

League Two Season Preview 2006/07 - Grimsby Town

Grimsby Town

Odds: 14/1

Last Five Seasons

2005/06 - 4 (League Two), 2004/05 - 18 (League Two), 2003/04 - 21 (League One, Relegated), 2002/03 - 24 (Championship, Relegated), 2001/02 - 19 (Championship).

2005/06 Cup Progress

FA Cup First Round vs Bristol Rovers (h) - lost 2-1

Carling Cup Third Round vs Newcastle United (h) - lost 1-0.

Football League Trophy Northern Section First Round vs Morecambe - lost 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw after extra time.

Top Goal Scorer 2005/06: Gary Jones (striker) - 17 goals.

Players In

Isaiah Rankin (Brentford - Free), Phil Barnes (Sheffield United - Free), Gary Harkins (Blackburn Rovers - Free).

Players Out

Rob Jones (Hibernian - Free), Thomas Pinault (Brentford - Free), Steve Mildenhall (Yeovil Town - Free), Jean-Paul Kamudimba (Yeovil Town - Free), Andy Parkinson (Notts County - Free), Marc Goodfellow (Bury - Free),

Grimsby Town had one of their most exciting, if not heartbreaking, seasons in a long time during 2005/06. After stunning Champions League chasers Tottenham Hotspur by beating them 1-0 in the Carling Cup, the Mariners looked to clinch automatic promotion for much of the season. However, Russell Slade's side hit an inconsistent patch of form during March, slipped out of the reckoning and suffered defeat in the play-off final against Cheltenham Town.

Slade departed this summer to take over at Yeovil Town and took Spurs match winner Jean-Paul Kamudimba and goalkeeper Steve Mildenhall with him. New manager Graham Rodger, who enjoyed an unbeaten six match temporary spell in charge at Blundell Park in 2004, has been left to pick up the pieces.

Sheffield United's former Blackpool goalkeeper Phil Barnes has been brought in to replace Mildenhall, while former Arsenal striker Isaiah Rankin has joined on a free transfer from Brentford, themselves play-off losers this season. This will be Rankin's second spell with the club, having had a loan spell during the 2003/04 campaign in which he scored four goals in 12 appearances.

With Gary Jones, last season's top goal scorer with 17 goals and former Sunderland striker Michael Reddy, second with 14, Rankin's arrival adds additional firepower to the squad which will be expected to push for promotion again next season.

Rodger is also keeping faith with younger players at the club with four youngster offered new six month deals. Midfielder Ben Higgins and striker Danny North, both 18, midfielder Paul Ashton and striker Danny North, both 19, have all put pen to paper.

Verdict

Last season's fourth placed finish proves Grimsby have one of the better teams at this level but it will be up to new manager Graham Rodger to push them that one step further than Russell Slade was able to do.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

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