 8 million . The contract negotiations had become protracted after Manchester City refused to pay Barton a fee of £ 300 @, @ 000 to which he was reported to be entitled if he left the club without submitting a request for transfer . Newcastle United consequently raised their initial offer of £ 5 @. @ 5 million to £ 5 @. @ 8 , in effect compensating Manchester City for the £ 300 @, @ 000 discrepancy . He said that his desire to win trophies helped him to make the decision , along with his admiration for manager Sam Allardyce . Barton made his Newcastle debut in a friendly against Hartlepool United on 17 July 2007 . Four days later , he was ruled out for six to seven weeks after fracturing the fifth metatarsal bone in his left foot during a friendly match with Carlisle United . He was ruled out for a further month in October 2007 . He eventually made his Premier League debut for Newcastle on 22 October 2007 , coming on as a second @-@ half substitute in a 3 ? 1 win over Tottenham . During his first Tyne ? Wear derby for Newcastle against Sunderland , Barton appeared to raise his foot dangerously in a challenge with Sunderland 's Dickson Etuhu , leading to the News of the World running with the headline " Ban Him " . However the FA were unable to charge Barton for the incident because match official Martin Atkinson had seen the act take place in the match , and had taken no action . FIFA regulations dictate that a retrospective charge for violent conduct can be made only if the match official did not notice the incident . Barton later apologised for the tackle . Early in December , he called for Newcastle fans to give the team more time after their abuse of manager Sam Allardyce , calling them " vicious " . He later played this down , saying his comments had been misrepresented .

On 27 December 2007 , Barton was arrested on suspicion of assault in the Church Street area of Liverpool city centre following an incident which took place at 5 : 30 am . He was remanded in custody on 28 December since the offence was committed whilst he was on bail for two prior offences ; the presiding magistrate noted " I also have to consider the safety of the public ? you lashed out indiscriminately " . CCTV showed Barton punching a man twenty times , causing him to lose consciousness , and attacking a teenager , breaking some of his teeth . On 20 May 2008 , he was sentenced to six months in jail after pleading guilty for his part in the December 2007 assault . Barton 's cousin , Nadine Wilson and his brother Andrew Barton also pleaded guilty to their part in

the assaults and received suspended sentences . Barton admitted to being an alcoholic and claimed he wanted to achieve " total abstinence " in order to improve his behaviour . He served 77 days of his prison term , being released on 28 July 2008 .

Barton 's subsequent conviction , a four @-@ month suspended sentence for the earlier assault on Ousmane Dabo at Manchester City was handed out while serving this sentence . He returned to playing action on 30 August 2008 , six days before his FA hearing , as a second @-@ half substitute during Newcastle 's 3 ? 0 defeat to Arsenal . He came on to a chorus of boos from the Arsenal supporters . Shortly into this return game , Barton was involved in an incident with Samir Nasri , putting in a strong tackle , for which the referee did not give a foul . The tackle , though hard , was legal . Minutes later , Nasri deliberately clipped Barton while tracking back , for which he was booked . At the end of the game , Newcastle manager Kevin Keegan was involved in an altercation with Nasri and Arsenal captain William Gallas , in regards to the incident .

It was a brief stint back in the playing squad , with Barton banned for six games , with a further suspended six @-@ game ban , for his assault on Dabo . After serving his ban , he played 75 minutes in a reserve game and said he wanted to transform his image to become a role model , before he returned to action in the Tyne ? Wear derby on 25 October . He was booed by Sunderland fans and had missiles thrown at him as he warmed up , as Newcastle lost 2 ? 1 . Without him , Newcastle had not recorded a league victory since the second game of the season , but Barton scored a penalty in his second game back to lift the club out of the relegation zone . The suspended six @-@ game ban was nearly brought into action when Barton appeared to flick Aston Villa striker Gabriel Agbonlahor in the club 's next game , but the FA decided not to punish Barton . However , further allegations that Barton had made a racist remark to Agbonlahor were cause enough for the FA to reconsider this decision . The remarks remain unfounded and ' professional lip @-@ readers ' claimed he said nothing racist . In Newcastle 's 2 ? 2 draw with Wigan on 15 November 2008 , Barton was injured after a tackle from Lee Cattermole . It was later confirmed that Barton would be out for two months with a medial ligament injury . Returning to the first team at the end of January , he played only twice before again breaking his metatarsal , during a 2 ? 1 defeat to his old club Manchester City .

In his first appearance in over three months on 3 May 2009 , Barton was sent off late in a 3 ? 0 loss to Liverpool at Anfield for a sliding challenge on Xabi Alonso . The red card ruled Barton out of Newcastle 's remaining three games of the season , with the club in danger of relegation from the Premier League . Newcastle manager Alan Shearer raised doubts about Barton 's future at the club , saying " I think it would be wrong to discuss his future now , but I 'm not very happy . " On 5 May , Newcastle United announced the suspension of Barton indefinitely , and Barton was told to stay away from the club . As a result , Barton 's future at Newcastle United was put in doubt . The club suspension was widely reportedly to have resulted not directly from the red card , but from a dressing room confrontation with Shearer and assistant manager Iain Dowie following the game . Shearer said he made a mistake putting Barton back into the team , and that his tackle was " a coward 's tackle " , to which Barton replied that he was " the best player at the club " , and Shearer had to play him . Shearer said that Barton was not that he was " shit " . Barton replied that Shearer was " a shit manager with shit tactics " . When Dowie intervened , Barton called him " a prick " . Barton was reportedly transfer listed , with former manager Sam Allardyce reported to have been interested in taking Barton to Blackburn Rovers . Barton 's counsellor has said that Barton " would love to work with Alan Shearer again " and " feels very much that he owes the club and the fans . "

Barton stayed on with Newcastle United after they were relegated to the Championship , playing six out of Newcastle 's opening eight league games , but suffered an injury to his foot in a 3 ? 1 win against Plymouth Argyle on 19 September . He returned in April for Newcastle , playing all nine of Newcastle 's remaining league fixtures and scoring his only goal of the campaign from a free kick in a win over Peterborough United . Due to the form of Danny Guthrie and Kevin Nolan , Barton had to play left wing when he returned .

Barton started his new club season 2010 ? 11 as a first team regular , playing against Manchester United on the opening day . On Barton 's and Newcastle 's second game , he scored against Aston Villa in a 6 ? 0 victory for Newcastle . Immediately , after the game Barton removed a moustache

which he had pledged to not shave until Newcastle United had won a game in the new season . On 10 November , in a 2 ? 1 defeat to Blackburn , Barton again acted violently , punching Morten Gamst Pedersen in the chest . He was not punished during the game as the officials did not see the incident , but after reviewing the evidence , the FA again charged Barton with violent conduct . Barton apologised , accepted the charge , and was banned for three matches . Barton courted controversy once again during Newcastle 's 3 ? 1 win over Liverpool on 11 December 2010 , when he appeared to direct homophobic remarks and a lewd gesture at Fernando Torres . Barton scored two penalties against Arsenal on 5 February 2011 as Newcastle came from a 4 ? 0 deficit to draw 4 ? 4 . He was involved in an altercation with Abou Diaby which led to a straight red card for Diaby . Diaby took offence to Barton 's strong challenge and retaliated by grabbing Barton by the neck and shoving him to the ground .

On 25 May 2011 , Barton 's agent Willie McKay confirmed that his client would not be signing a new contract at St James ' Park after contract talks broke down between the club and player . Barton was officially transfer listed by Newcastle on 1 August 2011 , and it was also stated that he could leave for free with his current contract yet to expire . Barton was set to leave Newcastle following his teammate Kevin Nolan , who had earlier joined West Ham United , but Barton insisted on not moving . Joey Barton also criticised the Newcastle board after it was decided he could leave the club on a free transfer . With Newcastle continuing to decline the offer of a new contract , after he refused an earlier offer , on 24 August 2011 , Barton was given permission to talk to QPR . Thanking the Newcastle fans , he left on 26 August 2011 .

A week before his signing with QPR , Barton was involved in an altercation with Gervinho of Arsenal , which resulted in Gervinho being sent off on his debut . Then , Alex Song stamped on Barton , for which Song received a three @-@ match ban . Barton later revealed he was on a verge of joining Arsenal but his incident with Gervinho ended his hopes of a move to the Emirates and instead , he joined Queens Park Rangers .

= = = Queens Park Rangers = = =

On 26 August 2011 , Barton moved to Queens Park Rangers , signing a four @-@ year deal on a free transfer . He was handed the captain 's armband by manager Neil Warnock on his debut with the club , which was a 0 ? 0 draw with former club Newcastle . On 17 September , he scored his first goal for QPR during a 3 ? 0 win against Wolverhampton Wanderers . Following his goal , Barton was involved in a physical confrontation with Wolves player Karl Henry . Henry and Barton had a previous physical confrontation in August 2010 when Barton was still at Newcastle . Barton accused Henry of " trying to hurt people " . Henry responded by calling Barton 's behaviour " embarrassing " .

On 2 January 2012 , Barton scored the opening goal in QPR 's game against Norwich City , his second for the club . However , he was given a straight red card after head @-@ butting Norwich midfielder Bradley Johnson , Barton 's first dismissal since May 2009 . With QPR down to ten men they went on to lose the game 2 ? 1 . When Warnock was replaced as manager by Mark Hughes in January 2012 , Hughes confirmed that Barton would remain captain . Barton 's performance in QPR 's 3 ? 2 home victory against Liverpool saw him booed by the QPR fans , who promptly cheered when he was substituted just after the hour mark . Barton admitted that his performance was " awful " and the " worst I 've ever played in my career " but also criticised the QPR fans for not sticking with the team in their battle against relegation . After being dropped for the club 's next game , an away defeat to Sunderland , he returned to the line @-@ up for the home game against Arsenal . Barton led QPR to a 2 ? 1 victory and he was cheered by the supporters and praised by Hughes , who described his performance as " top @-@ class " . Barton 's third goal for the club came in a 3 ? 0 victory at home to Swansea on 11 April 2011 .

On 13 May , on the final day of the season , with QPR requiring at least a draw in their match away at Manchester City or for Bolton Wanderers to not win in order to guarantee Premier League safety , Barton was sent off in the 55th minute for violent misconduct after elbowing Carlos Tevez in the face . Immediately after being shown a red card , he kicked Sergio Agüero in the back of the knee and attempted to head @-@ butt Vincent Kompany . Barton had to be dragged from the pitch by former

team @-@ mate Micah Richards as he rowed with Manchester City players and staff and attempted to square @-@ off with striker Mario Balotelli . QPR went on to concede two late goals and lose the match 3 ? 2 , but avoided relegation due to Bolton 's draw at Stoke City . Barton commented after the game saying that he was trying to " take [one] of their players with me . " The FA responded by issuing two charges of violent conduct against him , for the kick and the attempted head @-@ butt , the initial foul already carrying with it a charge of violent conduct . Barton accepted the charge for kicking Agüero but denied the charge for attempting to head @-@ butt Kompany . QPR also began an internal investigation into his behaviour , amid speculation that he will be stripped of the captaincy and fined and possibly shown the door by the club either by being sold , released on a free transfer or having his contract terminated for gross misconduct .

On 23 May , Barton attended an FA hearing . Punishing him for all three accounts of violent conduct , Barton was handed a twelve @-@ match ban and fined £ 75 @,@ 000 . On 25 June , QPR announced the results of their internal investigation . Barton was stripped of the captaincy and fined six weeks ' wages , believed to be around £ 500 @,@ 000 . Barton was also removed from the club 's pre @-@ season tour of Asia and in a statement , the club said that they had " also reached agreement with Barton that if he seriously breaches the club 's disciplinary procedures again , the club reserves the right to terminate his contract " . Barton responded by saying that " My behaviour was wrong and I accept the punishment that has been imposed upon me as a result . "

On 31 July 2012 , Barton played 45 minutes of a friendly match for League Two side Fleetwood Town in the club 's 4 ? 0 win over Kilmarnock . He had been training with Fleetwood after being left out of Queens Park Rangers ' tour of Malaysia . Fleetwood attempted to sign Barton on a six @-@ month loan , but the deal was turned down by QPR .

Ahead of the 2012 @-@ 13 Premier League season , Barton was not given a squad number by QPR . Towards the end of the season , however , chairman Tony Fernandes identified the loss of Barton as a factor in the club 's poor performance and relegation from the Premier League , saying " We missed Joey . We needed a workhorse midfielder and we tried to get Scott Parker . We missed a real leader . "

= = = = Marseille (loan) = = = =

Barton completed a season long loan move to Marseille on 31 August 2012 . In September , the LFP confirmed that Barton 's twelve @-@ match ban would be upheld in French football , restricting Barton to UEFA Europa League football for the first four months of the season . On 20 September , Barton made his debut for the club in an away trip to Fenerbahçe in a UEFA Europa League tie , a match that ended 2 ? 2 . Barton scored his first goal for Marseille on 8 November in the 2 ? 2 draw with Borussia Mönchengladbach in Germany , netting directly from a corner kick in the 54th minute .

Barton told ESPN that he would not return to Queens Park Rangers after the loan spell , and he also said that he only joined the club for money because his partner was expecting a child . Following the comments , on 25 November 2012 , he made his league debut in a 1 ? 0 home win against Lille . In his third league appearance on 2 December , Barton provided the assists for both Souleymane Diawara 's and André Ayew 's goals as Marseille defeated Brest 2 ? 1 to remain two points behind leaders Lyon .

On 6 May 2013 , Barton was given a two @-@ match suspended ban for describing Thiago Silva of Paris Saint @-@ Germain as looking like an " overweight ladyboy " on Twitter . Laurent Davenas , the President of the French Football Federation 's National Council of Ethics said that Barton was punished only for making " inappropriate " remarks , and escaped a more severe punishment because his lawyers proved his lack of homophobic intent by showing the committee Barton 's appearance in the BBC Three documentary on homophobia in football .

= = = = Return to Queens Park Rangers = = = =

Barton returned to QPR for the 2013 ? 14 Football League Championship season . During a match at Burnley in October , a plastic bottle thrown from the stands hit Barton on the head . He was sent

off in QPR 's 1 ? 0 home defeat to Leicester City on 21 December 2013 , receiving two yellow cards in quick succession for fouling and then throwing the ball in dissent at Gary Taylor @-@ Fletcher . On 21 February 2015 , Barton received the ninth red card of his career in the 32nd minute of a game against Hull City after swinging at Tom Huddlestone 's groin following a foul by Darnell Furlong . Chris Ramsey suggested that Barton , who would miss the club 's next three home matches as a result , would return to anger management therapy following the incident . In May 2015 , Queens Park Rangers announced the release of Barton in the summer of 2015 .

On 10 August 2015 , following his release from Queens Park Rangers , West Ham United were reportedly confident of signing Barton . Two days later , their co @-@ chairman David Gold confirmed that the deal was off after reported protests from some fans unhappy at the prospect of Barton turning out for the Hammers .

= = = Burnley = = =

On 27 August 2015 , Barton joined Championship side Burnley on a one @-@ year deal . On 17 April 2016 , he was named in the Championship PFA Team of the Year .

= = = Rangers = = =

On 24 May 2016 , Barton joined Scottish Premiership team Rangers on a two @-@ year deal . He made his first appearance for the club as a substitute in Rangers 2 @-@ 0 victory over Annan Athletic in the League Cup on 19 July .

= = International career = =

Barton represented the England under @-@ 21 team and was part of the squad for their 2004 UEFA European Under @-@ 21 Championship qualifiers against Macedonia and Portugal , scoring once against Portugal .

Following impressive form at club level , Barton received his first call @-@ up to the full England squad on 2 February 2007 for a friendly match against Spain , despite his recent criticism of certain members of the England squad for releasing autobiographies after an unimpressive 2006 FIFA World Cup . He had suggested such players had " cashed in " on the national team 's lack of success .

Barton later received support over his comments and Steven Gerrard , one of the players whom Barton had criticised , praised him for his honesty . However , Frank Lampard , who had also released an autobiography following the tournament , publicly stated his disapproval . Barton made his international debut on 7 February 2007 , replacing Lampard in the 78th minute of the 0 ? 1 defeat to Spain at Old Trafford .

= = Style of play = =

Early in his career , Barton mainly played a defensive role , with a game based on tackling and tracking back to shield the defence . As his career has progressed , he has begun to incorporate a more attacking approach to his play , which has resulted in a greater number of goals and assists and his six goals from midfield made him Manchester City 's leading scorer in the 2006 ? 07 season , ahead of strikers Georgios Samaras , Bernardo Corradi , Émile Mpenza and Darius Vassell .

Barton has been described as having a good work ethic and the ability to carry the ball and retain possession for the team . He has been praised for having a good passing range . This aspect of his game has shown improvement since the 2005 ? 06 season , when he began to favour simpler passes over more ambitious ones , and his relatively high pass completion rate can be attributed to this change . Barton 's passes have often proved to be crucial ; in the past he has led the way in his team 's assists .

Barton has been described as the dirtiest player in the Premier League , a style reflected in the high

number of fouls he has committed during his career . He received 39 bookings and three red cards during his time at Manchester City . This physical approach was occasionally criticised by Kevin Keegan as excessive . Opta statistics rated Barton as the tenth best tackler in the Premier League for the 2004 ? 05 season .

= = Personal life = =

= = = Family = = =

Barton 's brother Michael Barton was sentenced to life imprisonment (with a tariff of 17 years) for his involvement in the racially motivated murder of Anthony Walker in 2005 . Joey made a public appeal to his brother to come forward and help with the police investigation following the attack , and also made a series of calls to Michael , enquiring about his involvement in the incident .

On 28 December 2011 , Barton became a father . His partner Georgia McNeil gave birth to a son , named Cassius . On 6 June 2014 , McNeil gave birth to the couple 's second child , a daughter named Pietà .

= = = Interests = = =

He is a good friend of the boxer Ricky Hatton and has supported him in some of his fights , and has trained with him . He is also a friend of former Oasis band member Noel Gallagher . Barton co @-@ owns a race horse called ' Crying Lightning ' (named after the Arctic Monkeys song) with fellow footballer Claudio Pizarro . In January 2011 , the horse competed at the Nad Al Sheba Racecourse in Dubai . He is also notable for his love of Manchester band The Smiths , citing Morrissey as an idol of his .

= = = Charity = = =

Barton is a patron of the Tamsin Gulvin Fund , a charity set up to support people who have addiction problems and no financial support . Tony Adams , who had been impressed with Barton 's attitude during his involvement in the Sporting Chance clinic , appointed him to this role . He is a part of the ' Get Hooked on Fishing ' campaign , designed to keep children out of trouble by encouraging them to take up fishing . He has also taken part in a celebrity cricket match for charity to help fund a new children 's rehabilitation unit at a hospital in Manchester . In 2011 he began writing a regular column in The Big Issue , a street newspaper sold by the homeless and vulnerably housed .

= = = Views = = =

Barton is a prominent user of Twitter , with over two million followers as for April 2013 . Commenting on figures from Friedrich Nietzsche and George Orwell to Isambard Kingdom Brunel and Morrissey , his eclectic tweets have resulted in him being described by the BBC as " a philosophical sportsman to rival Eric Cantona in his heyday " . Others in the media have criticised this description with Paul Hayward , chief sports writer for The Daily Telegraph writing that Barton " manages to be patronised [by the media] and held up as some kind of exemplar all at once ... he is skilled at tricking us into watching him veer between the extremes of thinker and thug . Either this is a repudiation of societal hypocrisy or , more likely , indicative of a sociopathic tendency . " Ellie Mae O 'Hagan of The Guardian commented that " the problem , I think , is not the belief that Barton is a reformed character , but the notion that one cannot possibly be a philosopher and violent at the same time : that quoting philosophy should automatically be taken as a sign of reformation ... In my mind , this all boils down to class snobbery . It is automatically assumed that Barton has violent tendencies because he 's a working @-@ class man who has chosen to play football for a living . So when he shows signs of intelligence , it 's treated as a sign of reform : intellect is the preserve of the

gentlemanly middle @-@ classes . "

On 29 May 2014 , Barton appeared on the BBC 's Question Time discussion programme where , referring to the UK Independence Party (UKIP) , he said " If I 'm somewhere and there was four really ugly girls , I 'm thinking she 's not the worst ? that 's all UKIP are , " . Barton 's comments were criticised as sexist by an audience member and he later apologised on air . The Independent newspaper deemed that despite the comments , Barton had produced a " strong performance " on the programme .

In a television programme broadcast on BBC Three on 30 January 2012 , Barton stated his beliefs in support of gay rights , in discussion with presenter Amal Fashanu , niece of Justin Fashanu , England 's only openly gay footballer . He described lack of any openly gay players in English professional football as " a subject that 's quite close to my heart " , as his uncle is gay . He stated his belief that there would be an openly gay player " within the next 10 years " and expressed his fear that " certain managers ... will discriminate against people " but that he feels " more fool them , and their lack of social awareness and intelligence " and wants his generation 's legacy to " help not only change the game for the better , and change the teams that they played in , but also change the culture and change the society and the football clubs that they played at .

In an article written in The Independent in February 2015 , Barton stated that : " If I were Prime Minister I would privatise religion . All public money would be withdrawn from religion . Taxpayers money will cease to sponsor religion in any and every form . " He said that the Church of England should be disestablished . In April of that year , he was appointed an honorary associate of the National Secular Society .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Club = = =

As of match played 20 July 2016 .

= = = International = = =

As of match played 7 February 2007 .

= = Honours = =

= = = Club = = =

Newcastle United

Football League Championship : 2009 ? 10

Queens Park Rangers

Football League Championship play @-@ offs : 2013 ? 14

Burnley

Football League Championship : 2015 ? 16

= = = Individual = = =

Football League Championship PFA Team of the Year : 2015 ? 16

Burnley Player of the Year : 2015 ? 16