



Newcastle United's Dan Burn and Eddie Howe have been awarded honorary degrees by Northumbria University.

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## North East football heroes among leaders honoured by Northumbria University

Ahead of December's eagerly anticipated Tyne-Wear derby, footballing legends from both Newcastle United and Sunderland A.F.C. have been honoured by Northumbria University for their achievements on and off the pitch.

Newcastle United Head Coach Eddie Howe, local hero and England international Dan Burn, and former Sunderland A.F.C. chairman Sir Bob Murray were among seven distinguished individuals to receive honorary

degrees at the University's winter graduation ceremonies.

Eddie Howe and Dan Burn each received the degree of Doctor of Civil Law in recognition of their outstanding contributions to Newcastle United and the wider community. Together, they have given the city a football team built on hard work, unity and belief after leading Newcastle to their first domestic trophy since 1955 when Newcastle won the Carabao Cup earlier this year, with Dan scoring the opening goal.

Beyond their achievements on the pitch, both Eddie and Dan actively support the Newcastle United Foundation's community programmes, speaking openly about mental health and wellbeing to inspire almost 70,000 people across the North East every year.

Eddie and Dan were originally due to receive their degrees alongside students from the University's Faculty of Health and Wellbeing. However, when Newcastle's fixture against Tottenham Hotspur was rescheduled for the same date, University leaders arranged a special presentation at St James' Park to avoid disrupting the team's match preparations. George Clarke, Northumbria's newly appointed Chancellor, presided over the ceremony, marking his first official duties since taking up the role in November.

Speaking about receiving his honorary degree, Eddie Howe said: "Dan and I were blown away by the gesture and the acknowledgement. It's an incredible thing and very gratefully received. You never set out to achieve things individually; it's always about the collective, so to be recognised in any way is an amazing thing. I accept this on behalf of our entire coaching team and all the staff working incredibly hard to bring success to Newcastle United."

Dan Burn added: "It feels surreal to receive this incredible honour – it's a very proud moment for my family, and me. There are always knockbacks in people's careers, but the important thing is still having the fire to do what you want to do and not let those knockbacks stop you. While I was fortunate to score in the cup final, bringing that trophy to Newcastle was a team effort. This recognition belongs to everyone who made that moment possible."

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Sir Bob Murray CBE, former Chairman of Sunderland A.F.C., also received the degree of Doctor of Civil Law.

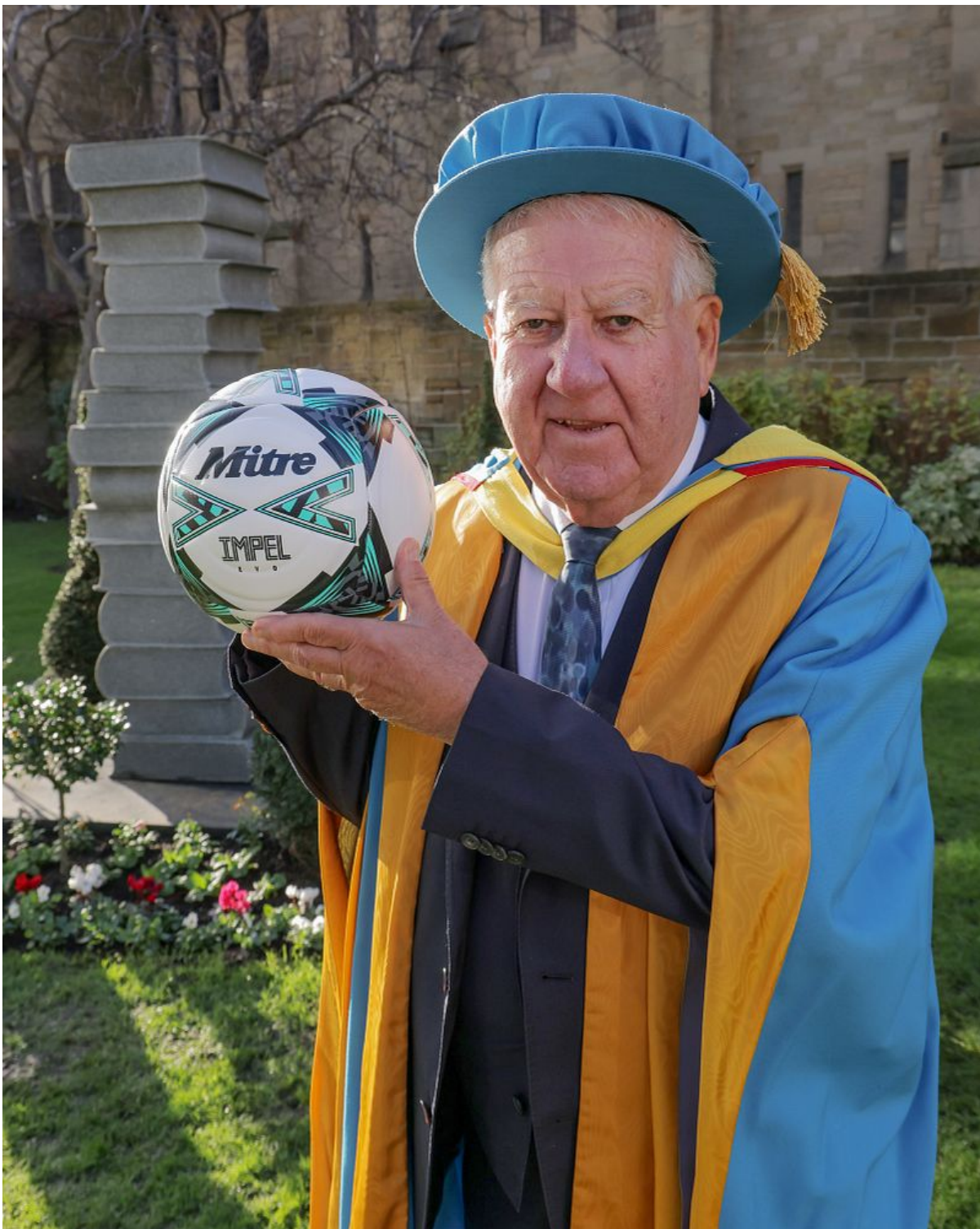
Sir Bob's journey from a coal-mining family in Consett to self-made millionaire exemplifies the transformative power of education. After studying accountancy at Newcastle Polytechnic, which became Northumbria University in 1992, he built a successful business career before taking the helm at Sunderland A.F.C.

As chairman of the club, his visionary leadership delivered the Stadium of Light, the Academy of Light, and the Foundation of Light, creating lasting legacies for the city and wider region. Sir Bob has also established scholarships for disadvantaged students, ensuring that background is never a barrier to opportunity.

Sir Bob Murray said: "To be honoured by Northumbria University is a privilege I value enormously. As a former student of Newcastle Polytechnic, this recognition carries real personal significance. The North East shaped who I am, and the education I received here gave me the foundation for my career in business, football, and community work.

"Northumbria's reputation for ambition, innovation and inclusion mirrors the principles that have guided my life. To be acknowledged by the university where my journey began means a great deal. I hope this award encourages others to aim high, work with integrity and believe in what they can achieve."





Sir Bob Murray CBE

Each year, Northumbria University awards honorary degrees to individuals who have obtained the very highest standards of scholarship, outstanding achievement, or distinction worthy of national or international recognition in their academic or professional field. The University also honoured:

**Lol Crawley**, a Northumbria graduate and Oscar-winning cinematographer whose visual artistry in films including *The Brutalist* has earned him both

Academy Award and BAFTA wins.

**Steph Edusei**, Chief Executive of St Oswald's Hospice, whose transformative leadership in healthcare and passionate advocacy for equality has impacted countless lives across the North East.

**Matt Hutnell**, former Director of Santander Universities UK, whose visionary leadership has created educational opportunities for thousands of students through scholarships, internships and enterprise support.

**Dr Marios Loukas**, Dean of the School of Medicine and President of St George's University, whose academic excellence and commitment to global medical education has strengthened Northumbria's international partnerships.

Professor Andy Long, Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of Northumbria University, said: "In awarding honorary degrees we look to honour those who have achieved things that align with the University's mission, activities and our values. An important part of that is their contribution to the University or to the North East.

"We know that our students will be inspired by the work of these exceptional leaders from the sporting, health, cultural, business and medical fields."

George Clarke, Chancellor of Northumbria University, added: "I am so proud and honoured to serve as Northumbria's newly appointed Chancellor. My grandad always used to say, 'knowledge is wealth' - to keep reading books and keep studying. He understood how much knowledge enriches your life.

"Graduation is such an important celebration for our students, they have achieved so much from their dedication to learning and to improving their lives and the lives of others. It truly is a special experience, congratulations to everyone involved."

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**Notes to editors**

Additional images are available for download in the related media section below. Video available via Vimeo [here](#).

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## UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

Northumbria is a research-intensive university that unlocks potential for all, changing lives regionally, nationally and internationally.

Two thirds of Northumbria's undergraduate students come from the North East region and go into employment in the region when they graduate, demonstrating Northumbria's significant contribution to social mobility and levelling up in the North East of England.

Find out more about us at [www.northumbria.ac.uk](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk)

--- Please contact [media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:media.communications@northumbria.ac.uk) with any media enquiries or interview requests ---

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