

= Shay Given =

Séamus John James " Shay " Given (born 20 April 1976) is an Irish professional footballer who plays as a goalkeeper for Premier League club Stoke City and the Republic of Ireland national team .

Having surpassed the total of 100 caps required for membership , he is part of the FIFA Century Club . Given gained his first international cap in 1996 and played in goal during every match for his country during the 2002 FIFA World Cup campaign , helping them reach the knockout stage . He was later on the pitch in Paris when the Republic of Ireland were knocked out of the play @-@ offs for a spot in the 2010 FIFA World Cup by France before helping his team qualify for UEFA Euro 2012 . He was selected in Martin O 'Neill 's 23 @-@ man squad for UEFA Euro 2016 but didn 't appear in any of Ireland 's four matches at the tournament . Given is the second most capped Republic of Ireland player (after Robbie Keane) . He holds 134 caps and has kept 52 clean sheets as of June 2016 .

Given started his career at Celtic , however he never made a first @-@ team appearance and he was released and signed by Blackburn Rovers on a free transfer in 1994 . Given was part of both the Sunderland team who won the Football League First Division title in 1995 ? 96 and the Swindon Town team who won the Football League Second Division title that same season , while on loan from Blackburn Rovers . He was signed by Newcastle United in 1997 for a fee of £ 1 @.@ 5 million , and it was there that he began competing to be a first @-@ choice Premier League goalkeeper . Given was part of the teams who came runners @-@ up in the 1998 and 1999 FA Cup campaigns , and was named in the Premier League Team of the Season for 2001 ? 02 and 2005 ? 06 . He played in the UEFA Champions League and UEFA Cup with Newcastle , and was involved in the club 's title challenge in 2001 ? 02 . Although he submitted a transfer request during the 2000 ? 01 campaign after losing his position in the starting line @-@ up , it was denied , and Given went on to regain his place .

On 1 February 2009 , Given transferred to Manchester City for £ 6 million on a four @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ year contract . While Given was at Manchester City , the club qualified for the UEFA Champions League for the first time in its history after finishing third in the Premier League , as well as winning the FA Cup , though he did not appear in the league in the campaign that City reached the Champions League , nor did he play in the FA Cup . On 18 July 2011 , he joined Aston Villa for a fee believed to be around £ 3 @.@ 5 million , signing a five @-@ year contract . Four years later , Given joined Stoke City in July 2015 .

= = Club career = =

= = = Early career = = =

Born in Lifford , County Donegal , Given 's footballing career began at local amateur side Lifford Celtic where he shot to notoriety for conceding seven goals on his debut . He was propelled into the limelight when he played in the Football Association of Ireland 's Junior Cup for Lifford Celtic in the semi @-@ final in Dundalk . At 14 , his performances for the club attracted attention from Celtic , and he was invited to train with their youth side during a pre @-@ season tour of Ireland in 1991 . Given signed for the club a year later . Despite being named to the substitutes bench for the Old Firm derby against Rangers on 1 January 1994 , Given never made a first @-@ team appearance .

His performances for Celtic 's youth team did bring him to the attention of Blackburn Rovers manager Kenny Dalglish , and he signed for the English side on a free transfer in the summer of 1994 .

= = = Blackburn Rovers = = =

The season after Given 's arrival saw Blackburn win the Premier League title and Given was unable

to oust first @-@ choice goalkeeper and England international Tim Flowers from the team . He made two loan moves to Swindon Town . Given acted as understudy during his first spell at the Wiltshire club but helped them start their Championship winning Division Two campaign during the 1995 ? 96 season . He played in five games for the Swindon before returning to Blackburn at the end of 1995 . Given was sent on loan again in January 1996 , this time to Division One side Sunderland . Given kept 12 clean sheets during his 17 games for the club , and formed part of the team who won promotion to the Premier League as champions . His performances on loan impressed Kenny Dalglish , who had recently been appointed manager of Newcastle United , and prompted him to sign Given again . Given signed for the North @-@ East club in the summer of 1997 for a fee of £ 1 @. @ 5 million .

= = = Newcastle United = = =

Given was one of the first signings of then @-@ newly appointed manager Dalglish . Given made his debut in Newcastle 's 2 ? 1 home victory over Sheffield Wednesday on 9 August 1997 and immediately established himself in the first team , beating fellow goalkeepers Pavel Srní?ek , Shaka Hislop and Steve Harper to the position . Newcastle advanced to the final of the FA Cup , and Given played the whole match as the team were defeated 2 ? 0 by league champions Arsenal . The club also progressed to the final the following year , but Given was replaced by Steve Harper as Newcastle lost 2 ? 0 in the final , this time to Manchester United .

In November 1997 , Given conceded a strange goal against Coventry City when , after collecting a cross , he rolled the ball out in preparation to make a long clearance . However , he had forgotten that Coventry striker Dion Dublin was still behind him , and Dublin quickly took advantage of the situation by rolling the ball into the empty net . The coincidence of the goalscorer 's name quickly led to the popular word game among football fans that Given " is the only Irishman who doesn 't know where Dublin is " and the goal itself is still regularly featured on lists compiled of bizarre goals .

Given submitted a written transfer request in December 2000 , after failing to regain his place in the first @-@ team from Steve Harper after a thigh injury had ruled him out of a match against Leeds United . Manager Sir Bobby Robson stated at the time : " A lot of clubs have a very good goalkeeper and one who stands by . I think we have two keepers ? and Harper is proving that ? who can play in the Premiership " . The club rejected Given 's request , which was then withdrawn by the goalkeeper , who later stated that his " intention was simply to express [his] frustration at being left out of the team , " and that he " never had any intention of actually leaving the club . " An injury to Harper led to Given being recalled to the first team , and he kept his place for the rest of the season .

In the 2001 ? 02 season , Given played in every Premier League match as Newcastle 's previously unexpected title challenge ended in a fourth @-@ place finish in the league . Given was selected in the PFA Team of the Year and Newcastle 's league position meant that they would enter the qualifying stages of the UEFA Champions League the following season .

During the summer he competed in the 2002 FIFA World Cup , but could not prevent the Republic of Ireland being eliminated by Spain after a penalty shoot @-@ out .

Given again found himself competing with Steve Harper during the following season . After a 5 ? 0 qualifying round win , Newcastle progressed to the group stages of the Champions League . He played in the first three group matches , all of which Newcastle lost . Given found himself out of the team for the next two games , as Harper replaced him in goal . Given returned for the final group match against Feyenoord in the Netherlands , and Newcastle 's 3 ? 2 win meant that they qualified for the second round . Internazionale scored four times past Given as Newcastle lost 1 ? 4 in their opening match in the second group stage . Newcastle conceded a further three times away to Barcelona , beat Bayer Leverkusen at home and in Germany (with Given saving an Oliver Neuville penalty in the home tie) , and drew with Inter at San Siro , however a 2 ? 0 loss at home against Barcelona meant that the club finished third in their group and failed to qualify for the knockout stages . Given played every game in the second round . Given played all 38 league games for the club , as well as his 12 European appearances , as the team finished in third place in the Premier League , meaning the club would enter the Champions League qualifying round in 2003 ? 04 .

Having finished third in the league in May 2003, Given and Newcastle lost 4 – 3 on penalties to Partizan Belgrade early in the 2003 – 04 season, meaning that Newcastle failed to reach the group stages of the Champions League. The club instead qualified for the UEFA Cup, where they reached the semi – final. A fifth – place finish in the league meant that the club qualified for the following season's UEFA Cup competition. Given played in every one of the club's league matches for a third successive season, as well as all 13 European games. The following year saw Graeme Souness replace Sir Bobby Robson as Newcastle manager after an early spell of poor form. Given overtook Alan Shearer as having played in the most European matches for the club on 16 September 2004 in a game against Bnei Sakhnin, and Given's 12 European and 3 FA Cup appearances helped Newcastle reach the UEFA Cup quarter – final and the FA Cup semi – final. Given missed two Premier League games as the club finished in 14th place.

Although the club entered the Intertoto Cup in 2005 – 06, a defeat by Spanish club Deportivo de La Coruña meant that they did not qualify for further European competition that season. Given played in all of the club's league matches as they finished in seventh position and he signed a new five – year contract with the club in the summer. His performances for Newcastle led to Given being named in the Premier League's Team of the Season. Given played in all of the club's FA Cup games as they reached the quarter – finals, and captained the team for three games during Alan Shearer's absence.

On 17 September 2006, Given suffered a one – centimeter tear in his bowel after a tackle by West Ham United striker Marlon Harewood. Doctors likened the injury to one more likely to happen in a car crash. Then – manager Glenn Roeder signed ex – Newcastle veteran Srní?ek as cover for Harper, and youth goalkeeper Tim Krul played a full match in Newcastle's 0 – 1 UEFA Cup win at Palermo on 2 November. Given returned on 18 November for Newcastle's 1 – 1 Premier League draw at Arsenal, and ended the season with 22 league appearances as the club finished in 13th place, and reached the last 16 of the UEFA Cup. Given did make his 400th appearance for the club during the season, however, in a New Year's Day match. Given's 2007 – 08 season was prematurely ended by injury in February when he had an occurrence of an old groin injury in the game with Manchester United.

The opening months of Newcastle's 2008 – 09 season were blighted by ownership and managerial turmoil, as well as numerous injury problems. This manifested itself on the pitch as the club struggled to direct itself clear of the relegation zone. On 2 January 2009, following the 5 – 1 defeat at home against Liverpool, the player's lawyer released a statement saying that his client was "considering his future" at Newcastle, and requested permission to talk to representatives of Manchester City on 28 January after the club made a bid of £5 million which was subsequently rejected. Newcastle manager Joe Kinnear had already stated that the club was "not interested at all in selling him", and described the amount on offer for Given as "insulting". However, on 30 January, it was reported that Newcastle had given permission for Given to enter talks with his suitors. After a transfer fee initially reported to be around £8 million was agreed between the clubs, Given signed for Manchester City on 1 February, with the transfer window set to close the following day. The news was disappointing for Newcastle fans who felt that Given left the club in a poor situation with many thinking that had Given delayed his decision to leave until the summer then Newcastle would have subsequently survived relegation to the Championship because Given was such a fantastic goal keeper who could have stopped many of the goals that the Toon conceded towards the end of the dreadful campaign. Although the fee for Given was expected to be around £8 million, in February 2009 Newcastle United Managing Director Derek Llambias revealed at a supporters panel meeting that Given had been sold for an initial £5 – 9 million. Given was 34 games away from breaking Newcastle United's appearance record held by Jimmy Lawrence.

== Manchester City ==

On 1 February 2009 Given signed with Manchester City on a four – half – year – contract for £6 million. He was formally paraded as a Manchester City player on 5 February 2009, and was assigned squad number 37. In the subsequent press conference, he criticised Newcastle

's management for not trying hard enough to keep him at the club . He also said that " By coming here I thought I could be at a club that is challenging for honours . I didn 't want to finish my career regretting not taking up this offer . " Given kept a clean sheet in a man of the match performance in his debut , a 1 ? 0 win against Middlesbrough on 7 February .

With Joe Hart leaving the club on loan , Given was given the squad number 1 for the 2009 ? 2010 season . He made his 400th League appearance on 5 October 2009 against Aston Villa . On 5 December 2009 , he made an outstanding penalty save from Frank Lampard to deny Chelsea an equalising goal . City went on to win 2 ? 1 . The same month , Daily Telegraph football correspondent Henry Winter named Given as Premier League Goalkeeper of the Noughties . While team captain Kolo Touré was on international duty , Given was given the captain 's armband by manager Roberto Mancini , who described the Donegal @-@ born player as " one of the five best goalkeepers in the world " . He dislocated his shoulder during a match against Arsenal on 24 April , ruling him out for the rest of the season . On 14 August 2010 , Given was dropped from the Manchester City starting XI for their opening league game against Tottenham and replaced by Joe Hart . Hart became City 's permanent first choice keeper , although Given played enough during the season to receive an FA Cup winners ' medal . Given played only one game for City since being put on the bench ? a defeat to West Brom in the League Cup . He challenged Hart to the first choice spot , though missed out . He played two Europa League matches that season as well .

= = = Aston Villa = = =

On 18 July 2011 , Given joined Aston Villa for a fee believed to be around £ 3 @. @ 5 million . He signed a five @-@ year contract , meaning that he will be 40 when his contract expires . Given made his Villa debut in a pre @-@ season friendly victory over Walsall on 21 July . He was substituted at half time for Andy Marshall , keeping a clean sheet as the score was 2 ? 0 to Villa . Given kept another clean sheet on 27 July 2011 in the 2011 Barclays Asia Trophy in Hong Kong in which Aston Villa beat Blackburn Rovers 1 ? 0 . This was his second clean sheet in two appearances for Aston Villa . On 13 August 2011 , Given played his first Premier League match for Aston Villa . They played Fulham in a 0 ? 0 draw which means he kept his first clean sheet for Aston Villa in his first start for them . In September 2011 , Given was reunited with Terry Gennoe at Aston Villa . After four years out of the game , Gennoe was named as the new first team goalkeeping coach , replacing Rafa Gonzalez . He had previously coached Given at Blackburn Rovers and Newcastle United . On 3 December , Given suffered a torn hamstring , leaving him out of the team until January .

After a disappointing start to the 2012 ? 13 season , Given lost his first team place to Brad Guzan after two league games . However , on 5 January 2013 , he appeared in a 2 ? 1 home win against Ipswich Town in the FA Cup third round proper match . Three days later , Given also played for Villa in a 1 ? 3 away defeat against Bradford City in the first leg of the League Cup semi @-@ final match . Despite winning the second leg 2 ? 1 , Villa were eliminated from the competition .

On 15 April 2014 , Given was appointed temporary assistant to Paul Lambert after the club suspended Ian Culverhouse and Gary Karsa , pending an internal investigation for an undisclosed reason .

Given played in all of Aston Villa 's 2014 ? 15 FA Cup fixtures that led to an appearance in the 2015 FA Cup Final at the age of 39 , which Villa lost 4 ? 0 to Arsenal . The cup run began with a 1 ? 0 victory over Blackpool , and continued with 2 ? 1 victories over both Bournemouth and Leicester City , and a 2 ? 0 win over derby rivals West Bromwich Albion . In the semi @-@ final , Villa came from a goal down to defeat Liverpool 2 ? 1 , putting the club in their first FA Cup final since 2000 .

= = = Middlesbrough (loan) = = =

Given joined Middlesbrough on a one @-@ month loan deal on 28 November 2013 as cover for the injured Jason Steele . Given 's initial one @-@ month loan deal was extended to the end of February 2014 and ultimately , he made his last appearance for Middlesbrough on 22 February , in

a 0 ? 0 draw against Leeds United . Whilst at Middlesbrough , Given kept ten clean sheets in 16 league games .

= = = Stoke City = = =

Given signed a two @-@ year contract with Stoke City on 10 July 2015 . Given joined as back @-@ up to first choice ' keeper Jack Butland . He made his debut on 25 August 2015 in a 1 ? 1 draw with Luton Town in the League Cup , Stoke winning on penalties . He missed most of Stoke 's 2015 ? 16 campaign after needing to undergo knee surgery in October 2015 . Given returned towards the end of the campaign and due to injury to Jack Butland he shared goalkeeping duties with Jakob Haugaard .

= = International career = =

Given represented the Republic of Ireland at youth level before earning five caps for the Republic of Ireland national under @-@ 21 team . Although he did not become a regular first team player for Blackburn Rovers , Given 's performances while on loan at Swindon and Sunderland led to him being called up to the Republic of Ireland squad in 1996 . He made his debut for the national team on 27 March 1996 , in a game against Russia . Although Ireland failed to qualify for the 1998 FIFA World Cup or UEFA Euro 2000 , Given established himself as first @-@ choice goalkeeper . He played in all of his nation 's games at the 2002 FIFA World Cup . With draws against Cameroon and Germany and a 3 ? 0 win against Saudi Arabia , the team reached the second round of the competition . Meeting Spain in the knockout round , Ireland forced penalties with the score at 1 ? 1 at the end of extra time . Three missed penalties for Ireland ended their participation in the tournament , and Spain progressed to the next round .

Given was part of the team for most of the 2006 FIFA World Cup qualifying campaign ; however a draw with Switzerland meant Ireland failed to qualify for the finals of the competition in Germany . He equalled Packie Bonner 's record of 80 caps against Slovakia on 28 March 2007 . Given obtained his 100th cap against Montenegro at Croke Park , Dublin on 14 October 2009 in a 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying game . Ireland reached a qualifying play @-@ off against France , but were controversially eliminated by a goal scored after Thierry Henry handled the ball .

Given was part of the team that secured qualification for UEFA Euro 2012 with a play @-@ off victory against Estonia . Given played in the Euro 2012 championship as Ireland were eliminated in the group stage .

He gives all his international playing fees to charity .

= = Retirement and comeback = = =

On 13 August 2012 , Given announced on Twitter his decision to retire from international football , describing it as an unforgettable experience to play for his country . Given retired holding the record for the most capped Irishman , though Robbie Keane was closing in on the record .

Due to Given 's lack of playing time with his club Aston Villa , there was speculation that he would make himself available for selection as part of Ireland 's 2014 FIFA World Cup qualification campaign . On 14 January 2013 , it was announced that Given was once again available for international selection .

On 30 August 2014 , still not having played a league game with Aston Villa , three games into the 2014 ? 15 Premier League season , he was selected by Martin O 'Neill in his 27 @-@ man squad for a friendly against Oman and Ireland 's first Euro 2016 qualifier in Georgia . It came after a two @-@ year international absence , after retiring following the disappointing Euro 2012 , where Ireland failed to progress from the group stages . He was one of four goalkeepers in the squad . On 2 September 2014 , Given made his first start for Ireland since the Euros in a 2 ? 0 win against Oman . However , he did not start against Georgia in O 'Neill 's first competitive game with David Forde getting the nod . Ireland won 2 ? 1 in Tblisi thanks to an Aiden McGeady brace . On 18 November

2014 , Given started the 4 ? 1 win against the United States in Dublin .

On 29 March 2015 , Given regained his place in the starting line @-@ up for the crucial Euro 2016 qualifier against Poland . The game finished 1 ? 1 with Shane Long scoring a last minute equaliser . On 8 October 2015 , Given suffered a knee injury and had to be stretchered off after 44 minutes against the 2014 FIFA World Cup winners Germany in what turned out to be a memorable night for Ireland as they prevailed with a 1 ? 0 win .

On 31 May 2016 , Given became Ireland 's longest @-@ serving player after appearing in the 2 ? 1 home defeat to Belarus . He eclipsed Johnny Giles ' record of 19 years and 202 days and became the first Irishman to play for his country for 20 years or more .

= = Personal life = =

Given married Jane Cunningham in Hexham , England , in a Catholic ceremony in 2001 . They have two children Shayne and Sienna . The couple divorced on 17 June 2014 . Given has been in a relationship with Manchester @-@ based PR executive Becky Gibson since 2013 , who is expecting the couple 's first child .

In 2006 , Given was awarded the Freedom of County Donegal in a ceremony in his home town , Lifford . He follows the Donegal Gaelic football team and witnessed their first All @-@ Ireland success in 1992 .

Given has also helped organise several successful fundraising events , in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support . His mother died of cancer when he was five , so he has continually tried to raise money as it is an issue close to him .

On 27 November 2011 , Given was brought to tears during a minute 's applause for former team @-@ mate and personal friend Gary Speed , following Speed 's suicide earlier that day , before Aston Villa met Swansea City at the Liberty Stadium .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Club = = =

As of match played 15 May 2016

= = = International = = =

As of match played 31 May 2016

= = Honours = =

= = = Club = = =

Sunderland

Football League First Division : 1995 ? 96

Newcastle United

UEFA Intertoto Cup : 2006

Manchester City

FA Cup : 2010 ? 11

= = = International = = =

Republic of Ireland

Nations Cup : 2011

Individual

FAI Senior International Player of the Year : 2005 , 2006

Newcastle United F.C. Player of the Year : 2005 ? 06

PFA Team of the Year : 2001 ? 02 , 2005 ? 06