



**FANTASY CHALLENGE  
PYRAMID CUP  
FINAL  
2023**

**John Bellamy**

**VS**

**David Murphy**

***15<sup>th</sup> Final***

**GAMEWEEK 38  
May 28<sup>th</sup> 2023**



# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this seasons Pyramid Cup Final preview.

The Pyramid Cup continues to be the competition that all in the FC World hoped it would be highlighting the new and growing talent within the FC World with those previous finalists being proof of this fact.

This season has seen Dave Rogers get to the Champions League final his second final he won the Pyramid Cup as recently as 2019, showing todays finalists that this competition can be a great springboard into the Champions League.

Like last season we have two debutants in todays final. John Bellamy and David Murphy, which once more guarantees a new name on this coveted trophy. Whoever wins will become the fifteenth name on the trophy. No one has ever won the trophy twice; the main reason is most of the successful managers have gained promotion through the Super20 Leagues seeing them progress into the Champions League competition. As we have mentioned above like Dave Rogers many finalists going in to do well in the Champions League final. The pyramid Cup was introduced to give the lower Super20 league managers a taste of the format of the Champions League style competition and is proving to serve them well over its fifteen years.

John Bellamy is in his third season within the FC World and has one promotion to his name and Quarter-Final appearance in the New Life Cup. Each season in the Pyramid Cup has seen Bellamy get better his first season going out in the Group Stage last season getting through to the Second Round. Today is Bellamy's first major final and gives him the chance to join the growing list of major Trophy winners and writing his name into the history books of the FC World.

David Murphy is in his second season, last season he could not get out of the Group Stage. Changing that this season showing us what he can do making a Major Final in his second season with promotion last season and Promotion from Pyramid One already secured this season victory in today's final will have the whole of the FC World talking about Murphy even more than he is already being discussed.

Todays final is made all the more intriguing by the fact that both managers are currently plying their trade in Pyramid One, although Murphy has secured promotion this season whilst it looks like Bellamy will be staying in Pyramid One next season. Murphy is currently top of amid One and will be hoping to complete a double the question is can Bellamy take the major trophy and deny Murphy that double. The FC Expert will be looking into their two Pyramid One encounters which makes interesting reading.

We all hope for a high scoring and a close final, the Pyramid Cup is alongside the Super20 Cup as the only finals where no manager has broken the hundred-point margin.

Over the next pages in this preview, we profile our two managers how their run got them to this year's final. The FC expert takes a look at the two manager's teams and we show the history of the competition.

Before I sign off, I want to apologise for any spelling and or grammatical mistakes in this preview the timeframes are just getting tighter every season the alternative is no preview.

I hope you enjoy this Pyramid Cup Final Preview Edition.

All that is left for me to do is to wish both John Bellamy and David Murphy all the best for this final.

*Paul Richardson*

Fantasy Challenge Founder

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# PLAYER PROFILES

## JOHN BELLAMY

### ROAD TO THE FINAL

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Round Group Stage

##### Group P

Rikki Bodhani	55	-	40
James Rees	61	-	69
Chad Pereira	82	-	53
Don Hessier	54	-	41
Rikki Bodhani	62	-	56
James Rees	96	-	75
Chad Pereira	55	-	69
Don Hessier	43	-	44

### FINAL TABLE

POS	TEAM	PLD	WON	DRW	LST	FOR	AGST	+/-	PTS
1	John Bellamy	8	5	0	3	508	447	61	15
2	Don Hessier	8	4	1	3	408	396	12	13
3	Rikki Bodhani	8	4	1	3	407	400	7	13
4	Chad Pereira	8	3	1	4	404	430	-26	10
5	James Rees	8	2	1	5	454	508	-54	7

### KNOCKOUT STAGE

		1 <sup>st</sup> Leg		2 <sup>nd</sup> Leg		Aggregate	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Round	Darron Meredith	61	- 65	57	- 52	118	- 117
3 <sup>rd</sup> Round	Mike Davies	102	- 98	61	- 48	163	- 146
Quarter-Final	Patrick Hearn	48	- 70	73	- 46	121	- 116
Semi-Final	Scott Smith	26	- 36	125	- 103	151	- 139

### HISTORY

**Career Honours** 2022 Pyramid Two 4<sup>th</sup> Promoted

**Honourable Mention** 2021 New Life Cup Quarter-Final

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HISTORY	PYRAMID CUP HISTORY	NEW LIFE CUP HISTORY
2021	Group Stage	Quarter-Final
2022	Second Round	

### STAT ATTACK

*(After Gameweek 37 – Champions League Average does not include 0-0 draw week)*

AVERAGE GAMEWEEK SCORE	67.05	GAMEWEEKS SCORE OVER 49	30
HIGHEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	125	GAMEWEEKS SCORE UNDER 50	7
LOWEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	26	CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AVERAGE	66.31

# PLAYER PROFILES

## DAVID MURPHY

### ROAD TO THE FINAL

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Round Group Stage

##### Group D

Nathan Timmons	67	-	59
Matt Coe	55	-	41
David Dinh	75	-	67
Sam Martin	79	-	100
Andy McLaren	48	-	52
Nathan Timmons	0	-	0
Matt Coe	63	-	56
David Dinh	90	-	110
Sam Martin	69	-	63
Andy McLaren	57	-	56

### FINAL TABLE

POS	TEAM	PLD	WON	DRW	LST	FOR	AGST	+/-	PTS
1	David Murphy	8	6	1	3	604	604	-1	19
2	Sam Martin	8	5	1	4	530	530	59	16
3	Andy McLaren	8	5	1	4	549	549	-46	16
4	David Dinh	8	4	1	5	542	542	31	13
5	Nathan Timmons	8	4	1	5	545	545	-16	13
6	Matt Coe	8	3	1	6	551	551	-27	10

### KNOCKOUT STAGE

		1 <sup>st</sup> Leg		2 <sup>nd</sup> Leg		Aggregate	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Round	Harry Penfold	80	- 65	64	- 57	144	- 122
3 <sup>rd</sup> Round	Stephen Nicolaides	102	- 72	59	- 34	161	- 106
Quarter-Final	Cameron Wong	65	- 63	81	- 66	146	- 129
Semi-Final	Sam Martin	39	- 32	96	- 92	135	- 124

### HISTORY

**Career Honours** 2022 Pyramid Two 3<sup>rd</sup> Promoted

**Honourable Mention**

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HISTORY	PYRAMID CUP HISTORY	NEW LIFE CUP HISTORY
2022	Group Stage	

### STAT ATTACK

*(After Gameweek 37 – Champions League Average does not include 0-0 draw week)*

AVERAGE GAMEWEEK SCORE	68.89	GAMEWEEKS SCORE OVER 49	32
HIGHEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	145	GAMEWEEKS SCORE UNDER 50	5
LOWEST GAMEWEEK SCORE	32	CHAMPIONS LEAGUE AVERAGE	69.94



# FC EXPERT MATCH ANALYSIS

We asked the Fantasy Challenge Expert to give us his thoughts on this year's Pyramid Cup Final. We have managed to give the FC Expert the two team line-ups from Gameweek 37.

**JOHN BELLAMY**

Gameweek 37

Squad List

52 Average    **74** Points    128 Highest →

**DAVID MURPHY**

Gameweek 37

Squad List

52 Average    **70** Points    128 Highest →



## STAT ATTACK

74	SCORE	70
12	CAPTAIN	2
24	DEFENCE	34
36	MIDFIELD	28
14	ATTACK	8
1	TRANSFERS	0
3-5-2	FORMATION	4-4-2
NONE	CHIP PLAYED	NONE
NONE	CHIPS LEFT	NONE

## THE ANALYSIS

The busiest day of the season for myself the FC Expert three Cup final previews to write in tight time frame. Another season which has seen Gameweek 37 play right up to the Gameweek of the final leaving less than a day to do the analysis.

That's enough of me trying to give the reason as to why these previews are not as in depth as in previous seasons or why I might not get the predictions correct. That said we have another final where neither

manager has Chip to play as I said in the Champions League preview making this a pure final for both managers.

This match takes on extra significance as the two managers are plying their trade in the same Super20 League Pyramid One. So before we do the deep dive and try and look at the key areas for this final we take a look at the two league encounters from this season.

### HAVENT, WE MET BEFORE

As well as looking at the two managers teams from gameweek 37 I have taken a look at their two meetings in Pyramid One this season.

Gameweek 9	David Murphy	90	-	96	John Bellamy
Gameweek 28	John Bellamy	61	-	59	David Murphy

When the two managers met in Gameweek 9 David Murphy was 3<sup>rd</sup> in the league with John Bellamy 7<sup>th</sup> victory for Bellamy saw him rise to 4<sup>th</sup> just 1 place behind his opponent. When the two met for their second fixture of the season Murphy was still in 3<sup>rd</sup> place whilst Bellamy had dropped to 15<sup>th</sup> just above the relegation zone. It was Bellamy that took the honours again to complete a league double over Murphy. Whilst Bellamy has claimed those two victories both matches have been close, a 6 point winning margin when they were close in the table and just a 2 point winning margin in the second fixture. This does point to Bellamy having the Indian sign over Murphy this season the gap has got closer and in overall league performance Murphy has been the better of the two managers.

I am going to go through three categories that I think will decide this final.

### FINANCE / TRANSFERS / OPTIONS

JOHN BELLAMY		DAVE MURPHY	
FINANCE	TRANSFERS	FINANCE	TRANSFERS
£103.1	1	£100.5	1

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This is such an interesting category and i see advantages for both. Bellamy finances do not tell the whole story as he has a massive £5.5Million in the bank, he might only have one transfer he can make without losing points but that bank balance he can basically bring in any player he wants it is a significant transfer budget. Murphy does not have as much money and has £1.4 million in the bank but Murphy has two transfers that he can make without losing any points. The massive key factor in this final is the upcoming FA Cup final between Manchester City and Manchester United (Alphabetical) and what players these two clubs will rest in the final gameweek with an eye on that final. Bellamy has 5 players from the Manchester clubs with three of these in his midfield I can't see him looking anywhere else in his squad for that single transfer he has available. The question as to who he transfers out is massive one from United's Rashford or Fernandes and City's Mahrez. I think he will keep Mahrez in and look to replace one of the United players as to he brings in will be interesting, he could take the decision to bring in Liverpool's Salah to negate his opponent's midfield or basically go for anyone else as he can afford them. Bellamy has to navigate who he thinks is going to be relaxed and have a goal fest on the final day. Murphy does not have such a big bank balance but he has two transfers available I think he will be happy with his Defence and will look to spread the transfers over the midfield and forward line. Could he make a massive gamble that City's Haaland doesn't play and say maybe go for Tottenham's Harry Kane.

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## SQUAD SAME – LOOKING FOR THE DIFFERENTIALS

### JOHN BELLAMY

Raya (Brentford)  
Kieran Trippier (Newcastle United)  
Estupian (Brighton & Hove Albion)  
Botman (Newcastle United)  
Mitoma (Brighton & Hove Albion)  
Mahrez (Manchester City)  
Fernandes (Manchester United)  
Haaland (Manchester City))

### DAVE MURPHY

Raya (Brentford)  
Kieran Trippier (Newcastle United)  
Estupian (Brighton & Hove Albion)  
Botman (Newcastle United)  
Mitoma (Brighton & Hove Albion)  
Mahrez (Manchester City)  
Fernandes (Manchester United)  
Haaland (Manchester City)

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In a squad of 15 these managers have 7 of the same players. I would also add a similar selection where Bellemy has Brighton's Mac Allister Murphy has March, Bellamy has on his bench Brentford defender Rico Henry Murphy has Ethan Pinnock, which for me pushes to say that the two squads have 9 of the same players. The differentials in this match are Bellamy's Alexander-Arnold the Liverpool defender the rest of the defences are the same. Could Murphy use one of his two transfers to cancel this out personally I think he will look elsewhere for his differentials. Bellamy has that massive transfer budget as already mentioned I think he will sell either of United's Rashford or Fernandes I think probably Rashford leaving Fernandes as same selection to cancel out Murphy and the go for Salah another match play transfer leaving Alex-Arnold as the key differential. Murphy would have lost this match in Gameweek 37 by just 4 points in the knowledge that was mainly down to the captain pick. Although he doesn't have a massive budget, he can use those two transfers wisely and find the differential for this match.

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## CAPTAIN – (Points for the Could have selected have been doubled)

### JOHN BELLAMY

Haaland (Manchester City) 12 Points

#### COULD HAVE SELECTED

Fernandes (Manchester United) 11 Points  
De Gea (Manchester United)) 10 Points  
Trippier (Newcastle United) 9 Points  
Rashford (Manchester United) 7 Points  
Mitoma (Brighton & Hove Albion) 7 Points  
Botman (Newcastle United) 8 Points (On Bench)  
Edourd (Crystal Palace) 8 Points (Bench)

### DAVE MURPHY

Haaland (Manchester City) 12 Points

#### COULD HAVE SELECTED

Fernandes (Manchester United) 11 Points  
Shaw (Manchester United)) 10 Points  
Trippier (Newcastle) 9 Points  
Botman (Newcastle United) 8 Points  
Mitoma (Brighton & Hove Albion) 7 Points

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A quick look at the team's from Gameweek 37 tells us that neither manager got their captain pick correct which does not bode well for either in this final as the captain pick alongside all of the other decision that the managers are going to have to contend with in this final is going to be key and could well be the difference. Usually, I go on about the options but as I keep on mentioning the FA Cup final is making those options so difficult to predict, At first glance where the managers got their captain picks wrong, Bellamy had 7 players scoring more points than his selected captain but 3 are Manchester United players. Murphy has 5 players score more points than his captain just 1 from Manchester United. All that said I just cant see Murphy looking anywhere other than Liverpool's Mo Salah, he is bound to play and of course his a recognised top point scorer over the years. Bellamy has the chance to bring in Salah and make him captain to cancel that out or he could go with another Liverpool player defender Trent Alexander-Arnold.

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Both managers will need to take a look at the fixtures below of the final day of the season to try and figure out who will be really trying and whose season is over. The selection of captain could be vital to gaining success in this final.

## THE FIXTURES FOR GAMEWEEK 38

### Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May

Arsenal	V	Wolverhampton Wanderers
Aston Villa	V	Brighton & Hove Albion
Brentford	V	Manchester City
Chelsea	V	Newcastle United
Crystal Palace	V	Nottingham Forest
Everton	V	Bournemouth
Leeds United	V	Tottenham Hotspur
Leicester City	V	West Ham United
Manchester United	V	Fulham
Southampton	V	Liverpool

## THE VERDICT

Another intriguing final made all the better for the fact that neither manager has a chip to play.

There is history between these two players having already met in the Pyramid One league twice with John Bellamy coming out on top in both, my head tells me this shouldn't have any bearing on this final but my heart and gut strongly disagree.

After all the analysis this final is going to come down to Bellamy's transfer budget and Murphy's two transfers. Bellamy's massive bank balance means he can bring in any player he wants which is a fantastic luxury to have. Whilst Murphy has those two transfers, the only negative here is I think he needs to bolster his forward line but with his third forward being Leeds United Sam Greenwood valued at just £4.1 million which rises to £5.5 with his bank balance but it just doesn't open up the market to players who I think can make a real difference.

### FINAL VERDICT: -

#### John Bellamy to win

**This is going to be such a close final and in truth I am being guided by the fact that Bellamy has already done the double over Murphy and I feel that money in the bank is going to be better than the two transfer that Murphy has available to him.**

## IN THE EVENT OF A DRAW

In the event of a draw the match will go into a penalty Shoot-Out. Each team's top five-point scorers will go head-to-head to produce a result. If the best five scorers in the two teams cannot produce a result sudden death will take place with the next highest point scorers being next.



# HISTORY

## PREVIOUS FINALS

YEAR	WINNER		MATCH SCORE		RUNNER-UP
2009	James O'Leary	30	-	28	Michael Lynn
2010	Sandeep Chohan	90	-	75	Dan Calder
2011	James Conway	54	-	34	Matt Hansell
2012	Darren Cullen	52	-	47	Ben Clarkson
2013	James Bastow	61	-	37	Jatin Joshi
2014	Miki Mielonen	49	-	46	David Pewtner
2015	Heath Cram	45	-	31	Alvar Chambers
2016	Alvar Chambers	38	-	33	Steve Clarricoats
2017	David Noel	97	-	53	James Bloomer
2018	Ian Baldwin	94	-	85	Karman Bansi
2019	Dave Rogers	63	-	59	Joseph Greenwood
2020	Colin Davison	74	-	67	Joseph Nicolaides
2021	Sanj Joshi	78	-	52	Jonas Silva
2022	David Dinh	80	-	72	Louis Irvine

### WINNERS

Alvar Chambers	1
Colin Davison	1
Darren Cullen	1
Dave Rogers	1
David Dinh	1
David Noel	1
Heath Cram	1
Ian Baldwin	1
James Bastow	1
James Conway	1
James O'Leary	1
Miki Mielonen	1
Sandeep Chohan	1
Sanj Joshi	1

### FINALISTS

Alvar Chambers	2	James O'Leary	1
Ben Clarkson	1	Jatin Joshi	1
Colin Davison	1	John Bellamy	1
Dan Calder	1	Jonas Silva	1
Darren Cullen	1	Joseph Greenwood	1
Dave Rogers	1	Jospeh Nicolaides	1
David Dinh	1	Karman Bansi	1
David Murphy	1	Louis Irvine	1
David Noel	1	Matt Hansell	1
David Pewtner	1	Michael Lynn	1
Heath Cram	1	Miki Mielonen	1
Ian Baldwin	1	Sandeep Chohan	1
James Bloomer	1	Sanj Joshi	1
James Bastow	1	Steve Clarricoats	1
James Conway	1		

Progressing from, the Pyramid Cup

### MANAGER

Michael Lynn  
Matt Hansell  
Darren Cullen  
Steve Clarricoats  
James Bloomer  
Dave Rogers

### PYRAMID CUP

Runner-Up 2009  
Runner-Up 2011  
Winner 2012  
Runner-Up 2016  
Runner-Up 2017  
Winner 2019

### CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Runner-Up 2014  
Winner 2014  
Winner 2018  
Runner-Up 2019  
Runner-Up 2021  
Winner 2021