

Celtic

V

FALKIRK

BELL'S

PREMIER

DIVISION

SATURDAY

DEC 16

Kick-off

3pm

Official

Matchday

Programme

£1.00



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PROGRAMME NO.13



**PHOENIX
HONDA
NEWS**

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Alternative **VIEW**

Literary Genius, and
Scotland's Answer to Melvin Bragg

MATT McGLONE

has a go in the Celtic View...and gets it right!

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Andreas Thom picks up the keys to his new Honda from Phoenix Honda's Managing Director John McGuire

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AS this is our last home match of the year I'd like to wish all our supporters all the best for the festive season and hope they have a happy Christmas and prosperous new year.

We can look back with much satisfaction on the past 12 months. A cup is back in the Celtic Park trophy cabinet again and we're rediscovering what it feels like to win on a regular basis by playing the Celtic way. The importance of that latter fact shouldn't be forgotten.

Suddenly the fans' thoughts are all on the team and the exciting brand of football they are producing. We must continue to go from strength to strength. And I see no reason why that shouldn't be the case. We have real quality in our ranks and that's been reflected in our performances. Our guys are playing with confidence, finding the net freely and clearly enjoying their football.

They have a real hunger and passion for what they are doing and they've waited a long time to be in a position when they could look forward to games rather than be full of trepidation - and long may that be the case.

It will certainly be that way against Falkirk this afternoon. Paul McStay's testimonial against Manchester United the other night certainly did us no harm. We maintained our high standard against a pedigree team to secure a 3-1 win.

I know much has been made of the fact United weren't at full strength and were missing four established players - but so were we!

Andreas Thom, Tom Boyd, Peter Grant and John Hughes all missed out. That lends even more value to Alex Ferguson's comment about the present Celtic side being the best he's seen in nine years.

The game was all about Paul though and it turned out to be a great night for him and his family.

In recent years when things weren't going well I think he worried about the possible reaction

'The game was all about Paul but it was a great night for everyone'

from the supporters to a testimonial and therefore it's delightful that it came in a year when he captained the club to its first trophy since 1989 and is a major force in a side that's producing some exceptional football.

And for all of us the exciting thing is that I'm convinced that, with the squad we have, we will get better and better.



A soccer player in a green and white CR Smith jersey is captured in a moment of intense celebration, with his arms raised high and his mouth open in a shout. The background is a blurred stadium filled with spectators, suggesting a high-stakes match. The overall tone is energetic and triumphant.

**A FINISH WORTH
CELEBRATING.**

CR SMITH

A CLASS ACT



THE SQUADS



GORDON MARSHALL



JACKIE McNAMARA



TOSH MCKINLAY



TOM BOYD



MALKY MACKAY



PHIL O'DONNELL



SIMON DONNELLY



PAUL McSTAY



PIERRE VAN HOOIJDONK



ANDREAS THOM



JOHN COLLINS



BRIAN McLAUGHLIN



MORTEN WIEGHORST



**Referee:
WNM CROMBIE
(Edinburgh)**



**Linesman:
MA CLARK
(Edinburgh)**



**Linesman:
A HUNTER
(Glenrothes)**

STAND-BYS:

**Celtic: Rudi Vata,
Chris Hay, Andy
Walker**

**Falkirk: Neil
Inglis, Mark
McGraw, Forbes
Johnston**



TONY PARKS



DAVID WEIR



STUART MUNRO



JAMIE MCGOWAN



JOE McLAUGHLIN



SCOTT MCKENZIE



DAVID HAGEN



DEREK FERGUSON



PAUL McGRILLEN



MO JOHNSTON



DAVID ELLIOTT



STEVIE KIRK



CRAIG NAPIER

IN ASSOCIATION WITH CR SMITH



+ TODAY'S VISITORS +

FALKIRK visit Celtic park this afternoon, lying second bottom of the Premier Division table, and on the back of a 4-0 hammering last weekend by Kilmarnock at Rugby Park.

The Brockville side had a turbulent close season, losing their manager Jim Jefferies to Hearts - after he had publicly declared that he was staying with the Bairns.

And club captain and mainstay of the Falkirk defence, John Hughes of course joined Celtic.

John Lambie moved from Partick Thistle to replace Jefferies and set about ringing the changes, bringing

in players such as David Hagen, Davie Elliot, Stuart Munro and Derek Ferguson and building his own team.

But things haven't been going well for the Falkirk men in recent times, who've been unable to lift themselves out of the relegation area.

However, if John Lambie's track record at Partick Thistle is anything to go by - he kept the Maryhill men in the Premier time after time against all the odds - it would be a foolish man who'd bet against the Bairns retaining their top flight status.

The last time they met Celtic was back in October.

That is a night that will be remembered by Jackie McNamara, who made his debut for the club and John Hughes, who returned to Brockville for the first time since leaving Falkirk and capped his night by netting the winner in the 1-0 victory. I reckon Falkirk will be glad he's suspended for tonight's match!

The man in goal, **TONY PARKS** will be happy, as he wouldn't want Yogi putting another past him. The former Spurs keeper will be determined to make up for losing four at the weekend and will go all out to deny Celtic adding to their recent



DAVID WEIR

high scoring games.

Parks was out injured earlier this season but has retained his place since returning and can't be blamed for days like last Saturday.

So he'll be relying on his defence to keep the ball away from him today and in the centre of the Falkirk back four he'll have two experienced men in **JOE McLAUGHLIN** and **JOHN CLARK**.

McLaughlin is an old pro who lets little past him, and forms a strong defensive pairing alongside Clark.

Clark has had his differences with the club recently - handing in a

transfer request - and if he is playing this afternoon, Celtic will also do well to watch out for his free-kicks which are unbelievably fierce. Rumour has it that the Falkirk defender is extremely superstitious, so maybe sticking a ladder up right outside the visitors dressing room door would be a good idea this afternoon!

In the right-back berth **DAVID WEIR** is still being employed, despite interest from Rangers and a number of other clubs in recent times. A former Celtic Boys' Club player he has let the Parkhead side see what they let slip



PRESSURE'S ON... Bairns boss John Lambie



+ TODAY'S VISITORS +

LAMBIE'S BATTLE TO BEAT DROP

through the net on many occasion with some good displays down the right flank.

Playing left-back could be either **STUART MUNRO** or **DAVID ELLIOT**. Lambie signed Munro from Bristol City and has used the former Ranger on and off, and former Celt Elliot was signed from St Mirren also this season. He has been played on the left of midfield or in left-back and has impressed so far with his displays.

Another of Lambie's signings, **DAVID HAGEN** was brought to Falkirk as part of a swap deal involving Steve Fulton, who made his way to Hearts.

The former Ranger has probably been one of Falkirk's best players this term with his pace and strength in midfield.

SCOTT MCKENZIE has figured more prominently this season than in the majority of his four years at Falkirk. He is a competent midfield star who seems to benefit from an extended run.

The third ex-Ranger in the team, **DEREK FERGUSON** needs no introductions. A skilful ball player who was rated highly by the Govan

club, but whose career floundered down south with Sunderland, the team he joined after leaving Hearts.

Still a good, strong midfield lynchpin, Lambie broke the bank to bring him back to Scotland, Falkirk shelling out their record fee £350,000 for his services.

STEVE KIRK is another versatile player who can operate up front or out in midfield. The former Motherwell player has a habit of scoring goals, which is no bad thing and Lambie will be looking to him to get it right this term as the Brockville men try to improve their situation.

PAUL McGRILLEN is another ex-Fir Park star who now plays his football in the central belt.

He can operate up front or in midfield.

Many of the Brockville club's players are familiar to the Celtic fans, but none more so than striker **MO JOHNSTON**. The infamous former Celtic and Rangers star has recently found a new lease of life, showing that he hasn't lost the skills and ability that took him to the top.

After a rotten spell at Hearts, Jefferies brought

TONY PARKS

(Goalkeeper)
Aged 32. Signed from Rotherham, 1992

JOE MCLAUGHLIN
(Defender)

Aged 35. Signed from Watford, 1992

DAVID WEIR
(Defender)

Aged 25. Signed from Celtic BC, 1992

JOHN CLARK
(Defender)

Aged 30. Signed from Stoke City, 1994

DAVID ELLIOT
(Midfielder)

Aged 26. Signed from St Mirren, 1995

STUART MUNRO
(Defender)

Aged 33. Signed from Bristol City, 1995

DAVID HAGEN
(Midfielder)

Aged 22. Signed from Hearts, 1995

SCOTT MCKENZIE
(Midfielder)

Age 25. Signed from Musselburgh, 1990

JAMIE McGOWAN

(Defender)
Aged 24. Signed from Dundee, 1993

DEREK FERGUSON
(Midfielder)

Aged 28. Signed from Sunderland, 1995

STEVE KIRK
(Forward)

Aged 32. Signed from Motherwell, 1994

PAUL McGRILLEN
(Forward)

Aged 24. Signed from Motherwell, 1994

MO JOHNSTON
(Forward)

Aged 32. Signed from Hearts, 1994

NICKY HENDERSON
(Forward)

Aged 25. Signed from Cowdenbeath, 1991

MARK McGRAW
(Forward)

Aged 24. Signed from Hibs, 1995

Lowdown + Lowdown

him to Brockville. A popular figure with the Falkirk fans he can expect the usual 'friendly' reception here today.

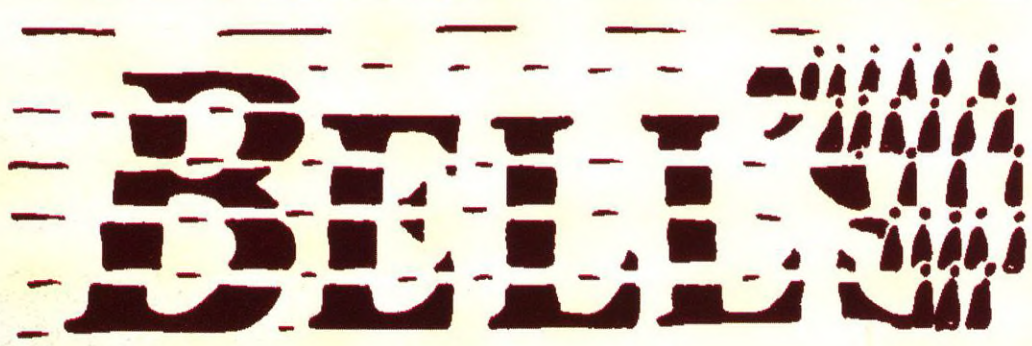
On the bench for Falkirk, could be former Dundee star **JAMIE McGOWAN** who plays as an overlapping full-back. Sitting beside him is likely to be **NICKY HENDERSON** who on his day is a pacy forward who can give defences all sorts of problems - Celts know this to their cost after he netted in the 2-0 win for Falkirk at Hampden last October.

And another benchmark could be youngster **MARK McGRAW**. Son of Morton boss Allan McGraw, the midfielder was signed from Hibs but hasn't been involved as much as he would have liked.

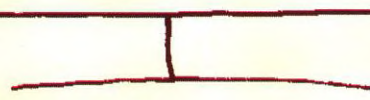


TONY PARKS





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