

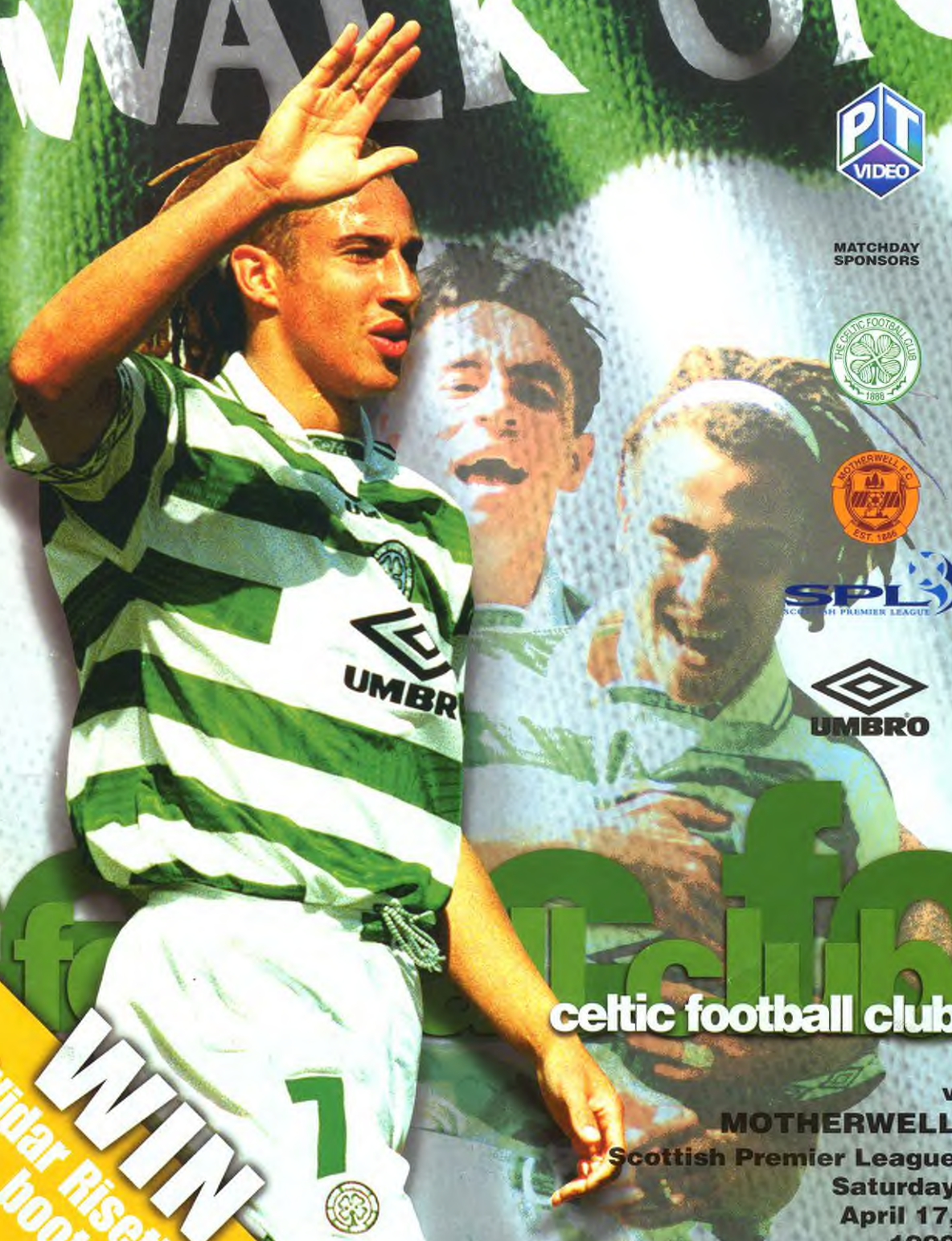
**INSIDE - ALLAN MACDONALD'S OPEN LETTER TO THE FANS**

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# WALK ON



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Scottish Premier League  
Saturday  
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Allan MacDonald spells out his plans for Celtic's future in a letter to all Hoops supporters

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Henrik Larsson pledges his future to Celtic

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### time out

Vidar Riseth gets stuck in the Scottish snow – in April

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### takin' the mick

Welcome to Celtic Park, seaside resort extraordinaire. Are you listening Mrs Zidane?

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### action replay

Celtic's cup and league clashes with Dundee United and Dundee

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### win 'n' grin

The Hoops are up for grabs

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## pep talk

If today's game lives up to the excitement of our 4-2 win over Hearts on Wednesday then we are all in for a treat this afternoon.

That game had everything you could want from a top-class match with many unpredictable moments and high-tempo entertainment.

The first half was particularly excellent and I have to congratulate the players for their performance throughout the match.

I hope that standard is maintained today for the visit of Motherwell as they are a side full of good players and a team who play neat technical football.

I know we are in for a very competitive game so hopefully we can sustain the momentum from our midweek victory.

That win of course wasn't the only boost we had this week and I was delighted when Henrik Larsson announced his re-signing with Celtic.

The news was good for the club, the team and the supporters as well as making for a very good atmosphere in the dressing room.

This is excellent news for the long-term plans of the club as we have targets and goals to aim for long beyond the end of this season.

We now have to build on this and although I am obviously pleased as a coach I am most



delighted for the supporters as Celtic is a big club and the fans deserve the best.

Henrik wants to play for Celtic and we know there are players here and elsewhere who have

## “Of course, that win wasn't the only boost we had this week”

the same commitment and desire to play for the club.

We are building a structure for the future and our base has now been strengthened with the pledge of Henrik and hopefully that will open up other possibilities for us.

We started on the right track with our win at Tynecastle and I'm hopeful we can carry on with the good work today against Motherwell.

**HILLSBOROUGH REMEMBERED:** Please note there will be one minute's silence before the start of today's game to mark the 10th Anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster.



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# cast list



- 1 Jonathan GOULD
- 2 Tom BOYD
- 3 Stephane MAHE
- 4 Jackie McNAMARA
- 5 Marc RIEPER
- 6 Alan STUBBS
- 7 Henrik LARSSON
- 8 Craig BURLEY
- 9 Harald BRATTBakk
- 10 Phil O'DONNELL
- 11 Morten WIEGHORST
- 12 Tommy JOHNSON
- 13 Simon DONNELLY
- 14 Paul LAMBERT
- 17 Rico ANNONI
- 18 Tosh McKINLAY
- 20 Regi BLINKER
- 21 Stewart KERR
- 22 Brian McLAUGHLIN
- 23 Andy McCONDICHIE
- 24 Colin HEALY
- 25 Lubomir MORAVCIK
- 27 Mark BURCHILL
- 28 Barry ELLIOT
- 30 Vidar RISETH
- 35 Johan MJALLBY
- 36 Mark VIDUKA
- 38 Barry John CORR
- 40 Scott MARSHALL



- 1. Steven WOODS
- 2. Eddie MAY
- 3. Stephen McMILLAN
- 4. Jamie McGOWAN
- 5. Ged BRANNAN
- 6. Greig DENHAM
- 7. Ian ROSS
- 8. Simo VALAKARI
- 9. Stephen HALLIDAY
- 14. Kevin CHRISTIE
- 15. Tony THOMAS
- 17. Michael WEIR
- 18. Lee McCULLOCH
- 19. Michael DOESBURG
- 16. Willie FALCONER
- 17. John McGLASHEN
- 18. Gavin STRACHAN
- 20. Rob MATTHAEI
- 21. Steven CRAIGAN
- 22. Jered STIRLING
- 24. Greg MILLER
- 28. Shaun TEALE
- 29. Andrew GORAM
- 30. Pat NEVIN
- 31. Steven REILLY
- 32. Steven HAMMELL
- 37. David DUNN
- 39. Derek ADAMS
- 40. John SPENCER



Referee: JIM McCLUSKEY (Stewarton)  
Assistant: ROSS McCLUSKIE (Crosshouse)  
Assistant: DEREK HORAN (Kirkcaldy)







  
**Celtic**

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Glasgow G40 3RE

Dear Fellow Supporter,

This week has been a week of contrast, the excitement of Wednesday night's victory against Hearts, Henrik re-signing for Celtic, but also the memories of Hillsborough, a tragedy we will never forget.

The match which you supported against Liverpool on Sunday 30th April 1989 has lived long and fondly with the people of Liverpool. A wreath from Celtic Football Club and its supporters in memory of the people who lost their lives at Hillsborough was sent on 15th April 1999. It sits at the eternal flame at the Bill Shankly gates stating 'those who live on in the hearts of others never die.' I know that our thoughts and prayers today will be with the people of Liverpool as we stand for one minute of silence in honour of the families who suffered such a tragic loss.

I would like to thank you for the support and encouragement you have shown to Henrik Larsson over his time at Celtic, particularly over the last few months. Please do not underestimate the importance your influence has had on Henrik's decision to stay with our unique and very special Club.

We have the largest average league attendance of any club in Britain (59,223) and the largest number of season book holders (53,000). Last Saturday at Ibrox, Celtic had more supporters (36,935) than the combined attendance of the other three teams (23,900). Your influence collectively is the beating heart of Celtic and by working together we can achieve our hopes and dreams for our Club.

An important feature of being a Celtic supporter is the tradition of supporting the Club through all the good times and the tough ones. I appeal to you to maintain that tradition and give the players the positive encouragement that will lift their spirits to the highest level in their determination to do their very best for Celtic.

I know that every player at Celtic when he pulls on the Hoops, plays with pride and complete commitment. Hence, the entire squad is deserving of our full support, regardless of level of form. Indeed, let's show Phil O'Donnell and Simon Donnelly our appreciation of the considerable contribution they have given to Celtic over many years. Also to Alan Stubbs, who has always given his heart and soul to Celtic's cause, despite difficult family circumstances. As players have a relatively short career, let's ensure that during their time at Celtic, they know and feel the respect and regard we have for them.

Simon Donnelly last Saturday never hid, despite appearing in his first game after recovering from injury. He kept looking for the ball and displayed the character and personal qualities which have made him an excellent Celt.

I was also struck last Saturday at the wonderful support the Dundee United fans gave their team, even when two-nil down. This reminded me of standing in the old Jungle during some of the tough times of the past, when fortune did not favour us; hearing and joining in the unstinting support for our players. That experience is as much about being a Celtic supporter as celebrating the good times.

There will be times in the future when lady luck deserts us and it is at these times when players need your support to take strength from knowing we are behind them - as we are all part of the Celtic family, working together to bring success to our Club.

I am asking you now, over the coming weeks and months through the good and especially the tough times to give the players your positive support, 'faithful through and through'.

Thank you once again for making Celtic the unique institution it is and for using your influence always to act positively and lift the team when it needs it most.

Best regards



Allan MacDonald  
Chief Executive







HERE TO LEND A HAND... Larsson seals his four-year deal with Allan MacDonald and Jozef Venglos

# Henrik: hero who's here to stay

**H**enrik Larsson's decision to commit himself to Celtic for a further four years brought with it a breath of fresh air to Celtic and Scottish football.

So many times in the past, Celtic 'heroes' have toyed with the fans' emotions only to walk away to something worse.

Paolo Di Canio and Pierre van Hooijdonk are proof of that.

But Larsson was single-minded in his intentions to stay with Celtic. And unlike his predecessors, he never used the media as a tool to manipulate his own position.

All of the negotiations were conducted in private between the player's agent, Rob Jansen, and the club.

And last Tuesday at Celtic Park, the announcement was made to the delight of every true Hoops supporter.

Larsson said: "I am very

pleased that this has been resolved. It took a bit longer than first thought but due to the efforts of Celtic and Mr MacDonald, it made the decision a little bit easier for me to make.

"At first it seemed like a long time to commit myself but I discussed it with my family and friends back home in Sweden and that is what I based my decision on."

The deal, which will keep Larsson at Celtic until he is 32, will be his last overseas contract. After which time he will end his career in his homeland – fitness permitting.

But in the interim, he is expecting great things for the club for which he shares a mutual love.

He added: "Celtic is a very big club and they have the potential to be even better than we are at the moment. We have 60,000 fans here every week when we play and quite simply it is a fantastic arena.

"There was no temptation on my part to try anything else as long as Celtic wanted me to stay here. I have been playing well with the Swedish national team and with Celtic so I have no need to move.

"I like Celtic and I like living in Scotland. The club is aiming for great things in Europe and I believe in that.

"It is up to the whole squad now to try and realise those ambitions we have for this club and our fans."







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★ Celtic are currently on a run of 12 consecutive home wins in all competitions. The last match at Celtic Park the Bhoys failed to win was on 20th October against FC Zurich in the UEFA Cup, which ended 1-1. This is Celtic's best run since the mid sixties. From 6th November 1965 when they drew 1-1 against Partick Thistle, Celtic won every single home match for exactly one year until they drew with St. Mirren, again 1-1, on 5th November 1966. In that period Celtic incredibly won 27 home games in a row.

★ Celtic's 5-0 win against Dundee two weeks ago was the eighth time they have scored five or more goals in a match this season. The last time they achieved this was 1983/84 when they scored five or more goals on nine occasions. From season 1989/90 to 1995/96 inclusive, covering over 350 games, Celtic managed to score five or more goals in a game just eight times.

★ Celtic's 7-1 win at Fir Park in February was their biggest victory over Motherwell since 18th September 1982 when they won 7-0.

★ When Henrik Larsson scored four goals in the above match, he became the first Celt to do so since Dariusz Dziekanowski netted four against Partizan Belgrade on 27th September 1989.

★ Celtic's sixth goal, netted by Henrik Larsson of course, in the 7-1 romp was the Bhoys' 150th Premier goal against Motherwell.

★ Victory for Celtic today would complete their third grand slam of four league wins against Motherwell in one season - the other seasons being 1985/86 and 1978/88. In fact Celtic's two wins at Fir Park

## facts facility



with David McDonald



WELL PLEASED... Paul Lambert has scored twice for Celtic against his old team - today's opponents, Motherwell

this season was the first time since 1987/88 they have achieved this.

★ Paul Lambert has scored three goals for Celtic in 71 games, since signing from Borussia Dortmund in 1997. Two of the goals were scored against his former club, Motherwell, and both at Fir Park. The other goal was of course the stunner against Rangers at Celtic Park.





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