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CELTIC V ABERDEEN

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

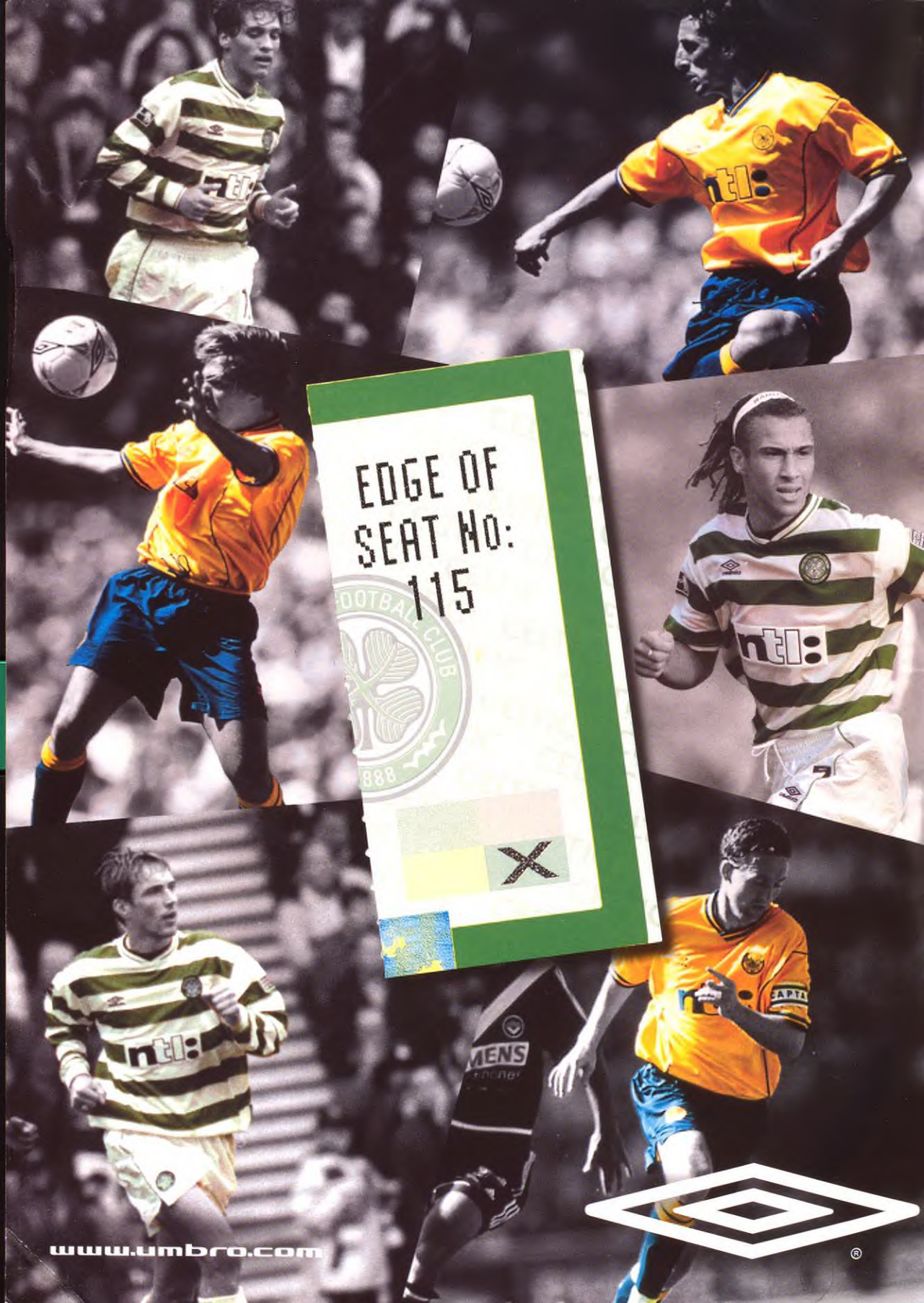
CELTIC PARK

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2000

KICK-OFF 3.00PM



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115



WE have had two excellent wins since I last scribbled some notes for the programme.

Our match against Dunfermline was always going to be difficult – as our third game in seven days – and we couldn't have wished for a worse start, our opponents scoring before most people had taken their seats in the stands.

I thought we played excellently in the first half, not only to claw our way back into the game but to get ourselves in front by half-time.

In fact, although we led 2-1 it could easily have been 4-1 by the interval.

However, Dunfermline came much more into the game after the break and kept the ball well.

We all became a little anxious before a third goal, arriving courtesy of Tommy Johnson, effectively settled the outcome of the match.

Tommy's goal was, incidentally, the 13th we had scored in our last three home matches. We remain the SPL's leading scorers, so the overall picture is still relatively bright.

Sunday's game at Dens Park was as thrilling as any this season.

Neil Lennon made his debut and I'm sure that, with all the publicity surrounding his move, he was not only delighted to play in the game but just as pleased to get it out of the way.

Naturally, Neil's reaction to winning was exactly the same as the rest of us – he was overjoyed.

He would certainly testify that the match was played at a furious pace.

We started magnificently and Stilian Petrov, who played brilliantly throughout, put us into the lead inside the first five minutes when he rounded off a well-worked move.

However Dundee – with a terrific array of talent in their team – came roaring back and deserved their second-half equaliser.

The game could have gone either way at this stage, with both teams going absolutely flat-out for the winning goal.

To our players' eternal credit, they kept going forward and got the breakthrough in the dying seconds of the game when Didier Agathe headed home after the ball rebounded to him from a corner kick.

We have only just passed the halfway stage of the league campaign and, while we are pretty pleased with our progress so far, we are entering a critical stage of the



MY FRIEND STAN: Petrov fires the opener against Dundee last week

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season ahead of the winter shutdown in January.

There is absolutely no time at all to dwell on the recent past.

Our squad still needs strengthening, but the players have shown an excellent collective spirit, which has undoubtedly had a positive effect on the field of play.

You, too, will play an influential role in proceedings in the coming weeks and months.

Despite the players' efforts, there will be numerous occasions when the opposition denies us the ball.

The team, although playing with plenty of confidence, need you behind them when the going gets even tougher than it currently is... although I must say I have always considered it to be pretty tough.

Aberdeen played very well against us at Pittodrie some months ago and fully deserved a share of the spoils.

Whether it was a bit of tiredness from our European exertions or not, we started very slowly that day and only came into the game in the second

half. Now Ebbe Skovdahl has some excellent young players in his team and he may feel results this season have not reflected their footballing prowess.

We will have to be very strong indeed to take anything from them this afternoon.

MAY I pass on my congratulations to the Kerry team who won the GAA All-Ireland Senior Championship recently. A number of the team are here today so I hope they have an excellent outing.

They won't mind me saying that, as a "Northener" I was cheering for Armagh when they emerged as the Ulster champions but I would never begrudge such a magnificent county their moment of triumph.



Stan

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celtic:

probable formation 3-5-2

aberdeen:

probable formation 4-4-2



subs	celtic	aberdeen

Referee: DOUGLAS McDONALD
 Assistant Referees: DEREK MASON
 STUART MacAULEY
 Fourth Official: CHARLIE RICHMOND

celtic squad

- 1 Jonathan GOULD
- 2 Tom BOYD (captain)
- 3 Stephane MAHE
- 4 Jackie McNAMARA
- 5 Joos VALGAEREN
- 6 Alan STUBBS
- 7 Henrik LARSSON
- 8 Alan THOMPSON
- 9 Chris SUTTON
- 10 Eyal BERKOVIC
- 11 Morten WIEGHORST
- 12 Tommy JOHNSON
- 14 Paul LAMBERT
- 15 Bobby PETTA
- 16 Olivier TEBILY
- 17 Didier AGATHE
- 18 Neil LENNON
- 19 Stilian PETROV
- 20 Rob DOUGLAS

- 21 Stewart KERR
- 22 Stephane BONNES
- 23 Dimitre KHARINE
- 24 Colin HEALY
- 25 Lubomir MORAVCIK
- 26 Paul SHIELDS (on loan)
- 27 Mark BURCHILL (on loan)
- 30 Vidar RISETH (on loan)
- 31 Rafael SCHEIDT (on loan)
- 32 Simon LYNCH
- 33 John CONVERY
- 34 Mark FOTHERINGHAM
- 35 Johan MJALLBY
- 37 Liam KEOGH
- 38 Barry John CORR
- 39 Jamie SMITH
- 40 Stephen CRAINEY
- 41 John KENNEDY

aberdeen squad

- 0 Hicham ZEROUALI
- 1 Jim LEIGHTON
- 2 Russell ANDERSON
- 3 Derek WHYTE
- 4 Cato GUNTVEIT
- 5 Thomas SOLBERG
- 6 Jamie McALLISTER
- 7 Andreas MAYER
- 8 Eoin JESS
- 9 Robbie WINTERS
- 10 Arild STAVRUM
- 12 Andy DOW
- 13 Mark PEAT
- 14 Paul BERNARD
- 15 David LILLEY
- 16 Rachid BELABED

- 17 David ROWSON
- 18 Chris CLARK
- 19 Darren YOUNG
- 20 Kevin RUTKIEWICZ
- 21 Derek YOUNG
- 22 Michael HART
- 23 Ryan ESSON
- 24 Philip McGUIRE
- 25 Darren MACKIE
- 27 Calum BETT
- 28 Fergus TIERNAN
- 29 Ross O'DONOGHUE
- 30 David PREECE
- 31 Kevin McNAUGHTON
- 32 Alex DI ROCCO

AFTER eight enjoyable years with St Mirren at Love Street, Aberdeen and Celtic gave me the opportunity to fulfil just about all my ambitions in football - winning trophies, playing in cup finals and savouring European football on a regular basis.

In 1983, with the advent of freedom of contract for players, I joined up again with Alex Ferguson at Aberdeen.

Sir Alex had signed me earlier as a raw kid for St Mirren back in 1975, as he built an exciting young team that took the Saints to the old Premier Division and established them there.

The move to Aberdeen, who had won the European Cup Winners' Cup and Scottish Cup weeks earlier, was to be as exciting as I could have hoped.

The Dons enjoyed the best spell in their history from the 1979 league championship win until Fergie left in 1986.

It was a great time to live in that marvellous city as everyone basked in the success of the football club.

I'm delighted to have a link with the city again through my older daughter Lyndsey who is a medical student there.

The game that sticks out from that period was played at Pittodrie on April 27, 1985, and Aberdeen needed one point from our last three games to retain the championship.

The first thing I remember about that day was the groundstaff having to clear snow off the pitch to ensure the game went ahead.

It is slightly colder in Aberdeen than here in the central belt!

As the match unfolded, Celtic were awarded a dubious penalty - for my push on Mo Johnston - which Roy

Aitken tucked away to give them the lead.

Midway through

SMART ALEX ...
Stark with his
Aberdeen
mentor
Ferguson



I've been there and Don that

BILLY STARK on his adventures as a player at Pittodrie and Celtic Park

the second half, though, Willie Miller scored a rare but very important equaliser with a header from a free-kick. That clinched the title in front of the Pittodrie fans.

It has been sad to see Aberdeen struggle in recent times and I sincerely hope they can get back and mount a real challenge in the near future.

In my time at Aberdeen we had a pretty good record against Celtic at Pittodrie, but the one thing that never ceased to amaze me was the support and loyalty of the Celtic fans, who took over the old Beach End (now the Dick Donald stand).

Even in defeat they refused to leave after the game, staying to show their undying support for the club.

I often wondered what it would be like to play for those supporters. In the summer of 1987 I was to find out!

November 1986 saw Alex Ferguson's reign at Pittodrie come to an end. He left to become boss of Manchester United and Ian Porterfield was given the difficult task of replacing him.

Over the rest of that season I became unsettled and unsure about my future at the club and decided I would move on when my contract was up at the end of the season.

A combination of circumstances

and good luck resulted in me signing for Celtic in July 1987.

I was very close to signing for Hearts when I received a telephone call from Billy McNeill, who had just returned as manager in place of David Hay.

He told me Aberdeen had given him permission to speak to me and asked if I could meet him in Glasgow.

Celtic had just lost Mo Johnston, Brian McClair, Murdo MacLeod and Alan McNally through freedom of contract and, with the season rapidly approaching, replacements were urgently required.

Billy realised he had to replace experience with experience and, on meeting him, I told him what I had decided five seconds after his phone call - I would love to sign for Celtic.

It was 1987/88, Celtic's centenary season, to add to my good fortune. What an emotional rollercoaster it turned out to be.

Graeme Souness had started the Rangers revolution the year before, culminating in their 1986/87 league success.

He had signed players of the calibre of Terry Butcher, Chris Woods and Trevor Francis and, with all the changes at Celtic Park, it was going



TOMMY GUNS 'EM DOWN ...
Billy Stark looks on as Burns
hits the vital opener in 1987

to be a difficult task to overtake them.

Mick McCarthy, Andy Walker, Chris Morris and later Joe Miller and Frank McAvennie were other additions to a squad that went on to complete a memorable league and cup double.

It was a remarkable feat and was achieved principally, I think, by the appointment of Billy as manager.

He ensured that the squad gelled and instilled his passion, enthusiasm and love for the club in all of us.

The Celtic-Aberdeen fixture I

remember most from that season was the first league tie at Celtic Park on September 19, 1987.

It was a game of mixed emotions for

me. I scored the second goal – adding to Tommy Burns' first-half strike – as we took a 2-0 lead.

However, a certain Joe Miller scored in the last minute to give Aberdeen a 2-2 draw.

From our view, it was a point lost.

Weeks later we threw away another two-goal lead at Ibrox in the infamous game where Frank McAvennie, Terry Butcher and Chris Woods were sent off and ended up in court! That period

constituted our worst spell of the season, though, and we went on to clinch the title against Dundee at the old Celtic Park in front of a crowd that was surely in excess of 80,000 people (official attendance: 61,000).

Three weeks later, the double was completed with a 2-1 Scottish Cup final win over Dundee United.

During that game, at 1-0 down, I experienced an almost tangible example of how the Celtic supporters can lift the team to greater heights.

We won a corner at the Celtic end after some pressure – and the noise from the terraces transmitted a surge of adrenaline that was like a transfusion of power, stamina and a sense of belief that we would go on and win the cup.

It was amazing.

Coincidentally, my last game for Celtic was the 1990 Scottish Cup final against Aberdeen where, unfortunately, we became the first team to lose the cup in a penalty shoot-out.

It was a low note to bow out on but I wouldn't swap my days with two great clubs for anything.

April 27, 1985

ABERDEEN 1

Miller 62

CELTIC 1

Aitken 39 pen

ABERDEEN: Leighton; McKimmie, McLeish, Miller, McQueen; Stark, Simpson, Bell (Cooper), Porteous; McDougall (Cowan), Hewitt.

CELTIC: Bonner; W McStay, Aitken, McAdam, McGrain; Grant (Provan), McStay, MacLeod, Burns; Johnston (McClair), McGarvey.
Attendance: 24,000

September 19, 1987

CELTIC 2

Burns 38, Stark 48

ABERDEEN 2

Nicholas 60, Miller 90

CELTIC: McKnight; Morris, Aitken, Whyte, Rogan; Stark, McStay, Grant, Burns; McGhee (Shepherd), Walker.

ABERDEEN: Leighton; McKimmie, McLeish, Miller, Robertson; Nicholas, Irvine, Bett, Connor; J Miller, Hewitt (Hackett).
Attendance: 38,944

Billy Stark fact-file

Born: December 1, 1956

Clubs: Rangers Youth, Anniesland Waverley, St Mirren (1975), Aberdeen (1983), Celtic (1987), Kilmarnock (1990), Hamilton Accies (1991)

Celtic record: 84 app, 25 goals

Celtic View

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CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Next week's new-look Celtic View will be nearly double its normal size.

Packed with exclusive interviews and information, it's an absolute must for all Celtic fans.

Chief executive Allan MacDonald reflects on a momentous year 2000 for the club and himself personally.

It's one which has swung from the lows of defeat by Inverness Caledonian Thistle and the departures of Kenny Dalglish and John Barnes to the highs of appointing Martin O'Neill and an explosive start to the new campaign, including the extraordinary 6-2 Old Firm victory in August.

Outgoing chief executive MacDonald is interviewed by Scotland's top football writer, Kevin McCarra, who assesses his high-profile contribution in the Celtic Park hotseat.

We will carry an in-depth look at the proposed Euro league and where it's at, including a detailed profile of the other clubs actively pursuing the concept.

And we'll give you a sneak preview of impressive Celtic exhibits at Hampden Park's new Scottish football museum, which is yet to be opened to the general public.

Also included will be interviews, pictures and features galore on all your Celtic favourites.

You can't afford to miss it. At £2.25 for 80 pages crammed with Celtic images and information, it's fantastic value.

Printers' holidays over the festive season mean that it will be the last View available at the news-stands until January 10, 2001.

But don't despair, you'll be able to keep up to speed on all Celtic matters by logging on to our website www.celticfc.co.uk where all the interviews, match reports and information you're used to finding in the printed version of the View will be readily available.

It's the ideal way to keep right up to date with everything that's happening in what promises to be a hectic festive season for everyone at Celtic Park.





BUNCH OF FIVES ...
Larsson and Mark Viduka lead the charge in the 5-0 win at Pittodrie last year

Henrik gets goal star

HENRIK LARSSON'S goal in the 1-1 draw at Pittodrie earlier this season was Celtic's 150th against the Dons in the Premier Division/SPL. So far 77 have been scored at Celtic Park, 71 at Pittodrie and two at Hampden.

THAT goal extended Henrik's lead at the top of Celtic's leading scorers against Aberdeen in the Premier Division/SPL. In just 11 games against Aberdeen he has scored an amazing 14 goals, well ahead of Mark Viduka (8) and Pierre van Hooijdonk (7).

EOIN JESS is Aberdeen's top Premier Division/SPL scorer against Celtic with 10 goals, followed by Gordon Strachan on eight. Jess' last

goal against the Hoops was at Pittodrie on September 10, 1995 when Celtic won 3-2 after being 2-0 down.

DESPITE the 1-1 draw in the last meeting, Celtic have won 18 of the last 21 league matches against Aberdeen. There have been two draws and just one defeat.

LAST season Celtic created numerous records in the four league matches with Aberdeen, winning them 5-0, 7-0, 6-0 and 5-1.

The total of 23 goals scored in the four meetings is a Premier record for any club, and the two visits to Pittodrie saw record Premier victories for the Hoops in the Granite City.

They won the opening match of the

season 5-0 but surpassed it in December by winning 6-0.

The first Celtic Park meeting in October saw another record Premier win when hat-tricks by Henrik Larsson and Mark Viduka helped Celtic to a 7-0 success.

The one consolation for the Dons last term was Robbie Winters' goal in the final match at Celtic Park.

Despite the 5-1 loss, Winters' strike denied Celtic four clean sheets in the four games.

CELTIC have won the last 11 home league matches against Aberdeen. The last time the Dons avoided defeat was on October 8, 1994 when the teams drew 0-0 at Hampden Park.

DAVID McDONALD

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