



**Bell's Scottish
League
Premier Division**

**Celtic Park
Saturday,
November 15,
1997**


**CELTIC
v
MOTHERWELL**

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1910, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1919, 1922, 1926, 1936,
1938, 1954, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972,
1973, 1974, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1986, 1988.
Scottish Cup Winners (30 times)
1892, 1899, 1900, 1904, 1907, 1908, 1911, 1912, 1914,
1923, 1925, 1927, 1931, 1933, 1937, 1951, 1954, 1965,
1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1980, 1985,
1988, 1989, 1995.
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To put together a run of eight straight league wins required us to be doing the right things.

But defeats, just like victories, are part of the game and the loss to Rangers last Saturday must be treated as the eight league matches that went before it. It happened, it's over and we must look forward. In football you must always look forward but take into consideration what has gone before.

We must get back to playing the way we did in stringing together the Premier wins, and with three home games inside eight days we begin a crucial spell in the championship this afternoon.

I didn't read so much about what people had to say about the Ibrox derby but we know we didn't play well. To win big matches you require all 11 players to be on the top of their form and that wasn't the case for us a week ago.

It is difficult to say at the time these notes are being put together what our team selection will be for Motherwell.

I always leave it as late as possible to see who is in the best shape as the game is coming round but this week I have no choice but to do this with so many players on international duty.

Added to that we have a number of fitness concerns, but whoever is chosen I am sure will be looking to play to the way we have been in the two months leading up to the Rangers game.

Perhaps a few players who haven't been featuring in the starting line-up will be given a chance this afternoon.

It is obviously difficult for members of the squad who haven't been first-team regulars and I understand their disappointment at not being involved. But I must pay tribute to the true

We need forward thinking

professionalism of those who have been on the fringes in recent months.

The have understood that successful football sides are about far more than 11 players and have been doing all they can to help those who are in possession of starting places. This is a good situation for the club.

We have no thoughts about the visit of Rangers on Wednesday at this moment for all our attentions are fixed on claiming three points today.

It is a surprise to me that Motherwell are at the bottom of the league. They were very tough opponents when we played them in the league at their ground in September and we really had to dig in to fight back from 2-1 down to win 3-2.

Our Coca-Cola Cup match a couple of days earlier was just as tight and I expect just as close a game today.

It was the Premier win over Motherwell that really set us up on a good run and we will be looking for that to be the way of it again.

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than that for the rest of us!***



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TONIGHT'S SQUADS



CELTIC



REFEREE:

Willie YOUNG (Clarkston)



ASSISTANT REFEREE:

John Underhill (Edinburgh)



ASSISTANT REFEREE:

James Bee (Edinburgh)

STAND-BYS

CELTIC:

Gordon Marshall (g/k), Phil O'Donnell, Brian McLaughlin, John Paul McBride, Darren Jackson, Tommy Johnson

MOTHERWELL:

Scott Howie (g/k), Dougie Ramsay, David Bell, Alex McLeish

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MOTHERWELL



One Eck of a



If Motherwell had a point for every one of the hellish problems that have hit them full on, they'd be skooshing this year's championship.

Yeah, yeah, every team could rhyme off a hundred sob stories to explain away why times are so hard for them, but Motherwell's hold more weight than most.

You could be forgiven for thinking that Alex McLeish has been walking under ladders on his way to work these past couple of years, such is the bad luck that has dogged the team he has managed since 1994.

Presently, they are under more of a cloud than ever, propping up the other nine sides in the division and without a victory since they triumphed at Pittodrie in August 28 – all of 10 matches ago.

A return of only eight league points from 12 games is miserable – but the club's injury problems in the past couple of months deserve to be similarly labelled.

They probably will find themselves down to the bare

bones of a first-team squad again today and have to do without HALF a senior side.

You can only feel sorry for McLeish with the Fir Park outfit better than

their form and position in the league would suggest.

Consider the list of unavailables for this afternoon's trip:

- Playmaker **BILLY DAVIES**, who damaged knee ligaments in the 1-0 defeat by Kilmarnock a week ago and appears set to be

By ANDREW SMITH

sidelined for a month.

- Former Celt **WILLIE FALCONER**, isn't scheduled to return to action for another couple of weeks after breaking his ankle last month.

- Striking stalwart **DOUGIE ARNOTT**, always good for goal, except in the last year or so, when the 36-year-old hasn't featured as the result of a long-term injury.

- New French face, **ERIC GARCIN**, a 32-year-old cultured playmaker signed from Toulouse who is recovering from a hamstring pull.

- Defensive rock **BRIAN MARTIN**, at the age of 34-years-old as important as ever to the Motherwell backline but banned for the Celtic Park encounter.

- Centre-back **GREG DENHAM**, who was red-carded the last time his team met Celtic and who will find himself sitting-out their attempt to gain revenge for that 3-2 defeat as a result of suspension.

- The biggest missing star of all will be the irrepressible **TOMMY COYNE**, still cutting the mustard despite having turned 35 yesterday.

This week however he is on international duty with the Republic of Ireland, preparing for their World Cup play-off with Belgium.

Coyne is the Lanarkshire side's top scorer with seven goals, two of these coming against Celtic in the five-goal thriller in September – and how Well will wish he was in claret and amber today.

All would the above could have laid a claim to a place in Motherwell's starting line-up. Indeed, the injury

“Alex will be without HALF his players”

'Well boss Alex McLeish

time for McLeish



UP FOR IT... Brian Martin challenges Henrik Larsson earlier this term

crisis it so bad that there were rumours McLeish was ready to come out of reserve-games-only retirement.

So who's left? Well, despite the fact that Motherwell, uncharacteristically, have been leaking goals **STEVIE WOODS** has been in impressive form.

He will be depending on a mightily young defence to prevent that happening today with 21-year-olds **KEVIN CHRISTIE**, **STEPHEN McMILLAN** and **STEPHEN CRAIGAN** pressed into action alongside old head **JOHN PHILLIBEN**. They are being forced to grow-up quickly simply because McLeish has so few options.

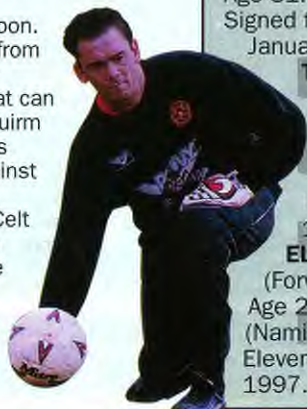
The situation is no better in midfield with **IAN ROSS** - 24-years-old and with a couple of years in the Fir Park senior side to his credit - along with **JOHN HENDRY**, expected

to help teenager **LEE McCULLOCH** and 1997 purchase from Finland **SIMO VALAKARI** run the show.

Pacy and powerful Namibian forward **ELIPHAS SHIVUTE** is likely to get another chance to make a name for himself this afternoon.

The 23-year-old from Windhook a direct player, the kind that can make defences squirm - and he netted his only 'Well goal against Rangers at Ibrox.

Self-confessed Celt **OWEN COYLE** is a certain starter. The ex-Dundee United man has a real eye for goal and grafts away up front.



STEVIE WOODS

(Goalkeeper)
Age 27. Born in Glasgow. Signed from Preston North End in July 1994.

SCOTT HOWIE (Goalkeeper)
Age 25. Born in Glasgow. Signed from Norwich City in October 1994.

KEVIN CHRISTIE (Defender)
Age 21. Born in Aberdeen. Signed from East Fife in March 1997.

STEPHEN McMILLAN (Defender)
Age 21. Born in Edinburgh. Signed from Troon Juniors in August 1993.

STEPHEN CRAIGAN (Defender)
Age 21. Born in Newtonards. Signed from Blantyre Vics in September 1995.

JOHN PHILLIBEN (Defender)
Age 33. Born in Stirling. Signed from Doncaster Rovers in September 198.

LEE McCULLOCH (Midfielder)
Age 19. Born in Bellshill. Signed from Cumbernauld United in August 1995.

IAN ROSS (Midfielder)
Age 23. Born in Broxburn. Signed from Bathgate Thistle in August 1993.

SIMO VALAKARI (Midfielder)
Age 24. Born in Helsinki. Signed from Finn PA in February 1997.

JOHN HENDRY (Midfielder)
Age 27. Born in Glasgow. Signed from Tottenham Hotspur in July 1995.
OWEN COYLE (Forward)
Age 31. Born in Paisley. Signed from Dundee United in January 1997.

TOMMY COYNE (Forward)
Age 35. Born in Glasgow. Signed from Tranmere Rovers in November 1993.

ELIPHAS SHIVUTE

(Forward)
Age 23. Born in Windhook (Namibia). Signed from Eleven Arrows in August 1997.

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NAME: STACEY COPLAND
FROM: ABERDEEN
AGE: 10
GAME: CELTIC v ST JOHNSTONE - 25.10.97

When Stacey Copland arrived at Celtic Park to be team mascot for the day, she was aware that she would get encouragement from everyone she met.

However, she was more than impressed with the advice on "team tactics" she was to receive from someone who should know alright - namely Mr Bertie Auld!

Stacey was more than happy to put her excitement at meeting her favourite Celt, Tom Boyd on hold as she chatted with Bertie about her day ahead.

And what better way

MEET THE MASCOT

to start her collection of autographs in her new 7-Up Young Hoops autograph book, than to have the legendary Lisbon Lion himself sign the first page.

Not a bad way to spend your Saturday afternoon - Stacey will definitely agree with that!

If you would like the chance to be the lucky mascot for the day, contact: The 7-Up Young Hoops, c/o the Commercial Department on 0141 551 4263.

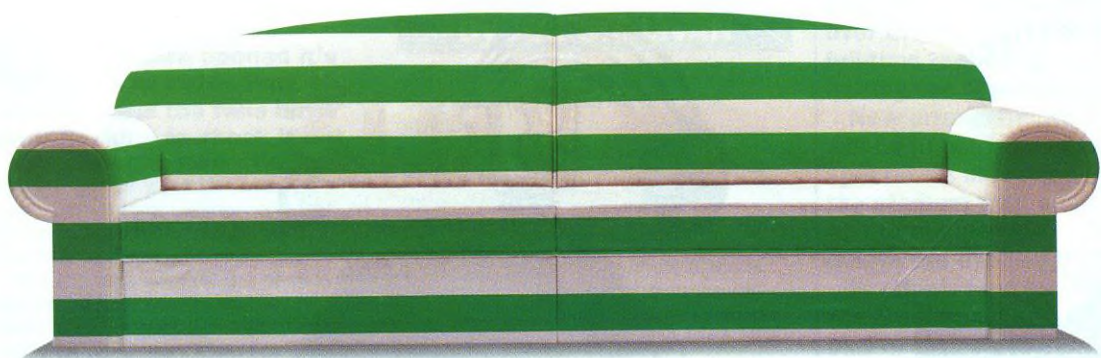
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