



Joe Edwards went down a division when he joined Yeovil from Bristol City, but now he could be Championship-bound

PICTURE: FRAN STOTHARD

Edwards: My decision could not have worked out better

Former Bristol City academy graduate Joe Edwards believes his impending Wembley appearance has justified a "difficult" decision to leave Ashton Gate.

Edwards prepares to line up for Yeovil Town against Brentford in the League One play-off final at Wembley on Sunday after arriving at Huish Park on a permanent deal during the January transfer window.

The versatile youngster, who now plays in central midfield after coming through the Ashton Gate ranks as a right-back, managed just three appearances following his senior debut on the final day of the 2010-11 campaign – but has been a mainstay of Yeovil's charge to the verge of the Championship under former City boss Gary Johnson this season

"When I left Bristol City, it

was a tough decision," said Edwards, who spent two loan spells at Huish Park before agreeing to join permanently.

"I didn't know if it was the right move or if stepping down a division was going to help me, but it couldn't have worked out any better.



Close Skuse has been praised by City head coach Sean O'Driscoll

"I'm so happy that I stepped down a level at that time to play so many games of football, when it could have been the other way round.

"I was at City since I had been a little boy and came up

through the academy, so I had a lot of friends there.

"It felt that the time was right to play the games I needed to in order to impress people and show them what I could do. That patience has paid off."

Edwards, meanwhile, travelled to Wembley as a supporter on the day on which City were just 90 minutes from the Premier League at the end of the 2007-08 season.

A Dean Windass strike secured victory for Hull City in that play-off final and Edwards added: "I was a youth trainee at the time, so went up as a fan with my family and watched it as any other supporter would.

"I've spoken to Jamie McAllister, who obviously played on the day, so to be playing alongside him now shows how far I've come and also means I know from him what a bad day

it can be if you don't win. I'm now concentrating on just us getting the win."

City head coach Sean O'Driscoll, meanwhile, has paid tribute to departing midfielder Cole Skuse.

Bristol-born Skuse, who made over 300 appearances for City, ended a 17-year association with the club by joining Championship side Ipswich Town earlier this week.

"Cole has been a fantastic servant to this football club and a pleasure to work with," said O'Driscoll. "In the short time I've been here, I found him to be someone who was always prepared to take responsibility and does the kind of work you only really notice when he's not in the team.

"He's a team player, an intelligent player and was always a positive influence in the dressing room."