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THE OFFICIAL MATCHDAY MAGAZINE OF CELTIC FOOTBALL CLUB 2007/08



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>> CONTENTS

SOCIAL MISSION STATEMENT

Introduction

Celtic Football Club is legendary and as with most legends as much myth as fact surrounds its history and what the Club stands for today. The Social Mission Statement aims to simply define what the Club stands for and seeks to promote within society.

History

Celtic Football Club was founded in 1888. Its principal founder was a Marist Brother named Walfrid. The Club had two principal aims: The first aim was to raise funds to provide food for the poor of the East End of Glasgow, an area of the City that was greatly impoverished and had a high rate of infant mortality. Within the East End was a large Irish community and friction was growing between the native Glaswegians and the new influx of Irish. Brother Walfrid saw the need for social integration and his vision was a football club that Scottish and Irish, Protestants and Catholics alike could support. A new football club would be a vehicle to bring the communities together and this was the second aim. The Marist brother sought for the Club to have both a Scottish and Irish identity and hence, the Club's name "Celtic" came about, representing a bridge of cultures across the Irish Sea.

Current Positioning of Celtic Football Club

Celtic Football Club is a Scottish football club with proud Irish links. The primary business of Celtic is as a football club. It is run on a professional business basis with no political agenda. However, the Club has a wider role and the responsibility of being a major Scottish social institution promoting health, well-being and social integration.

Who is Celtic Football Club for?

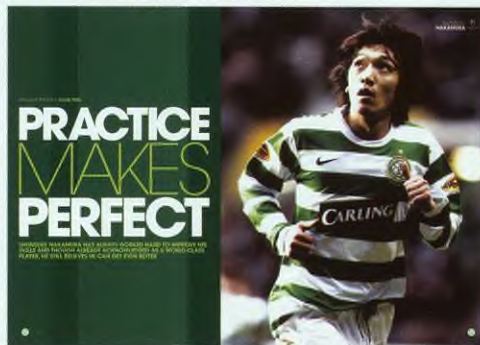
Celtic Football Club is for people who want to support a football club that strives for excellence in Scotland and in Europe, is proud of its history, supportive of its local community and seeks to support the following aims: "To maximise all opportunities to disassociate the Club from sectarianism and bigotry of any kind. To promote Celtic as a Club for all people, regardless of gender, age, religion, race or ability."

Summary

Celtic is a club for everyone who believes in football as a medium for healthy pleasure, entertainment and social integration. The Club always has been and always will simply aim to be the team of the people.

- 5 Gordon Strachan
- 6/7 Celtic Football Club Factfile
- 10/11 Captain's Column
- 12/16 Shunsuke Nakamura Interview
- 18/19 FC Barcelona Facts
- 20/24 Tonight's Visitors
- 26/30 Barca Legends
- 34/35 Poster
- 38/41 The Road To The Last 16
- 44/47 Gary Lineker Feature
- 50/51 Previous Meetings
- 52/55 Alan Thompson Interview
- 58/59 On This Day
- 64/65 Celtic Stats
- 66 Quiz

12/16



44/47



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>> GORDON STRACHAN



TONIGHT'S UEFA Champions League tie with Barcelona is one that we've been looking forward to since the draw was made at the end of last year. Our focus has obviously been on domestic matters up until now but after Saturday's fixture was completed, we have been concentrating solely on the task in hand.

And what a task it is. To have reached the last 16 of the UEFA Champions League for the second consecutive season is a tremendous achievement and one that everyone at the club is rightly proud of. Our reward for that success is a contest against Barcelona, one of the best sides in Europe and one of the great names in world football.

This is a game that everyone is excited about - the management, the players and, of course, the supporters. We knew from our experiences last season in getting to this stage of the competition that there would be no easy games, and that has proved to be the case.

You only have to look through the Barcelona squad list to realise that some of the best players in the world are in their ranks, but that's something we relish rather than fear. We want to compete against the best and to show what we can do and this draw has given us that opportunity.

Our form here at Celtic Park in the UEFA Champions League is only matched by Barcelona's own home form in the tournament and it is something that we are proud of. This season in our group games, we have defeated the reigning European champions, AC Milan, as well as Benfica and Shakhtar Donetsk, victories which allowed us to reach the last 16 again and so we have every right to be confident going into tonight's match.

However, no-one should mistake that confidence for complacency because everyone is aware of just how difficult our task is. Barcelona won this competition in 2006 and are favourites to win it again this season so that underlines their quality and the threat they pose to us.

I think it is safe to assume that there's going to be another special atmosphere inside Celtic Park tonight. European nights in this stadium are something unique in football and Barcelona, from their previous experiences here, will know just how difficult that can make this venue.

Our last 16 UEFA Champions League tie with Barcelona is one that we've been anticipating for a while now and I'm sure it's one that we will all enjoy. Hopefully, at the end of the 90 minutes, it will also be one that we'll all be celebrating.

