

**Career Progression and Racial Discrimination
in Professional Team Sports**

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An analysis of English professional soccer's employment structure centres on players' career progression over five-year intervals within the period 1986-2001. Transition probabilities are estimated using a three-equation model with initial divisional status, retention and divisional transition as dependent variables. A seemingly-unrelated structure allows for cross-equation correlation. Retention depends on age, divisional status, first-team appearances, playing position and birthplace. Divisional transition depends on age, first-team appearances and playing position. Non-white players tend to be employed by teams of higher divisional status and have higher retention probabilities, suggesting a form of hiring discrimination affecting the process of becoming a professional.