

Chesterfield FC

Record transfer fees paid and received.

Transfer fees are, of course, open to interpretation, given the reluctance of many clubs to publicise them, or the tendency to slap on signing-on fees and projected wages in an effort to gild the lily. Such variations make any sort of consistent study of them difficult, but observing the way “record” fees have changed over the years makes for an interesting diversion.

Record fees received:

Player:	transferred to:	date:	fee:	note:
Ellis GEE	Everton	March 1898	£100	
Joe BALL	Bury	December 1903	£400	
William EGERTON	Lincoln City	January 1914	£500	
Jacky FISHER	Burnley	March 1922	£1,000	
Joe COOPER	Notts County	March 1923	£1,000	
Billy MARSHALL	Grimsby Town	May 1923	£1,000	
Willis EDWARDS	Leeds United	March 1925	£1,500	
Cyril OXLEY	Liverpool	October 1925	£2,000	4
Jimmy COOKSON	West Bromwich A.	June 1927	£2,500	
Albert MALAM	Huddersfield Town	September 1934	£3,000	
Harry CLIFTON	Newcastle United	June 1938	£8,500	
Billy WHITAKER	Middlesbrough	June 1947	£10,000	
Harry ROBERTS	Birmingham City	December 1947	£10,600	
Gordon DALE	Portsmouth	July 1951	£20,000	1
Alan STEVENSON	Burnley	January 1972	£50,000	2
Jim BROWN	Sheffield United	March 1974	£90,000	
Alan BIRCH	Wolverhampton W.	August 1981	£177,500	3
Kevin DAVIES	Southampton	May 1997	£750,000	

Notes:

1: Portsmouth's record for a fee paid, at the time.

2: £60,000 is also reported.

3: This was the amount that Chesterfield finally received: Wolves had agreed £200,000 but renegotiated their debts in the wake of their 1981 financial crisis.

4: £1750 basic, plus £250 more when Oxley played six first-team games, which he did, and they paid!

Record fees paid:

Player:	transferred from:	date:	fee:	note:
Joe BALL	Bury	Aug-05	£400	4
Allan SLIMAN	Bristol City	Mar-32	£1,500	
Walter McMILLEN	Manchester United	Dec-36	£2,000	
Norman KIRKMAN	Rochdale	Nov-47	£4,500	5
Walter HARRISON	Leicester City	Dec-50	£8,500	
Arthur BELLAMY	Burnley	Jul-72	£10,000	
Frank BARLOW	Sheffield United	Aug-72	£15,000	
Ricky GREEN	Scunthorpe Utd.	Feb-77	£20,000	
Geoff SALMONS	Leicester City	Aug-78	£35,000	

Bill GREEN	Peterborough Utd.	Jun-79	£40,000	
Alan BIRCH	Walsall	Jul-79	£40,000	
John TURNER	Torquay United	Feb-80	£120,000	6
Phil BONNYMAN	Carlisle United	Mar-80	£150,000	
Paul HOLLAND	Sheffield United	Jan-96	£150,000	
Steve WILKINSON	Preston North End	Jul-97	£150,000	7
David REEVES	Preston North End	Nov-97	£100,000 + p	8
Jason LEE	Watford	Sep-98	£250,000	

Notes:

4: Local sources reported that Chesterfield paid what they received for Joe Ball. The Bury historian Peter Cullen has confirmed that £400 was paid by The Shakers, but it seems incredible that Chesterfield's notoriously slim resources stretched to such an amount.

5: Local sources say £5,000 - the deal may have involved a down-payment and top-ups for appearances.

7: As reported at the time. A club representative at Chesterfield's 1998 AGM said that only £85,000 had been paid. Increments may have been due with appearances.

8: Deal appears to have been £100,000 plus Tony Lormor, who Chesterfield were said to have valued at around £70,000. A record fee, of sorts, then, but difficult to express as a money figure alone.

9: Fee paid in total was £1738 – this figure includes Sliman's share of benefit at City, which Chesterfield paid.

Interestingly, for a so-called 'goalkeeper factory', only two of Chesterfield's record fees received have been banked for the transfer of a custodian (Stevenson and Brown). Seven of those who left for a record fee were wingers.

Chesterfield's long decline from being a good Second Division side in 1950 to being an average Fourth Division one in the mid-60s is emphasised by there being nearly twenty years between the record purchases of Harrison and Bellamy.

The situation in the wake of the Bosman ruling make it most unlikely that the club will pay such a fee as the did for Jason Lee for a long time to come!