# Paul Mitchell’s clash with Eddie Howe leaves Newcastle United’s sporting strategy in disarray



Despite entering the role of sporting director at Newcastle United with significant expectations, Paul Mitchell's tenure has quickly evolved into a cautionary tale of mismanagement and miscommunication. His arrival on Tyneside, marked by a brash attitude, alienated staff and players alike, culminating in a dismissive reputation that many at St James' Park have not been shy to express.

Mitchell's initial addresses to the squad were met with dismay. Players and staff noted that rather than adopting a collaborative approach, he presented himself much like a bull in a china shop, unwilling to heed the established culture or the club's trajectory under manager Eddie Howe. It became apparent early on that Mitchell, once an ally of esteemed manager Mauricio Pochettino at Tottenham, had a vision that clashed with Howe's successful philosophy. Frustrations bubbled when Mitchell openly questioned the club's transfer strategies, inferring that significant amounts had been overpaid for players like Lewis Hall and Tino Livramento—individuals many viewed as future mainstays for the England squad.

Insiders reported that no one was surprised when Mitchell announced a desire for transformative changes, which threatened to undermine Howe’s influence over recruitment. This unrest was reflected in the atmosphere at the training ground; many felt they were “walking on eggshells” amid the discord. Tensions further escalated when Mitchell famously stated he "didn’t care who [he] upset," a flagrant dismissal of the established relationships and insights critical to maintaining a constructive environment.

During a notable press briefing, Mitchell's commentary struck chords of discontent among staff, specifically when he labelled the club’s transfer strategy as "not fit for purpose." By asserting such opinions, he inadvertently alienated key personnel who had long contributed to Newcastle's resurgence from relegation struggles to Champions League qualification. Those close to the situation observed a clear rift forming; Howe’s higher priorities moved towards winning matches rather than navigating an internal crisis.

This tumultuous relationship reached another tipping point when the press revealed Mitchell had excluded Howe from critical discussions, raising alarms about the club's leadership dynamics. These conflicting ambitions not only tarnished Mitchell's image but also called into question the overall decision-making process at Newcastle. Chief executive Darren Eales, having appointed Mitchell without Howe's prior knowledge or agreement, attempted damage control. Yet insiders suggested that Howe's resolve was solely focused on winning, unperturbed by the rift that had filled the ranks with quiet apprehension.

As the fallout progressed, while Mitchell did negotiate a couple of transfers in January, his inability to bring in key targets left Howe’s strategy weakened. Newcastle managed to regain momentum during the second half of the season, boasting 19 wins from 24 games, including a run to the Carabao Cup final. Notably, this success further consolidated Howe’s position, a testament to his capability and understanding of the club's ethos, despite the sabotage Mitchell’s early tenure had threatened to inflict.

As Mitchell's departure from Newcastle became official, following what the club termed a "mutual decision," the timing raised eyebrows—particularly with the summer transfer window looming. Howe, now equipped with a substantial transfer budget post-Champions League qualification, is poised to steer recruitment in a direction aligned with the club’s long-term aspirations.

In retrospect, it is evident that a little humility could have diffused much of the tension that marred Mitchell's brief tenure. While he possesses a wealth of ideas and experience, understanding the delicate fabric of teamwork and respect within a club's structure is paramount. For those at Newcastle, the hope now rests on the fact that the next sporting director, whoever that may be, learns from these missteps to foster an environment conducive to collaboration and success.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.footballinsider247.com/eddie-howe-vs-paul-mitchell-newcastle-duos-relationship-frosty/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-united-howe-frozen-out-sack-update-mitchell-risks-backlash-new-plan), [[4]](https://www.footballinsider247.com/exclusive-newcastle-staff-stunned-by-paul-mitchell-claim-amid-howe-bust-up/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-united-howe-frozen-out-sack-update-mitchell-risks-backlash-new-plan), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/football/2024/09/10/newcastle-january-transfer-eddie-howe-paul-mitchell/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://www.footballinsider247.com/exclusive-newcastle-staff-stunned-by-paul-mitchell-claim-amid-howe-bust-up/), [[5]](https://www.shieldsgazette.com/sport/football/newcastle-united/four-things-paul-mitchell-will-change-at-newcastle-united-and-three-he-wont-4770209), [[7]](https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-isolated-howe-bemused-two-key-themes-aggravation-mitchell)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/football/2024/09/10/newcastle-january-transfer-eddie-howe-paul-mitchell/), [[5]](https://www.shieldsgazette.com/sport/football/newcastle-united/four-things-paul-mitchell-will-change-at-newcastle-united-and-three-he-wont-4770209)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-united-howe-frozen-out-sack-update-mitchell-risks-backlash-new-plan)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-united-howe-frozen-out-sack-update-mitchell-risks-backlash-new-plan), [[3]](https://www.footballinsider247.com/eddie-howe-vs-paul-mitchell-newcastle-duos-relationship-frosty/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/football/article-14757431/Newcastle-Paul-Mitchell-Eddie-Howe.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-united-howe-frozen-out-sack-update-mitchell-risks-backlash-new-plan> - This article discusses reports that Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe is set to be 'frozen out' following a fallout with sporting director Paul Mitchell. It highlights Mitchell's criticism of the club's transfer strategy and his plans to overhaul recruitment, potentially reducing Howe's influence over signings. The piece also touches on the tensions between Howe and Mitchell, suggesting a shift in the club's power dynamics and the need for collaboration to avoid further discord.
3. <https://www.footballinsider247.com/eddie-howe-vs-paul-mitchell-newcastle-duos-relationship-frosty/> - This article reports on the strained relationship between Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe and sporting director Paul Mitchell. Despite efforts to resolve their differences, the duo's relationship remains frosty, with tensions arising over recruitment strategies and the club's direction. The piece also mentions speculation about Howe's future at the club, indicating that the ongoing issues could influence his tenure at St James' Park.
4. <https://www.footballinsider247.com/exclusive-newcastle-staff-stunned-by-paul-mitchell-claim-amid-howe-bust-up/> - This article reveals that Newcastle United staff were taken aback by sporting director Paul Mitchell's assertion of authority shortly after his appointment. Mitchell's claim that he was now the person in charge, excluding manager Eddie Howe from a key meeting, raised concerns among staff about the club's leadership structure and their roles within it.
5. <https://www.shieldsgazette.com/sport/football/newcastle-united/four-things-paul-mitchell-will-change-at-newcastle-united-and-three-he-wont-4770209> - This article outlines the changes Paul Mitchell plans to implement at Newcastle United, including overhauling the recruitment strategy to cast a wider net for talent and modernising the club's approach to scouting. It also discusses areas Mitchell intends to maintain, such as supporting manager Eddie Howe and adhering to the club's Performance and Sustainability Regulations (PSR).
6. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/football/2024/09/10/newcastle-january-transfer-eddie-howe-paul-mitchell/> - This article discusses the tensions between Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe and sporting director Paul Mitchell, particularly regarding the club's transfer strategy. It highlights Mitchell's criticism of the previous recruitment process and his plans to implement his own ideas, leading to speculation about Howe's future at the club and the need for collaboration to resolve the issues.
7. <https://www.football365.com/news/newcastle-isolated-howe-bemused-two-key-themes-aggravation-mitchell> - This article examines the growing tensions between Newcastle United manager Eddie Howe and sporting director Paul Mitchell. It details how Howe felt isolated during the summer transfer window and how Mitchell's approach to recruitment and communication led to frustration among staff, highlighting the need for improved collaboration to avoid further discord.