

Manchester United (1st)

The chance to knock first Arsenal and then Chelsea out of the title race will set Alex Ferguson's competitive juices flowing. The central trio of their seven remaining fixtures are pivotal. But while United have lost at both Middlesbrough and Blackburn in recent seasons, they did not do so at the business end of the campaign. They also have the psychological edge over their two title rivals, having stuffed Arsenal 4-0 in the FA Cup and already beaten Chelsea at Old Trafford earlier. Expect some on-pitch celebrations at Stamford Bridge.

March 29	Aston Villa	(7th, H)	Win
April 6	Middlesbrough	(12th, A)	Win
April 13	Arsenal	(3rd, H)	Win
April 19	Blackburn	(8th, A)	Win
April 26	Chelsea	(2nd, A)	Draw
May 3	West Ham	(10th, H)	Win
May 11	Wigan	(14th, A)	Lose

Final points: **89**

Chelsea (2nd)

Avram Grant proved some wrong by overcoming Arsenal. But he has much more to do to convince the rest of the doubters, especially as three of Chelsea's four home games are the sort of matches they can win on autopilot (against Middlesbrough, Wigan and Bolton). The vital week in their season begins with a visit to Everton and ends with Manchester United venturing south. The Blues have finally struck form and are showing the kind of ruthless efficiency made famous by Jose Mourinho but it is a case of a little too late. And it is then that they are likely to be condemned to finish, at best, second best.

March 30	Middlesbrough	(12th, H)	Win
April 5	Manchester City	(9th, A)	Win
April 14	Wigan	(14th, H)	Win
April 19	Everton	(5th, A)	Lose
April 26	Manchester United	(1st, H)	Draw
May 3	Newcastle	(13th, A)	Draw
May 11	Bolton	(18th, H)	Win

Final points: **82**

The title run-in

Richard Jolly gives his views

Arsenal (3rd)

Without a win in five Premier League games, Arsenal are on their worst run in nine years and their next three games are the sort that could intimidate. Win at Bolton, however, and second place – together with automatic qualification for the Champions League – could benefit. It is a worrying period for Arsene Wenger as key players Emmanuel Adebayor and Francesc Fabregas have been out of sorts lately and they desperately need Robin van Persie back at full fitness. Arsenal need to hold on to a lead, something they have struggled to do in recent weeks.

March 29	Bolton	(18th, A)	Win
April 5	Liverpool	(4th, H)	Win
April 13	Manchester United	(1st, A)	Lose
April 19	Reading	(15th, H)	Win
April 28	Derby	(20th, A)	Win
May 3	Everton	(5th, H)	Draw
May 11	Sunderland	(16th, A)	Win

Final points: **83**

Liverpool (4th)

Forget about Manchester United, Chelsea and Arsenal, it is all about their neighbours, rivals for fourth and visitors on Sunday. The 14-point gap between Liverpool and the Red Devils vividly illustrates the gulf between the also-rans and the genuine contenders. Everton will not have to face the banned Javier Mascherano but Liverpool should still possess enough to win the derby, giving them a cushion to secure fourth place.

March 30	Everton	(5th, H)	Win
April 5	Arsenal	(3rd, A)	Lose
April 13	Blackburn	(8th, H)	Win
April 19	Fulham	(19th, A)	Win
April 26	Birmingham	(17th, A)	Draw
May 3	Manchester City	(9th, H)	Win
May 11	Tottenham	(11th, A)	Lose

Final points: **72**