



Allcock, Ashman and Gavin are appropriate City statue candidates

Norwich City FC legends Terry Allcock, Johnny Gavin and Ron Ashman^a are the players from the club's Hall of Fame most likely to be honoured by a statue at Carrow Road, according to research from the University of Sheffield.

Data on the 99 playing members of the currently 123-strong Norwich City Hall of Fame was collected and analysed by Canaries' season ticket-holder Ffion Thomas of the [Sporting Statues Project^b](#), using a statistical model derived from the subject selection of existing English football statues^c, and designed to predict the probability of any former English League footballer player having a statue of themselves erected at the stadium of their club.

The past twenty years have seen over 50 football statues erected in the UK, with projects instigated by clubs, local authorities and fan groups. Analysis of this statuary suggests that a player's loyalty to the club and the era in which they played are as important in being chosen as their performances on the pitch.

Allcock, Gavin and Ashman all contributed to one of the most successful periods in the club's history. In 1959 the then Third Division Canaries famously defied their underdog status to reach the semi-finals of the FA Cup, with the club achieving promotion to the Second Division a year later and then winning the club's first major trophy, the League Cup, in 1962. However, whilst Norwich City were particularly successful in the 1950s and 1960s, there is a wider trend for statues to depict players from this era regardless of their team's performance. Such images evoke happy memories in older fans and provide a sense of authenticity in a commercialised age, making statues an effective marketing tool for football clubs looking to provide a distinctive statement of identity at their stadia.

In addition to their playing era, the loyalty displayed in spending at least two-thirds of their careers with the Canaries makes Allcock, Gavin and Ashman prime statue candidates. However, there are signs that this trend may be shifting somewhat as clubs increasingly look to brand themselves through the proclamation of contemporary success and celebrity status; Arsenal's recent unveiling of Thierry Henry outside the Emirates Stadium being the most obvious example.

If Norwich were to honour club saviour Geoffrey Watling or, as recently suggested by Chief Executive David McNally, current majority shareholder Delia Smith, they would be only the second club to depict a board member or owner, following the lead of Blackburn Rovers tribute to the late Jack Walker.

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Notes for Editors:

^a Forward Terry Allcock played 389 games for the club between 1958 and 1969, scoring 106 goals, and is second in both the club's all-time appearances and goalscoring lists. Ron Ashman captained the club to its major successes of this period and pulled on the yellow shirt a club record 662 times between 1947 and 1963. Johnny Gavin is Norwich City's all-time leading goalscorer, with 132 goals in 338 matches during two spells at the club between 1948 and 1958.

^b The Sporting Statues Project, based at the University of Sheffield, aims to record and research the background behind statues of sportsmen and women around the world. Since 2010 we have published and contributed to a handful of academic papers and magazine articles on the subject, and have gradually collected and collated information on over 500 statues from around the world. The website www.sportingstatues.com, documenting all of the UK's sporting statues, will go live in March 2012

^c Stride, C. B., Thomas, F. E., Wilson, J. P. & Pahigian, J. (in press) Modeling stadia statue subject choice in the US baseball and English soccer. *Journal of Quantitative Analysis in Sports* (to be published Spring 2012)