



ENGLAND

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V LITHUANIA

EUROPEAN QUALIFIER

7.45pm, Friday 27 March 2015

Wembley Stadium connected by EE

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME £6

FEATURING

ROY HODGSON

GIEDRIUS ARLAUSKIS

LUKE SHAW

BACK IN BUSINESS

Roy Hodgson's Group E leaders resume the task of qualifying for Euro 2016



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VAUXHALL



TOGETHER FOR ENGLAND

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All the stats you need

It has been four months since England's last qualifying match for next summer's European Championship and after a perfect start in Group E another three points tonight will take Roy Hodgson's men one step closer to France.

England's four wins from four matches has left them clear at the top of the group but despite the current six-point cushion and a healthy goal difference advantage, they will know that any slip-up at Wembley could prove costly. And Lithuania have already proved they can be difficult opponents.

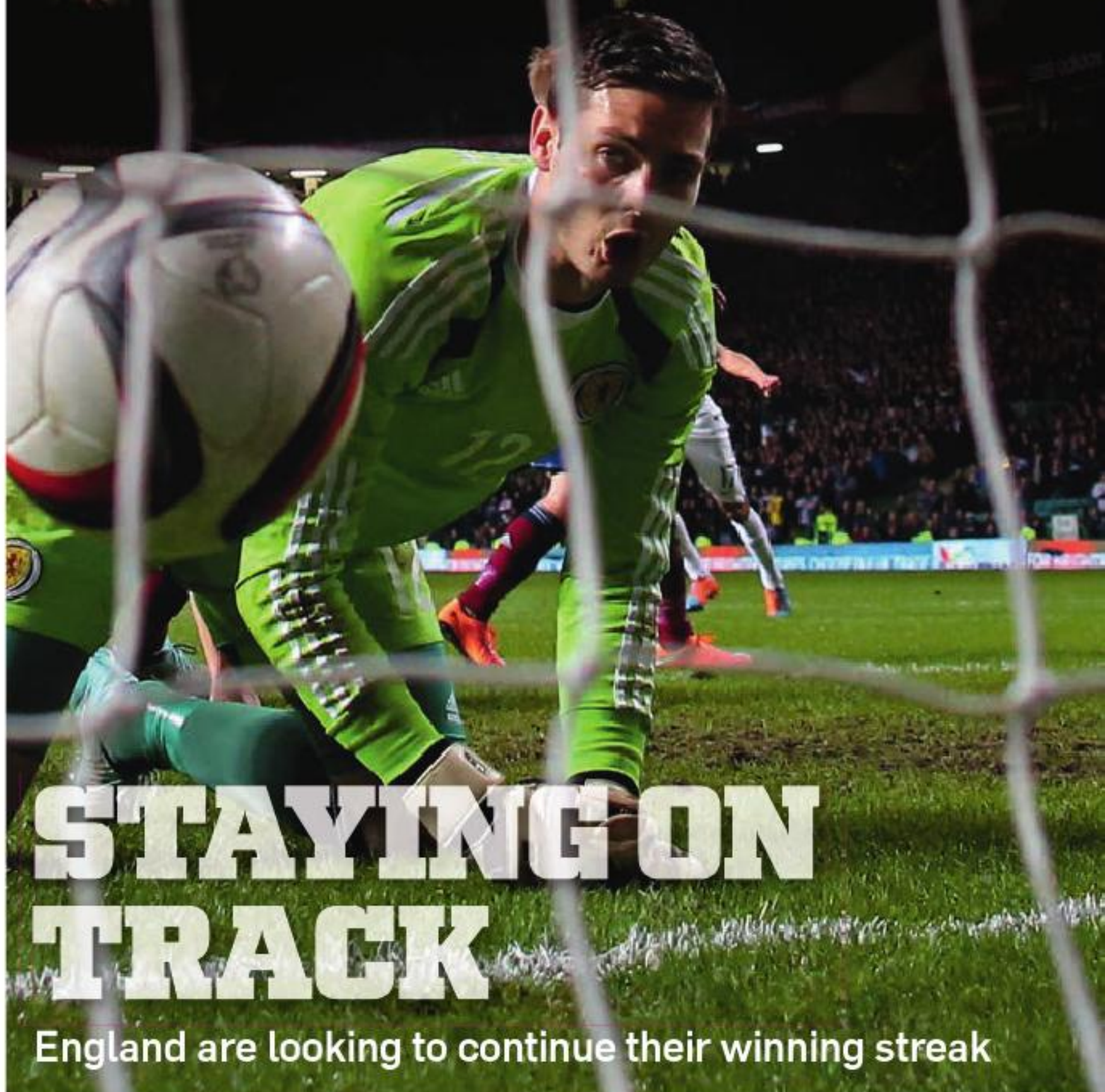
Wins in their opening two matches, over San Marino and Estonia, have left them handily placed as one of three teams on six points, although back-to-back defeats against their nearest rivals, Slovenia and Switzerland, have dented their qualification hopes.

Tonight's visitors can be

dangerous opponents, as Czech Republic found to their cost in qualification for Euro 2012, when the Lithuanians beat them 1-0 in Olomouc. They also held Scotland to a 0-0 draw in Kaunas in the opening match of that campaign.

Slovenia offered England stubborn resistance in mid-November, taking the lead before a goal from Wayne Rooney and a brace from Danny Welbeck, who is Group E's leading scorer with five, sealed a 3-1 win in front of 82,000 fans on an early winter's afternoon.

That win was followed by a thrilling 3-1 triumph over Scotland, which extended England's winning run to six following the conclusion of their disappointing World Cup campaign in Brazil. Their four Euro qualifying victories, coupled with two friendly wins against Norway and the Scots, have left the national side in rude health ahead of a busy 2015.



STAYING ON TRACK

England are looking to continue their winning streak

ROUND THE TABLE

How England's rivals in Group E have been faring

England remain the only team in UEFA

Euro 2016 qualifying Group E with a 100 per cent record following their victory here over Slovenia in November.

Switzerland made it back-to-back wins on the same day. After their 4-0 victory over San Marino in October they overcame Lithuania by the same score-line at the AFG Arena in St Gallen. An own goal from Lithuania goalkeeper Giedrius Arlauskis, plus one from Fabian Schar and a brace from Xherdan Shaqiri made sure of a comfortable night for the Swiss.

Elsewhere, San Marino managed to get their first point of the campaign, holding Estonia to a 0-0 draw in Serravalle in front of a crowd of only 759.

There are two other matches in Group E tonight: second-placed Slovenia will be strong favourites to secure all three points as they welcome San Marino in Ljubljana while Switzerland, currently in third, are also at home, facing Estonia in Lucerne.



TIMETABLE OF EVENTS

18.15 General Admission turnstiles open, selection of music, general announcements

18.15-18.30

Teams arrive at the Stadium

18.30-18.50

Marching display on pitch by the Band of the Scots Guards

19.00-19.30

Players warm-up, England and Lithuania crests paraded around the pitch

Teams enter the arena, accompanied by player escorts

19.40 National Anthems performed by the Band of the Scots Guards

Fair Play Handshake, Team photos, Exchange of Captains' pennants, Coin toss

19.45 Kick-off

20.30 Half-time

Vauxhall penalty shootout

Presentation to Kelly Smith recognising her International retirement following a 20-year England career

First-half highlights

20.45 Second half

21.30 Full-time

Match highlights

Special thanks to volunteers from the Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the Reserves from our Armed Forces for the on-pitch banner reveal.

KELLY SMITH HONOURED

At half-time today,

England Women's all-time record goalscorer Kelly Smith will be honoured following her retirement from international football after a 20-year career.

Smith, who scored 46 goals for England, will continue to play domestic football for Arsenal.

She made her England debut against Italy in 1995 and scored her first goal against Croatia in the same year. During her career, Smith played in four European

Championships and the 2007 and 2011 World Cups. She was also part of the Team GB squad at the 2012 London Olympics. Alongside her playing career, Smith has been training as a coach

and is currently undertaking the UEFA B Licence course.

Smith said: "Women's football has changed so much since I started and I am proud to have been a part of that. I'm pleased that I'll still be working in the game and with The FA in its activities moving forwards."

England head coach Mark Sampson said:

"Kelly will be remembered as one of the iconic players in the history of the women's game.

She was without a doubt one of the greatest ever players."



INVESTMENT BOOST FOR GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL

Speaking at the 2015 National Game Conference, Football Association director Kelly Simmons said an unprecedented level of investment will be made to raise standards in this country.

Simmons restated the goals of The FA Chairman's England Commission. She said: "There will be additional money coming in to help implement the National Game Strategy, bringing in better coaches and better facilities."



LITHUANIA

Lithuania? Baltic nation with a population of around three million, right?

It is now, but in the fourteenth century, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was the largest in Europe taking in Belarus, Ukraine and parts of Poland and Russia.



Lithuania's next game was. Some point to a 0-0 draw against Kyrgyzstan in 1979-80, although neither were independent nations at the time. Others point to a match in May 1990 between Zalgiris Vilnius and Dinamo Tbilisi as a de facto international. In terms of a game that was recognised

Then what happened?

In 1569, Lithuania formed a commonwealth with Poland that endured for over 200 years when it began to be annexed by the Russian Empire. It regained independence after the First World War, though.

Then the Second World War happened?

Yes. Their last game before the War was a 4-3 victory over Latvia in October 1940 and, as the country was subsumed by the Soviet Union, it would be over 50 years before they played again.

as a full international by football's authorities though, Lithuania's re-emergence came with a 4-1 win over Estonia in the Baltic Cup in November 1991.

When did it all begin for them in terms of football? Lithuania were relatively early adopters, playing their first international fixture in 1923, a 5-0 defeat to Estonia.

So what happened after the break-up of the USSR? There's some debate as to exactly when

And how's their record in the Baltic Cup? Pretty good: they've won it ten times, as opposed to Latvia's 12 and Estonia's three successes.

VITAL STATISTICS

LAST FIVE RESULTS

18.11.14	Ukraine	0-0	Kiev	Friendly
15.11.14	Switzerland	0-4	St Gallen	ECQ
12.10.14	Slovenia	0-2	Vilnius	ECQ
09.10.14	Estonia	1-0	Vilnius	ECQ
08.09.14	San Marino	2-0	Serravalle	ECQ

ANY PREVIOUS?

England have not played Lithuania before at senior level, but the Under-21s sides have faced off four times in the last five years. England won all but one game with Danny Welbeck, Saido Berahino and Harry Kane all finding the net.

DID YOU KNOW?

Basketball is by far the most popular sport in Lithuania. They're ranked fourth in the world (see page 46) and, between 1992 and 2000, they were three times bronze medalists at the Olympic Games.

The French geographer Jean-George Affholder calculated in 1989 that the centre of gravity of the geometrical figure of Europe lies 16 miles north of the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius.



1995

Biggest win: 7-0 v Estonia, 1995

84

Record appearances:
Andrius Skerla (above)

0-10

Biggest defeat: v Egypt, 1924

19

Record goals:
Tomas Danilevicius



LITHUANIA'S FINEST EXPORTS

For a relatively small nation, and one whose main sporting passion is basketball, Lithuania has still produced some fine footballers over the years



Slam dunk!

There is little doubt about Lithuania's major sporting passion. As American journalist Luke Winn once wrote in *Sports Illustrated* on a trip to the country in 2011: "Basketball is the only sport the 3.2 million Lithuanians truly care about – it is their second religion... and their success is proportionately stunning."

Stunning indeed. At the time of writing, Lithuania's national basketball team is ranked fourth in the world by the International Basketball Federation (FIBA).

Top Lithuanian exports to the United States' NBA include NBA Hall of Famer Arvydas Sabonis, Zydrunas Ilgauskas and Jonas Valanciunas.

With a highest-ever FIFA ranking of 37, the country on the Baltic Sea can still boast a UEFA Champions League winner in the shape of 6ft 4in former striker Edgaras Jankauskas. He was part of FC Porto's side that lifted the trophy in 2004 under the management of Jose Mourinho. Jankauskas was born in Vilnius on 12 March 1975 and began his professional career with local club Zalgiris Vilnius. He moved to Russia in 1996, signing for CSKA Moscow before a move to Torpedo Moscow the following year. He won the Belgium league title in his first season with Club Brugge before signing for Real Sociedad in 2000.

The well-travelled forward was loaned to Benfica and scored an impressive eight goals in 12 Portuguese league matches and managed a further 19 strikes in 64 Primeira Liga appearances for Porto between 2002 and 2003. He spent a season on loan with Nice while under contract to Porto.

2008, is now manager of FK Trakai in his homeland.

Vilnius-born defender/midfielder Deividas Semberas has also experienced European glory during his playing career, which still continues at the age of 36 with Zalgiris Vilnius. Having impressed at Zalgiris between 1996 and 1998, Semberas moved to Dynamo Moscow as a 19-year-old. It was at rivals CSKA Moscow, however, that he made a real name for himself, winning three Russian Premier League titles, six Russian Cups, four Russian Super Cups and the UEFA Cup in 2005. He made 254 league appearances for CSKA, scoring once. Following a spell with FC Alania Vladikavkaz in Russia, Semberas returned to Zalgiris Vilnius last year.

He retired from international football in 2013 having won 82 caps.

Currently playing his club football for Hannover 96 in Germany, Marius Stankevicius is perhaps one of the best-known names in recent years. His career, which began at FK Ekranas, has seen him play for clubs across Europe including Italian side Brescia, for whom he made 157 league appearances and scored 12 goals.

Stankevicius's Italian adventure continued at Sampdoria, where he was a Coppa Italia runner-up in 2009. The defender was loaned to Sevilla where he won the Copa del Rey in 2010 but returned to Italy and Lazio in 2011 and won the Coppa Italia in his final season there in 2012-13; he signed for Hannover in 2014. He has 67 caps to his name with five international goals.



The five-time Lithuanian Footballer of the Year, who won 56 caps for his country and scored ten goals between 1991 and

Edgaras Jankauskas
(above) and **Marius Stankevicius** (right)

FANS PICK WAYNE AS ENGLAND PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Three Lions skipper Rooney chosen by the fans as Vauxhall England Player of the Year for a record third time

Wayne Rooney was back to scooping awards as England fans named him their Vauxhall Player of the Year.

The Manchester United striker played all 13 games for his country in 2014 and scored eight goals.

He also earned his 100th England cap last year, scoring in a 3-1 Euro 2016 qualifying win over Slovenia in November.

Members of the England Supporters Club made their votes

The fact that this award is chosen by the fans makes it even more special, so I would like to thank all those who voted.

"I would also like to thank all the England fans. They have stuck by us since the World Cup, we have managed to win every game since and are in the best possible position for European qualification."

He continued: "Without the support of my team mates, coaching and backroom staff such an award would not be possible. I therefore accept this from the fans on behalf of every single member of the England team."

Rooney was not the only winner, though, with four other awards being presented.

Manchester City striker Toni Duggan scooped the majority of votes in the Women's Player of the Year poll after a fine 2014 for Mark Sampson's side.

She bagged six goals in ten games, including a hat-trick as England crushed Montenegro 9-0 in a World Cup Qualifier.

West Bromwich Albion forward Saido Berahino edged the voting for the Under-21s Player of the Year, just ahead of Tottenham Hotspur man Harry Kane.

With an enviable strike rate of one goal in every two games for the U21s last year, Berahino was often selected as the man to lead the line for Gareth Southgate's side.

England Development Team coaches also voted for their players of 2014 across the men's and women's youth squads.

Under-17s striker Dominic Solanke was chosen by the coaches as the England Men's Youth Player of the Year for his performances that helped John Peacock's side become European Champions.

The Chelsea youngster was joint-top scorer at the UEFA Finals in May and he also enjoyed a successful year at club level netting the winner as the Blues lifted The FA Youth Cup.

He also made his debut for Jose Mourinho's first-team during their Champions League victory over Maribor.

The England Women's Youth Player of the Year award was won by Arsenal midfielder Leah Williamson. The 17-year-old played 14 times for the Three Lions across three different age groups in 2014, scoring twice. She also helped her club to win The FA Women's Cup.



count for their Players of the Year across the Senior Men's and Women's teams, and the Under-21s.

Rooney took 27 per cent of the votes, more than second-placed Danny Welbeck and third-placed Raheem Sterling combined. He was presented with the award by England Team Lead Sponsor Vauxhall earlier this week and can add his prize to the two he collected in 2008 and 2009.

The 29-year-old said: "I'm both very happy and proud to be named the England fans' Player of the Year."



FANS' MESSAGES...

Congratulations to Paul Fleckney who is here today to celebrate prior to his wedding to Claire, from all your friends and family!

Happy birthday to Matthew Reynolds who is celebrating his seventh birthday. Enjoy the game and sing loud!



England regular **Lewis Whiten** turns 14 today and is here with his Dad Scott, Uncle Matt, brother Jarrod and cousin Jack. Happy birthday!

Happy 18th birthday to England fan Jack Clark, love from mum, Alan, Ronnie and Harry.



England and Doncaster Rovers fan **Jake Silvester** is celebrating his seventh birthday.

Your Mummy, Daddy, Millie and all the family hope you have a brilliant night!

Happy 12th birthday to Ben Mills from Cricklade. From Mum, Dad and the girls.

It's a double celebration as dad Mark Atherton turns 30 and his daughter Delilah is one. "We hope that England score a goal for you! Love Daisy, Mummy and Woody."

Gary Dawn planned to get down on one knee and propose to girlfriend Karen Bradley by the Bobby Moore statue tonight. Good luck!

VAUXHALL ENGLAND PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2014

England Player of the Year
Wayne Rooney, Man Utd

England Women's Player
of the Year

Toni Duggan, Man City

England U21s Player of the Year
Saido Berahino, West Brom

England Men's Youth Player
of the Year

Dominic Solanke, Chelsea

England Women's Youth Player
of the Year

Leah Williamson, Arsenal

ENGLAND PLAYER OF THE YEAR WINNERS

2003 **David Beckham**
2004 **Frank Lampard**
2005 **Frank Lampard**
2006 **Owen Hargreaves**
2007 **Steven Gerrard**
2008 **Wayne Rooney**
2009 **Wayne Rooney**
2010 **Ashley Cole**
2011 **Scott Parker**
2012 **Steven Gerrard**



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