

## **VILLA CLAIM MAIDEN BARCLAYS AWARDS DOUBLE**

### **- O'Neill and Agbonlahor scoop Barclays monthly honours**

Aston Villa manager Martin O'Neill has been named the Barclays Manager of the Month and striker Gabriel Agbonlahor the Barclays Player of the Month after the Villans recorded four consecutive wins in November, scoring eleven goals in the process and cementing their position in the upper reaches of the Barclays Premier League.

England under-21 striker, Agbonlahor, claims the award for the first time, after a month which saw him win a host of plaudits and confirm his status as one of the hottest English prospects in the Barclays Premier League.

After setting up Ashley Young for the second goal in a 2-0 home success against Derby County, Agbonlahor played a crucial role in the hotly-contested Birmingham Derby at St. Andrews, clearing a Liam Ridgeway header off the line while the scores were level, before scoring at the other end of the pitch to seal a dramatic 2-1 victory. He followed this up with another goal in a comprehensive 3-0 success at Middlesbrough, before setting up a penalty as O'Neill masterminded a resounding 4-0 victory away to Blackburn.

Agbonlahor is the first Villa player to be named Barclays Player of the Month since Paul Merson scooped the award back in February 2000, under the stewardship of then Villa boss, John Gregory.

This is the fifth time that Martin O'Neill has won the Barclays Manager of the Month Award, and the second time as Villa boss, having previously picked up the accolade in April 2007.

The decision was made by the Barclays Awards Panel, which includes representatives from footballs governing bodies, the media and fans.

### **MARTIN ONEILL: BARCLAYS MANAGER OF THE MONTH FOR NOVEMBER**

Martin Hugh Michael O'Neill was born on March 1, 1952 in Kilrea, Northern Ireland.

As a player, O'Neill was an integral part of the Nottingham Forest team under Brian Clough that won the League title, two League Cups and two European Cups. He also earned 62 caps for his country.

His managerial career began at non-league Grantham Town, before he moved on to Wycombe Wanderers, taking them into the Football League in 1993.

After a brief spell at Norwich City, he took over the helm at Leicester City achieving promotion to the Premier League in his first season.

Leicester City went on to record four consecutive top-half finishes and won the League Cup twice in 1997 and 2000.

Following his appointment in June 2000, O'Neill led Glasgow Celtic to three Scottish Premier League Championships, three Scottish Cups and one Scottish League Cup. O'Neill's Celtic side reached the 2003 UEFA Cup Final in Seville, where they lost out to FC Porto.

Appointed in August 2006, O'Neill's Barclays Premier League record at Aston Villa reads: Played 53, Won 19, Drawn 20, Lost 14, Scored 69, Conceded 57.

Martin O'Neill has won the Barclays Premier League Manager of the Month award on four previous occasions (September 1997, October 1998, November 1999 all at Leicester City. April 2007 at Aston Villa).

**GABRIEL AGBONLAHOR: BARCLAYS PLAYER OF THE MONTH FOR  
NOVEMBER**

Gabriel Agbonlahor was born in Erdington, Birmingham on the 13th October 1986.

After joining Aston Villa as a 14-year-old, Agbonlahor went on to score 40 goals for the club's youth team in 2003/04, beating the record previously held by Darius Vassell.

Following loan periods at Watford and Sheffield Wednesday in 2005, Agbonlahor scored on his Barclays Premier League debut for Aston Villa as a substitute in a 4-1 defeat against Everton at Goodison Park on 18th March 2006.

Agbonlahor made his England U-21 debut as a substitute on the 10th October 2006 against Germany at Coventry's Ricoh Arena. Agbonlahor has made nine appearances for England U-21s, scoring two goals.

In the 2006/07 season, Agbonlahor played all but 77 minutes of Aston Villa's Barclays Premier League season.

Agbonlahor was named Aston Villa's Young Player of the Year and Players' Young Player of the Year for 2006/07.

He has made 61 appearances for Aston Villa, scoring 16 goals. This season he has made 15 Barclays Premier League appearances, scoring six goals.

**-ENDS-**

A COPYRIGHT FREE PICTURE OF MARTIN ONEILL AND GABRIEL  
AGBONLAHOR WITH THEIR AWARDS WILL BE SENT TO ALL PICTURE DESKS  
THIS AFTERNOON

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