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programme no. 11

# WALK ON

**ntl:**

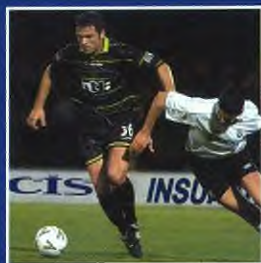
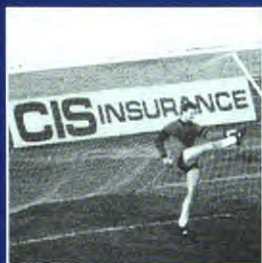


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**v DUNDEE**

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Wednesday  
December 1st, 1999  
7.45 pm





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Answer: 1978



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Step back in time

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ntl:

**N**o one here at Celtic needs reminding how good an outfit Dundee are – they proved that as recent as Sunday afternoon when they went to Ibrox and became the first team this season to beat Rangers in domestic action.

We too have also experienced their battling qualities this year when we had to rely on a late strike from Henrik Larsson to take the three points at Dens Park in August.

Dundee have only won once at home this season yet the defeat of Rangers marked their fifth away win – we will give them the respect they deserve.

But while they have some good players we must believe in our own qualities and ability and take advantage of the fact that this match is being played at Celtic Park in front of our home support.

The disappointment of the defeat at Motherwell on Sunday is shared by us all – supporters, players and management alike – and it is obviously a double blow because we missed the opportunity to make up some more ground in the chase for the title.

But we have to put it behind us and look forward to this evening and the chance of a place in the last four of the League Cup – that is our aim.

The conditions at the weekend weren't favourable for either side but we still managed to create chances and tonight we need to continue to do that but we have to start making more of them.

Creating chances isn't a problem for us the problem is losing three goals. We must



sharpen up defensively and we can't be caught sleeping at the back.

There is not a lot we can do about what has already happened but we have to keep going, try to get the result we need tonight

## “We must believe in our own qualities and ability”

and just try to pick up the performance.

A win tonight will set us up for the semi-final stage which doesn't take place until next February and will give us something else to aim for in addition to our bid to win the league.

The CIS Insurance Cup will be the first contested trophy of the new millennium and one which everyone at Celtic wants to win.

But just as we won't dwell on the past we can't look too far into the future and we won't think about anything aside from what we have to achieve tonight.

Hopefully we will have learned from the mistakes we made at Fir Park and hopefully we will have a packed and noisy Celtic Park to cheer us into the next round.





EDGE OF  
SEAT №  
135



UMBRO

# cast list



**ntl:**

- 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 Eyal BERKOVIC
- 11 Morten WIEGHORST
- 12 Tommy JOHNSON
- 14 Paul LAMBERT
- 15 Bobby PETTA
- 16 Olivier TEBILY
- 17 Ian Wright
- 19 Stilian PETROV
- 20 Regi BLINKER
- 21 Stewart KERR
- 23 Dimitre KHARINE
- 24 Colin HEALY
- 25 Lubomir MORAVCIK
- 27 Mark BURCHILL
- 28 Barry ELLIOT
- 30 Vidar RISETH
- 35 Johan MJALLBY
- 36 Mark VIDUKA
- 37 Liam KEOGH
- 38 Barry John CORR
- 39 Jamie SMITH



- 1 Robert DOUGLAS
- 2 Barry SMITH
- 3 Lee MADDISON
- 4 William MILLER
- 5 Stephen TWEED
- 6 Robert RAESIDE
- 7 Stephen BOYACK
- 8 Gavin RAE
- 9 Edward ANNAND
- 10 James GRADY
- 11 William FALCONER
- 12 Shaun McSKIMMING
- 13 James LANGFIELD
- 14 Hugh ROBERTSON
- 15 Lee SHARP
- 16 Thomas COYNE
- 17 Frank van EIJS
- 18 Roberto MATUTE PURAS
- 19 Patrizio BILLIO
- 20 Lee WILKIE
- 21 Mark SLATER
- 22 Graham BAYNE
- 23 John ELLIOT
- 24 Steven MILNE
- 25 Michael YATES
- 26 Paul CLARK
- 34 Craig IRELAND
- 
- 



Referee: H DALLAS  
Assistants: J McDOWELL  
D R LOWE  
Fourth Official: R ORR



spill the beans

..the lowdown on tonight's visitors Dundee

# Travelling doesn't give Scott's men the Blues

**D**undee head to Celtic Park tonight looking to complete an Old Firm double following their 2-1 win over Rangers at Ibrox on Sunday.

Jocky Scott's side are finding their form away from home this season with five out of their six wins notched up at their opposition's ground. Walk On takes a look at the Dark Blues main men...

**ROBERT DOUGLAS**, born Lanark, 29/04/72

Signed from Livingston on the eve of season 1997/98 and instantly established himself as the club's 'first choice keeper', having missed only one league game over the past two seasons. His form last season was outstanding, pushing him into the full international squad after being capped by Scotland at B level. Began his career with Forth Wanderers before turning senior with Meadowbank Thistle in 1993. Made 77 appearances before his move from Almondvale to Dens in a deal valued at £100,000, which saw Kevin Magee move in the opposite direction. Signed a new contract that will keep him at the club until 2002.

**LEE MADDISON**, born Bristol, 05/10/72  
Left-sided player who can figure as a full-back or wing-back was signed from Northampton in 1997. A regular in the side in the promotion campaign, injury restricted him to 21 league outings last term. His first club was Bristol Rovers for whom he played 73 times in five seasons. In two terms with Northampton, he made 55 league appearances before joining Dundee where he scored the one and only goal of his career. Out injured until the end of the year.



**THE DENS PARK ROADSHOW...** The Hoops face a tough task tonight as the Dark Blues look to chalk up their sixth win away from home

**LEE SHARP**, born Glasgow, 25/05/75  
Young full-back or wing-back who was bought for the future just before the turn of last year. Began his career with Ashfield juniors before entering the senior ranks with Dumbarton in December 1995. Almost exactly three years later he made a further step up the ladder by signing for Dundee for whom he made six appearances scoring once last term.

**GAVIN RAE**, born Aberdeen, 28/11/77  
Recruited from Hermes Juniors in 1995, Gavin came on leaps and bounds last season. After hardly figuring in the promotion winning side, he won himself a near permanent slot in central midfield last season in the SPL, scoring once in 29 appearances. His season was nicely rounded off when he was capped at under-21 level last May.

**SHAUN McSKIMMING**, born Stanraer, 29/05/70  
One of two players at Dens who is in his second spell with the club. The strong-running left-sided player moved from his home town club to Dundee in 1987. Scored three times in 23 league appearances over the next four years, before he was sold to Kilmarnock for £40,000 in 1991. A regular in the Rugby Park side, his 113 appearances brought him nine goals before he was transferred to Motherwell for £350,000 in November 1994. His Fir Park days ended in the summer of 1998 after 64 league outings in which he hit seven goals. Since his return to Dens, he has opened his Dark Blue scoring account, scoring twice in 31 appearances.

**EDDIE ANNAND**, born Glasgow, 24/03/73  
The alert striker was signed from Clyde

towards the end of season 1996/97 and after scoring 12 goals in the club's promotion campaign, he finished top scorer last term with nine league goals. Originally with Patrick Thistle, Eddie tried his luck with Sligo Rovers, successfully establishing himself in the Republic of Ireland. When he returned to Scotland, he joined Clyde, topping the 20-goal mark in each of his two seasons, which promoted a scramble for his signature, won by Dundee and John McCormack.

**WILLIE FALCONER**, born Aberdeen, 05/04/66

One of four players who joined the club from Motherwell after gaining promotion in 1998. A versatile and highly experienced player who can play in midfield or up front. Willie first made his name with his home town club but after finally establishing himself in the Pittodrie side, his career took a new direction in England where he spent over five years with Watford, Middlesbrough and Sheffield United. On returning to Scotland he joined Celtic in 1994, scoring five times in 41 appearances. Fir Park was his next port of call early in 1996, scoring 10 times in 48 appearances before coming to Dens. Played a vital part in last season's campaign, missing only three games and scoring four times, a total which he had surpassed within the opening month of this season.

**JAMES GRADY**, born Paisley, 14/03/71  
The small, but nippy striker turned senior with Clydebank whom he joined from junior side, Arthurlie, in June 1994. An ever-present in three seasons at Kilbowie, he hit 25 goals. On switching to Dens, he was again an ever-present as Dundee gained promotion, top scorer with 15 league goals. Didn't find goals quite so easy to come by last term, netting only three in 26 appearances.

**BARRY SMITH**, born Paisley, 19/02/74  
Moved to Dundee as part of the deal which saw Morten Wieghorst head to Celtic Park. Was on the books with the Hoops for five seasons, making 19 league appearances, gaining under-21 honours. Equally at home at right-back or in central defence, he is an excellent



**A LEAGUE OF HIS OWN...** Annand was Dundee's top scorer last season

reader of the game. Easily the longest serving member of the Dens Park playing staff, having made over 150 appearances in a Dark Blue jersey during his three and a half years.

**STEVEN TWEED**, born Edinburgh, 08/08/72  
Tall dominating central defender who was signed from Stoke City after 18 months in the Potteries. Made his Dark Blue debut in December 1998 against Aberdeen but he wasn't in the starting line-up so regularly towards the end of the season. His first goal for the club proved to be the winner when Motherwell visited Dens in February this year. Began his career with Hibs whom he joined from Hutcheson Vale, winning under-21 caps and established himself in the Easter Road defence. After five seasons with Hibs, he joined Ionikos in 1996, returning after a season to this country to sign for Stoke.

**FRANK VAN EIJS**, born Geleen, Holland, 06/11/71  
Joined the Dark Blues as a free agent this summer. The 27-year-old Dutchman's last club was Vinkenslag but he also has experience of playing in Belgian football with Mechelen. Can play either at right-back or in midfield. He has good technique and is expected to be well capable of handling the physical aspect of the Scottish game.

**STEVEN BOYACK**, born Edinburgh, 04/09/76  
The Scotland under-21 internationalist was signed from Rangers last spring for £25,000. Impressed greatly in his wide-right role in midfield in the eight games he had before the end of last season, chipping in with a couple of goals. At Ibrox, he made just one first-team appearance, but played 12 games whilst on loan to Hull City during the 97/98 campaign, scoring three times.



# bits & bhobs



## **ABERDEEN v CELTIC, BEAMBACK SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11 PROGRAMME STARTS 1.45 - 2PM**

Tickets are currently available for our next Beamback presentation against Aberdeen at Pittodrie. Tickets are priced as standard £5 and £3 with Lounge access tickets available at £8. There will be a full pre-match programme, very much geared towards the festive season. So don't miss out on a great family day out at Celtic Park.

## **CELTIC v HIBS SAT, 4 DEC, KO 3PM**

## **CELTIC v DUNDEE UTD SAT, 18 DEC, KO 3PM**

Tickets are on sale for the above matches. Prices range from £16 -

£25, with limited number of concession tickets available at £10.

## **CELTIC v BAYERN MUNICH TUE, 1 FEB, 2000**

Tickets will soon be available for our match to commemorate the Millennium. Watch this space.

## **CELTIC v RANGERS MON, 27 DEC, KO 1PM**

There will be no public sale of tickets for this match. Entry for Season book holders will be by voucher 19. We would ask all season book holders to ensure they have the appropriate voucher in their book.

If you are in any doubt please contact Ticket Services as replacements will not be issued and all cases will have to be investigated. Please do not leave it

to chance.

Visiting supporters will approach the stadium from Kinloch Street at London Road and will enter the stadium through turnstiles 55 - 67.

The segregation for the East Stand has been extended this season and we would ask season book holders in Block 115 to check to whether your book is valid for the match.

We must stress that if you do not have a valid method of entry through your season book or a match ticket you will not gain entry to the stadium. No duplicate or replacement tickets will be issued under any circumstances.

Anyone found to be attempting to enter the stadium fraudulently will be banned for life.

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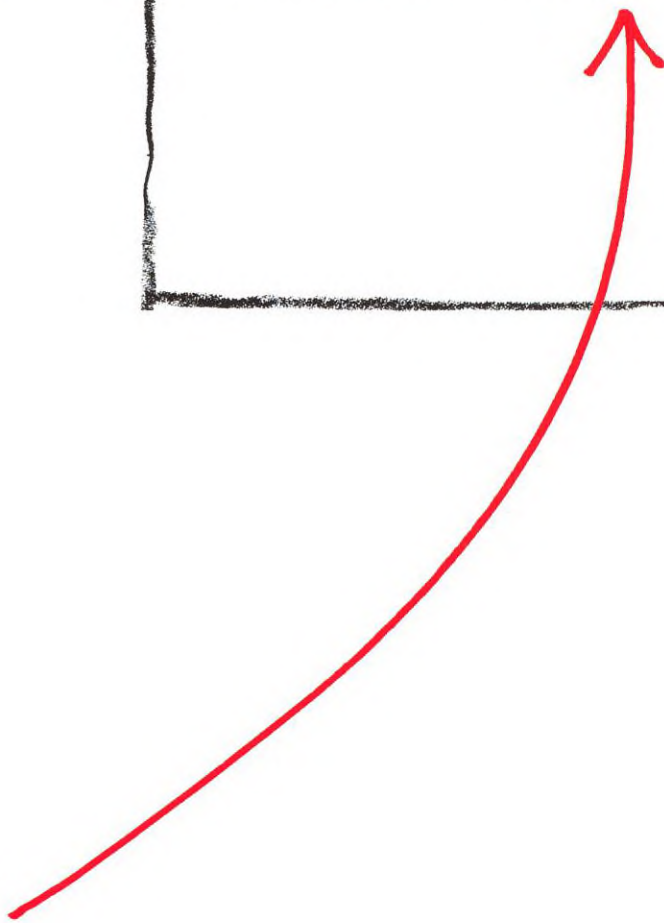
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# what makes me 'tic

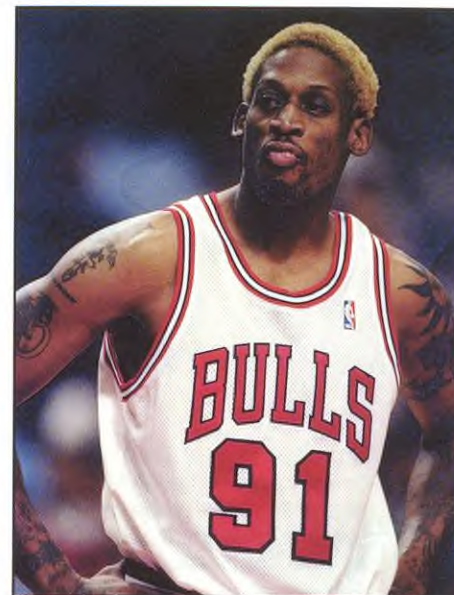
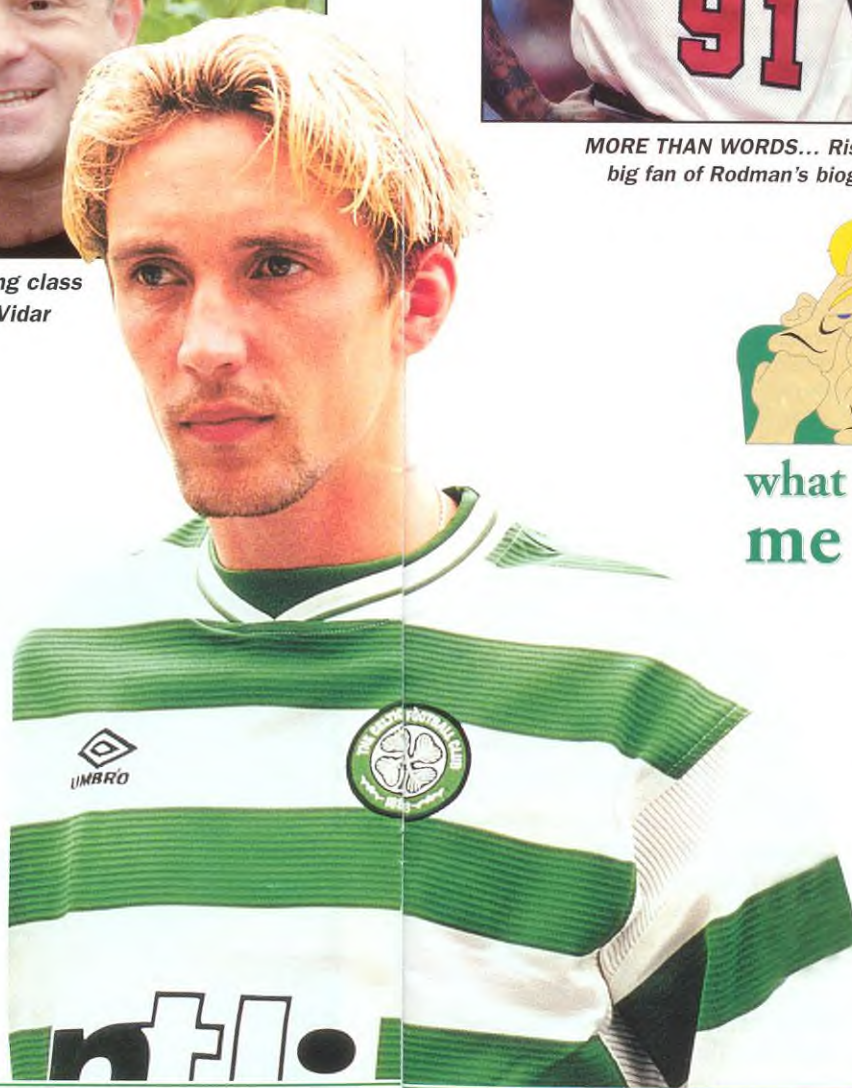
Today it's the turn of **VIDAR RISETH** to reveal all to Walk On and let us know what clicks with him and what turns him the wrong shade of green.



**PICTURE THIS...** Eddie Murphy (left) wins the top spot in Riseth's acting class while Eastenders' Ross Kemp (right) wouldn't win any Oscars from Vidar

# what makes me 'tic

- CD Single: 'Superstition' by Stevie Wonder
- CD Album: 'HIStory' by Michael Jackson
- Band: Jackson Five
- Singer: Michael Jackson
- Film: American Pie
- TV Programme: Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
- Actor: Eddie Murphy
- Actress: Demi Moore
- Book: Dennis Rodman's Biography
- Holiday Destination: Kongsvinger
- Hobby/Pastime: Going to the cinema
- Breakfast: Fruit
- Food: Steak and Fries
- Comedian: Eddie Murphy
- Board Game: Don't play them



**MORE THAN WORDS...** Riseth is a big fan of Rodman's biography



# what makes me sick

- CD Single: 'Wannabe' by the Spice Girls
- CD Album: 'Spiceworld' by the Spice Girls
- Band: Spice Girls
- Singer: Posh Spice
- Film: Any Science Fiction Film
- TV Programme: Eastenders
- Actor: Ross Kemp
- Actress: Patsy Palmer
- Book: History books
- Holiday Destination: Denmark
- Hobby/Pastime: Golf
- Breakfast: Eggs and Bacon
- Food: Shell Fish
- Comedian: Marc Rieper
- Board Game: Still don't play them



**TOP OF THE POPS...** Michael Jackson's HIStory gets the Norwegian's vote as favourite ever CD album



**A LOAD OF POSH...** Spice Girls get thumbs down

# Could this be the REAL reason he's Collins it quits?



takin' the mick

**H**ave you ever read such a load of garbage as the stuff produced before the Scotland v England matches?

Both countries milked it to the full. Like most Scots being born with a humility gene, I detest arrogance and the tunes of "own trumpets" being played but sadly we were awash with it from the usual sources in the lead up to the match with our nearest neighbours. Yep, Jim Baxter was so full of himself that his ego is now the size of the Millennium Dome! Slim Jim was in great demand recently and obviously had to find something else to say on top of the usual "keepy up" at Wembley story. He dreamt up a cracker about wishing he'd signed for Celtic so he could have played alongside Jinky... yeah right! We caught up with Jimbo (it wasn't hard) to discuss with him the "what might have beens". We told him we wished he had signed for us too but there is one small detail that would have prevented the two of them linking up together at Celtic. Jinky played for the vast majority of his career in the first team.

● Continuing the International theme, were you shocked at Johnny Collins decision to call time on his Scotland career? I have always been an admirer of the left-footed one for a long time,



By MICK O'BLIVIOUS

since his days at Hibs in fact, and will always remember his dying fly goal celebration as the Collins moment. The shock end to his dark blue career has obviously led to speculation about the reasons, so as usual we set about to find the truth. Let's examine some facts. Collins was very particular about his diet and training schedule and was a big success on the continent. He has scored against the mighty Brazil. John's Scotland career has now ended without scrapping in a Copenhagen nightclub or leaving the team in the lurch on the eve of a World Cup opener and I believe he's never been tempted by the oary boats at Largs. He comes over well on TV and has a distinctive Scottish accent. Our conclusion from all this is that the guy isn't

actually Scottish at all and got out before being found out! We Wanted to put this to him and phoned his house on the night before Everton's huge clash with Chelsea and he was in! I rest my case, he's definitely not tartan!!

● Had to laugh when reading that Man Utd defender Michael Silvetre and 'keeper Massimo Talbi' both claim not to understand a word Sir Alex screams during his famous dressing-room rants. It must be difficult in a foreign country with Fergie's strange accent but I'd wager if Fergie screamed "Dae yous want an extra few bob in your sky rocket this week?" the "oui" and "si" would deafen you! Some may say I'm being too harsh on the duo who have taken a lot of flak this season for some real defensive blunders. A few have suggested their mistakes have been due to language problems. I'm no great linguist but I'm pretty sure what Mr Ferguson shouts can't be translated in any language as "defend like a dumplin' and just let the ball trickle past you into the net".

● Simple Mind Jim Kerr and Sharleen Spiterri of Texas were recently asked to submit a piece of artwork for some charity event. The pieces they carefully put together were analysed by some so called expert to reveal their innermost thoughts. There is no truth in the

rumour that Jeffrey Archer also submitted a drawing of a pair of Pinocchio's pants on fire in a London railway station. The Texas lead singer did some fancy paper sculpture while Jim Kerr produced a piece referring to human rights. Interestingly wee Craig Brown was also involved and he produced a fine drawing of a ball with wings supposedly representing his hopes for the future etc. Our own analysis from Celtic's Psychiatric Dept (A very busy unit – Ed) is that to take Scottish football to the heights we all expect it needs more than just a boot, it needs wings. Well, have you seen how high the slates on Hampden's roof are?

● The Jambos are not enjoying the best of luck losing two players to red cards and conceding last minute goals in their recent matches. If you thought that was a bit unfortunate how about travelling from a distant galaxy with the wonders of the Universe at your disposal and you land on Earth where you are made to support Hibs! That's what happens in the new BT advert where that ridiculous creature ET appears in a Hibernian strip cheering a penalty conversion. Apparently the Hearts fans were outraged and jammed (how apt – Ed) BT's complaints' line when the advert was first screened. Most were concerned at seeing what they thought was Stevie Fulton clowning around in their bitter rivals' colours.



# win'n'grin



## WIN!

How would you like to win a new, improved Celtic strip? All you have to do is answer this one simple question.

Q: Who are Celtic playing in the Millennium Challenge match? Send your answers on a postcard along with strip size (S,M,L,XL) to: Win & Grin, Walk On, PO Box 2413, Glasgow G40 3YB.

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**GREAVES**  
*Sports*

## meet the mascots

According to Huddle Clubber Luke Walker, his favourite song of 1999 is definitely Shania Twain's, "That Don't Impress Me Much!" Well impressed was an understatement of how this lucky mascot felt during his dream day at Celtic Park. Luke is the star player with his local football team, The Bellfield Royals and should his dream of being a football player in later years not transpire, I'm sure he could pick up a few singing tips from Ms. Twain!

Before coming along to be lucky mascot number two, Alanah Rea couldn't quite make up her mind who she would rather meet - Jackie McNamara or Juventus striker Inzaghi. However, ask her now and I'm sure the decision wouldn't be as hard to make! Alanah has declared meeting Jackie as one of the best moments in her life - I'm sure Inzaghi will understand.

If you would like the chance to be chosen as lucky mascot, please contact the Huddle Club, c/o Commercial Department on 0141-551 4228.



NAME: Alanah Rea  
AGED: 11  
FROM: Glasgow

NAME: Luke Walker  
AGED: 9  
FROM: Kilmarnock

GAME : CELTIC v LYON - 4/11/99



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# facts facility



with David McDonald

● Celtic and Dundee last met in this tournament on August 31, 1994 at Dens Park. John Collins (3) and Andy Walker (77) scored for Celtic whilst Ray Farningham (19) netted for the home side. The match is probably best remembered for Paul McStay receiving the only red card of his career.

● The last Celtic Park meeting between the two clubs in the League Cup was on 19th August 1992. Andy Payton scored the only goal as early as the eighth minute, shooting past Jim Leighton in the Dundee goal.

● The first ever League Cup meeting came as early as the second ever season of the competition. On August 16, 1947 a crowd of 35,000 saw both teams battle out a 1-1 draw at Celtic Park in a section tie. Dundee won the return at Dens 4-1.

● Celtic's biggest ever League Cup wins over Dundee are as follows:

Celtic Park – 1970/71, 5-1  
Macari (8, 88), Hughes (31),  
Hood (42), Wilson (69)  
Dens Park – 1978/79, 3-0  
Doyle (23, 31), Conn (67)

● Celtic and Dundee have met in two League Cup Finals. The first was on October 28, 1967, just four days before the World Cup Championship second leg in Argentina. A crowd of 66,600 saw a thoroughly entertaining



CUP FOR IT... Dundee have won seven of their 19 meetings with Celtic

match end 5-3 to Celtic. The goalscorers were for Celtic – Chalmers (6, 73), Hughes (10), Lennox (79) and Wallace (88), and for Dundee – George McLean (23, 84) and Jim McLean (77).

● The second final was on December 15, 1973. When the enforced State of Emergency had the match kicking off at 1.30pm. That combined with the wet, freezing conditions, kept the attendance down to 27,974. Gordon Wallace gave the Dark Blues a deserved win by scoring the only goal in the 75th minute, which meant Lisbon Lion Tommy Gemmell was able to lift the cup as the captain of Dundee. It was the first time in 21 years that the

Tayside club had lifted the trophy.

● Dundee have a decent League Cup record against Celtic, winning seven of the 19 meetings. They have even won twice here at Celtic Park – 1954/55 (1-0) and 1965/66 (2-0).

● In 1972/73 the teams met in a quarter-final tie. Dundee won the 1st leg at home 1-0, which was then cancelled out by Celtic winning the return 3-2. A decider was played at Hampden which saw Celtic run out 4-1 winners with Kenny Dalglish scoring for the Bhoys, and Jocky Scott netting Dundee's only counter.



# potter's playback



with David W. Potter

This season's Walk On features DAVID W POTTER'S complete history of Celtic through the decades right up to the Millennium...tonight, 1935-1940

**C**eltic had been so poor in seasons 1934 and 1935 that the word "finished" was often used about them.

But Celtic will always bounce back and this happened in season 1935/36. For once Manager Maley was lucky enough to keep his players free from injury most of the time. He had a settled squad – a defence centred around Willie Lyon and up front Jimmy Delaney, Willie Buchanan and Johnny Crum supplied the ever-ready McGrory. There was also the grossly under-estimated left winger Frank Murphy whose one Scottish cap is scant reward for his ability and service.

In 1936, the team had a bad couple of weeks on tricky grounds in early February. First they lost to Hearts at Tynecastle in the League, then they went out of the Scottish Cup to St Johnstone – a result which shocked and amazed even the few die-hard Perth fans who had come from the Fair City.

But after that, it was as if somebody had pressed a button. Celtic really turned it on and won every game from then on. McGrory scored at least one goal per game – most of them with his head – and the play of the team was bewilderingly excellent. They won the League by some distance from Rangers and, for the first time in a decade, Celtic could call themselves the Champions. They celebrated by beating Rangers



**TWO GOOD...** McGrory witnessed the good times with Celtic and Killie

4-2 in the Final of the Glasgow Charity Cup.

By the time that the next season came around, football was struggling to find its way into the headlines being crushed out by the Abdication crisis, the war in Abyssinia and the war in Spain, and of course Hitler. Celtic were a potent force that season but lost out in the League thanks to a series of injuries at vital times to key players like McGrory. But

ample and deserved recompense came in the Scottish Cup Final when Celtic beat the black and gold of Aberdeen by 2-1. The crowd was a record 147,000 and many more that climbed over the wall on a day when the whole city of Aberdeen more or less evacuated itself to Glasgow. McGrory didn't score in his last Cup Final but he did a few weeks later when Celtic retained the Glasgow Charity Cup.



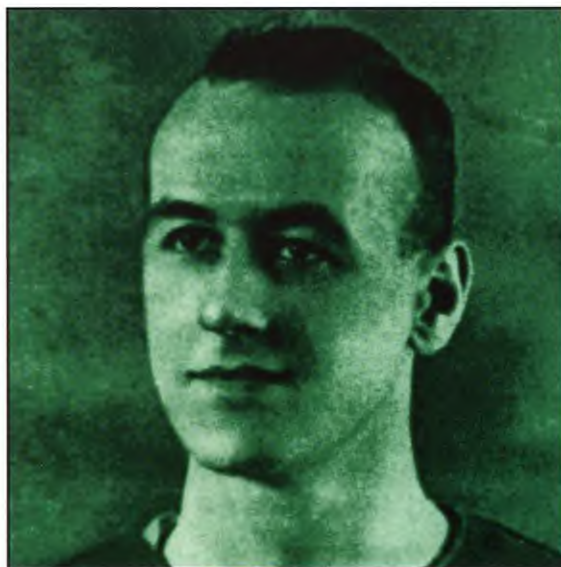
# Hoops hit back in injury time

1938 was Celtic's Golden Jubilee and was marked in fine style by the return of the Scottish League Championship, Glasgow Charity Cup and the Empire Exhibition Trophy which was competed for by the top teams in Britain. Celtic beat Everton 1-0 in the Final at Ibrox. But Celtic didn't win the Scottish Cup. They went out in the quarter finals to Kilmarnock. And who was Kilmarnock's manager? Jimmy McGroary!

1938/39 was a poor and disappointing season for Celtic. They won the Glasgow Cup in October 1938 but after that poor form knocked them out of the Championship and the Scottish Cup. In their defence it must be said that this season was an unnatural one – for by now everyone knew that War was coming sooner or later.

It came on September 3, 1939 causing the abandonment of the season. It was replaced by War Competitions in which Celtic did spectacularly badly.

But that was not the main topic of conversation in early 1940. The sacking probably could have been done with more tact, but it was surely the right time to bid farewell to the grand old man of Celtic Football Club, now well into his 70s.



**MAIN MAN...**  
Maley's  
Celts  
defence  
was centred  
around  
Willie Lyon



**THE SILENT MAN...**  
Winger  
Murphy  
was grossly  
under-  
estimated  
during his  
time at Celtic



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With just 8 teams remaining at the start of this round - all determined to win their place at the semi-finals to be played in February - we are sure you will enjoy a hard-fought contest tonight and hope to have the pleasure of welcoming you to further fixtures in the future.

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# just a tic

By The Bhoys In The Know

If Celtic can come through the proceedings this evening unscathed they will find themselves a mere 180 minutes away from the first trophy of the season.

Okay the CIS Insurance League Cup isn't exactly the most sought after piece of silverware in the game and, as has been well documented previously, it doesn't even afford the winner a European place.

But what it doesn't do is heavily outweighed by the psychological boost of knowing that the team which wins the cup can go on to win bigger and better things – Celtic aim to be that team.

In the championship winning side of 1997/98 under Wim Jansen, Celtic undoubtedly took a massive confidence boost from winning the soft drinks equivalent of the CIS Cup.

The current crop of Celtic stars hope to emulate that success and go on to prove the critics wrong by winning the league.

There is no reason why that can't be achieved despite what we read in the press about how the club is in an alleged state of disarray.

Tynecastle Stadium in Edinburgh is arguably the most hostile ground in the country for Celtic to travel to – possibly more so than Ibrox.

Hearts are never an easy team to beat yet Celtic managed to do so 10 days ago with a performance that wasn't a classic by any stretch of the imagination.

But what does it matter? Of course Celtic fans demand to be entertained. Travelling to the



**A HARD TYNE...** An away day at Hearts can be more hostile than Ibrox

capital cost the average Hoops supporter £18 a head plus the incidental costs of actually going to a game like travel and the odd refreshment.

But isn't it better to get the result? Most supporters would say yes. All the attractive football we played in years gone by with stars like Paolo Di Canio and Jorge Cadete was great to watch.

But in terms of actually realising any silverware at the end of the season it did us no good whatsoever.

Another way to look at it is that if Celtic can play badly and win and keep the pressure on Rangers then it can't be all that bad. It's only when they play badly and don't win that we should be more concerned.

We travelled to Tynecastle without the services of four players who, if recent starting line-ups are any sort of benchmark, would certainly have played from the beginning.

Johan Mjallby spoke out after the game and said that while the system was correct, the players playing in it were unable to keep their shape.

That is what the club have been looking at this past week and not at ways to play a more

entertaining and attacking game which could leave us vulnerable.

No one expected John Barnes to become an immediate success – anyone who did suffers from the naivete that Barnes himself has been accused of.

What we did expect was bedding in time for the new man and the new players he has brought in and should Celtic go on and win the league we will soon forget about performances like the one against Hearts.

We have just completed the first third of the league campaign with around 20 or so vital matches still to be played.

To write off the Hoops chances at this stage of the season would be foolish – just as foolish as writing off Rangers' hopes.

Three Old Firm games, another potentially hazardous trip to Tynecastle and a return to Celtic Park for Motherwell are just some of the challenges we face between now and next May.

What we need is more self-belief. We also need to give less credence to the prophets of doom.

But most importantly we need to put ourselves in the CIS Cup semi-final with a good result tonight – no matter what the performance is like.



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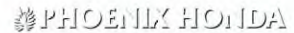
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