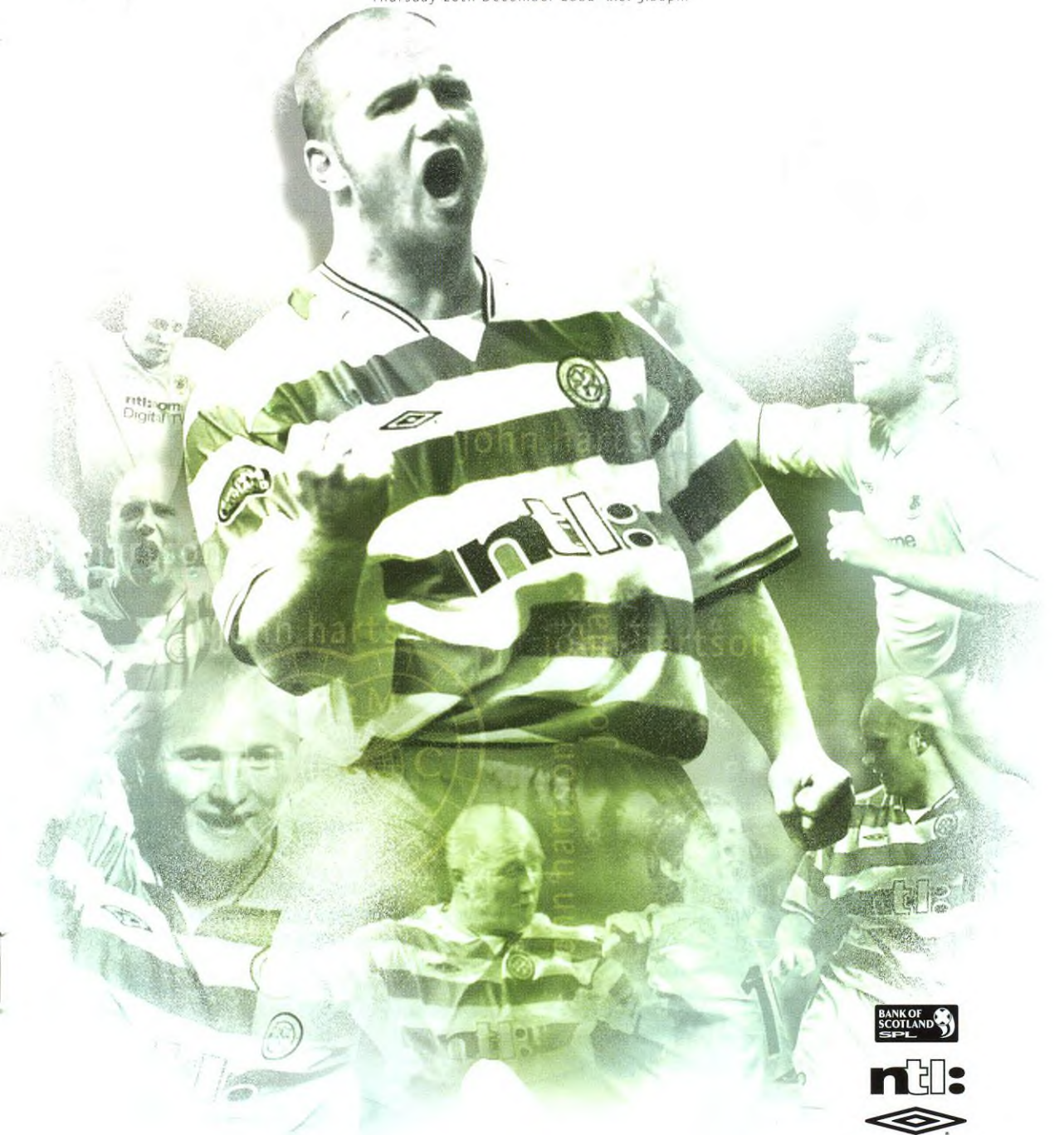


Celtic

v HEARTS

Scottish Premier League
Thursday 26th December 2002 k.o. 3.00pm



PHOENIX HONDA

Merry Christmas

Christmas past.



Christmas present.



Don't waste your money on a wooly jumper or a three pack of socks that will never be worn. These new Celtic gift certificates are ideal for every Celtic supporter.

So versatile, they can be used in all official Celtic stores, the ticket office, restaurants and even for corporate hospitality.

NOT VALID FOR STADIUM CATERING OUTLETS

So, whoever receives them can choose exactly what they want. They come in values of 5, 10 and 25 pounds as well as 5, 10 and 25 euros.

Available from all official Celtic Stores, ticket services or by calling 0141 550 1888.

Celtic



“Everything is in our hands and between now and the winter break in January we will be striving for full points”

PRINTING deadlines over the festive period have ensured that I write before the outcome of recent games are known.

First of all, I hope everyone had a very Happy Christmas.

Just where does the time go? Is it really a year since we had that pulsating game against Livingston here at Celtic Park with victory coming in the last minute of the match.

Hearts are the visitors today and the encounter promises to be every bit as exciting as the game 12 months ago. I would be absolutely delighted if we achieved the same scoreline, but Craig Levein will undoubtedly have other ideas.

We played brilliantly at Tynecastle earlier this season, with four superb first half goals to show for our efforts.

However, the games between the two clubs are normally tighter affairs and I think that will be the case this afternoon.

This season already, there have been plenty of highs for us and I think it is fair to say that the European evenings here have been every bit as

memorable as the ones we enjoyed last year.

We were obviously disappointed not to make the Champions League this season, but Basel have since proved they were no flash in the pan by going into the second phase of the competition.

We have enjoyed reasonable domestic success over the last two seasons and it is always nice to make an impact in Europe.

Winning the title will always be our priority but to be in the last 16 of the UEFA Cup is a brilliant achievement and everyone is excited at the thought of playing Stuttgart in February next year.

The games against Celta Vigo and Blackburn here at Celtic Park have been enthralling occasions and to beat teams of such calibre on our own patch is quite magnificent.

Celtic Park is a fantastic arena and some of the games that I have seen here since my arrival two and a half years ago have been extraordinary.

When the stands are full and

everyone gives their vociferous backing to the team it can be a daunting experience for any opposing team to come into and so often the atmosphere in the ground has contributed to such memorable occasions.

Winning the title against Livingston here last season was every bit as satisfying as lifting it the first time and I can assure you that everyone at the club is doing their utmost to defend the Championship.

Everything is in our hands and between now and the winter break in January we will be striving for full points in our meetings against Hearts this afternoon, and the same commitment will be shown in our games against Dunfermline and Aberdeen.

Once more I thank you for your support today and urge you to give your full backing as we strive to overcome Hearts.



Celtic FC Factfile

Formed: 1888

Stadium: Celtic Park

(capacity 60,506)

Home strip: Green/white hooped shirts, white shorts, white socks

Away strip: Gold shirts, green shorts, gold socks

Third strip: White shirts, black shorts and socks

Record attendance: 92,000 (v Rangers, 1938)

Record victory: 11-0 (v Dundee, 1895)

Record defeat: 0-8 (v Motherwell, 1937)

Most league goals (1 season): 50, Jimmy McGrory, 1935/36

Most Premier/SPL goals (1 season): 35, Brian McClair, 1986/87, Henrik Larsson 2000/01

Website: www.celticfc.net

Honours

Scottish League (38)

1892/93, 1893/94, 1895/96, 1897/98, 1904/05, 1905/06,

1906/07, 1907/08, 1908/09, 1909/10, 1913/14, 1914/15, 1915/16, 1916/17, 1918/19, 1921/22, 1925/26, 1935/36, 1937/38, 1953/54, 1965/66, 1966/67, 1967/68, 1968/69, 1969/70, 1970/71, 1971/72, 1972/73, 1973/74, 1976/77, 1978/79, 1980/81, 1981/82, 1985/86, 1987/88, 1997/98, 2000/2001, 2001/2002

Scottish Cup (31)

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, 2001

League Cup (12)

1956/57, 1957/58, 1965/66, 1966/67, 1967/68, 1968/69, 1969/70, 1974/75, 1982/83, 1997/98, 1999/2000, 2000/2001

European Cup (1)

1967

Coronation Cup (1)

1953

CELTIC FACTS

1. Back in the late 1960s, at this time of year, Joe McBride seemed to have a particular dislike for poor old Morton. In 1965, on Christmas Day, he scored three in 18 minutes as Celtic had a merry festive outing, beating the Greenock side 8-1 at Parkhead. Two years later, on December 23, he repeated the feat in a 4-0 victory at Cappielow. This time the goals came in 5, 76 and 84 minutes.

2. On December 26, 1955, Celtic met Rangers in a replay of the Glasgow Cup final. The teams had drawn 1-1 in the first game and the return was eagerly anticipated, particularly the clash between Celtic centre-half Jock Stein and the bustling Rangers centre-forward Don 'The Rhino' Kichenbrand from South Africa. Big Jock did the business and contained his opponent; while Celtic striker Jim Sharkey proved a handful for George Young. The Bhoys won 5-3 before 39,000 fans.

3. Stevie Chalmers was born in Glasgow on December 26, 1936. He joined Celtic from Ashfield Juniors in 1956, made his first-team debut against Airdrie in March 1959 and played till September 1971. Stevie scored 228 goals in 405 appearances, second only to Bobby Lennox in the post-war list. His most famous goal, of course, must be the winner in the 1967 European Cup final in Lisbon.

HEARTS FACTS

1. Heart of Midlothian FC was founded in 1874, the fifth oldest Scottish team behind Queen's Park, Kilmarnock, Dumbarton and Rangers. After the advent of league competition in the early 1890s, Hearts were quick into the honours list, picking up the league title in 1894/95 and again in 1896/97; while their name also was engraved on the Scottish Cup, in 1891 and 1896.

2. The club took its name from the Royal Mile dance hall frequented by the founders and was the only club from the east to become a founder member of the Scottish League in 1891. That 1896 final mentioned above was a unique occasion. Firstly, it was an all-Edinburgh affair between Hearts and Hibs, the first and only time these clubs have met at this stage; and secondly, it was the only final ever played outside Glasgow, the venue being Logie Green.

3. At the start of World War 1, the entire Hearts playing staff volunteered to join the forces, encouraging the support to do likewise. Seven players were killed in action, few of the survivors ever played again but their response to the War Effort has never been forgotten. Every year a Remembrance Service is held at Haymarket, at the war memorial to the club.

TODAY'S SQUADS

TODAY'S VISITORS **HEARTS**

TEAM SPONSORS
ALL-SPORTS




MANAGER CRAIG LEVEIN

STADIUM TYNECASTLE
CAPACITY 18,001
PREVIOUS RESULT HEARTS 1 CELTIC 4


CELTIC



HEARTS

CLUB SPONSORS

JONATHAN GOULD	1	2
TOM BOYD	2	3
MOMO SYLLA	3	4
JACKIE McNAMARA	4	5
JOOS VALGAEREN	5	6
BOBO BALDE	6	7
HENRIK LARSSON	7	8
ALAN THOMPSON	8	9
CHRIS SUTTON	9	10
JOHN HARTSON	10	11
DAVID FERNANDEZ	12	12
PAUL LAMBERT	14	13
BOBBY PETTA	15	14
ULRIK LAURSEN	16	15
DIDIER AGATHE	17	16
NEIL LENNON	18	17
STILIAN PETROV	19	18
ROBERT DOUGLAS	20	19
MAGNUS HEDMAN	21	20
COLIN HEALY	24	21
PAUL SHIELDS	26	23
JON PAUL McGOVERN	27	24
SHAUN MALONEY	29	25
STEVE GUPPY	30	
SIMON LYNCH	32	
MARK FOTHERINGHAM	34	
JOHAN MJALLBY	35	
JAMIE SMITH	39	
STEPHEN CRAINEY	40	
JOHN KENNEDY	41	
LIAM MILLER	43	

ALAN MAYBURY
STEPHANE MAHE
STEVEN PRESSLEY
KEVIN McKENNA
SCOTT SEVERIN
KEVIN TWADDLE
PHIL STAMP
MARK DE VRIES
ANDY KIRK
JEAN-LOUIS VALOIS
STEVEN BOYACK
RODDY MCKENZIE
ANDY WEBSTER
GARY WALES
STEPHEN SIMMONS
ROBBIE NEILSON
AUSTIN McCANN
RYAN DAVIDSON
CRAIG GORDON
NEIL MacFARLANE
ROBERT SLOAN
PAUL KACZAN
NEIL JANCZYK



RECENT FORM

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE 15 DECEMBER, 2002
KILMARNOCK 1 v CELTIC 1 (Valgaeren)

UEFA CUP 3rd Round 2nd Leg 12 DECEMBER, 2002
CELTA VIGO 2 v CELTIC 1 (Hartson)

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE 7 DECEMBER, 2002
RANGERS 3 v CELTIC 2 (Sutton, Hartson)

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE 4 DECEMBER, 2002
HIBERNIAN 0 v CELTIC 1 (Petrov)

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE 1 DECEMBER, 2002
CELTIC 3 v MOTHERWELL 1 (Valgaeren, Larsson, Leitch og)

UEFA CUP 3rd Round 1st Leg 28 NOVEMBER, 2002
CELTIC 1 v CELTA VIGO 0 (Larsson)

FORTHCOMING FIXTURES

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
CELTIC v DUNFERMLINE SUN 29 DECEMBER 2002

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
ABERDEEN v CELTIC THURS 2 JANUARY 2003

TODAY'S MATCH OFFICIALS

REFEREE:	HUGH DALLAS
ASSISTANT REFEREES:	ANDREW SEYMOUR FRANCIS ANDREWS
FOURTH OFFICIAL:	JOHN FLEMING



CELTIC FOOTBALL CLUB
CELTIC PARK,
GLASGOW
G40 3RE
0141-556 2611

CELTIC plc DIRECTORS Brian Quinn, Ian McLeod, Eric Riley, Dermot Desmond, Sir Patrick Sheehy, Kevin Sweeney, Tom Allison

CFAC DIRECTORS Ian McLeod, Eric Riley, Jim Hone, John Keane, Michael McDonald, Kevin Sweeney

CHIEF EXECUTIVE Ian McLeod **MANAGER** Martin O'Neill **ASSISTANT MANAGER** John Robertson **COACH** Steve Walford

PLAYER DEVELOPMENT OFFICER Tommy Burns **HEAD YOUTH COACH** Willie McStay **UNDER-21 COACH** Kenny McDowall

PHYSIOTHERAPIST Brian Scott **CLUB DOCTOR** Roddy Macdonald **KIT CONTROLLER** John Clark



Home Bhoy

John Hartson is content
to lay his hat in Glasgow

WORDS: Alison McConnell

IT'S unlikely that John Hartson will be seen complaining about a Celtic's heavy fixture list over the festive period.

Excusing the fact that the Welsh striker is delighted to have secured a regular starting slot in Martin O'Neill's side, he is also in a position to appreciate a run of three home games.

The nomadic 27-year-old has known Christmas periods spent isolated from his family and stuck in a hotel because of fixture destinations and isn't perturbed about turning out for the Hoops over the holidays.

"Although there are a lot of games over the Christmas period, it's fine because we're playing in Glasgow so it's not as much hassle in terms of preparations," he said.

"I've been at clubs in London and you've had a game on Boxing Day up north and you're away from your family for most of Christmas Day.

"When I was at West Ham, Luton and Arsenal all the guys used to check the Boxing Day

"Playing so many games over Christmas is ok as they are at home"

game as soon as the fixture list came out.

"So, it's fine to be playing so many games because they're at home as it gives us a chance not only to play in front of our own fans, but it will give us the opportunity to keep on going

“I’ve had no luck against Rangers; I’ve been sent off, had a legitimate goal chalked off and scored twice yet still lost”

and stay strong in the league. “It is a busy period for us and obviously now it’s vital that we don’t slip up in the league. We’ve had quite a few away games over the last few weeks, so it will be nice to at least have the chance to play in front of our own fans.”

Meanwhile, Hartson has also insisted that he isn’t too bothered about getting back to Wales over the Christmas period because he now considers Glasgow as home.

The striker has been linked with moves away from the club this season, but he has once more rubbished the suggestions and maintained that he is

settled and happy at Celtic.

He explained: “My family usually come up for Christmas, but I don’t mind not going home over Christmas because this is my home now. I made London my home for 10 years and now I consider myself to be settled in up here.

“Wales will always be special to me, but at the minute Glasgow is my home and so they’ll come up over the holidays to see me.

“Things have been good over the last few months. I did pre-season and got a few goals but I started the season on the bench and was then coming on and trying to make an impact during games.

“I’m glad that the manager has found a system that accommodates all three of the strikers although that can change from game to game.

“It’s no secret that everyone wants to play and I’m delighted with the way things have went recently. I’m really happy at the club and I’m happy that I managed to get back in the side.

“When you aren’t playing there’s always lots of speculation about your position and that can be just as frustrating. It might get you down when you’re not playing, but not enough to decide that you’ve had enough and want to leave.”

The striker hasn’t only hit the headlines with Celtic this season, but has also been in form for Wales as they have enjoyed a series of excellent results in their quest to qualify for the European Championships.



“I’m pleased with the way I’ve fitted in and I think the Welsh thing really helped me out when I wasn’t playing,” he said. “Playing for my country in the European Championships against Italy and so on was great for me because it kept me going.

“When I wasn’t in the team I was going away with Wales and playing and that cheered me up.”

With a mid-season break looming in just a couple of weeks, Hartson is desperate to help Celtic pick up every available point they can between now and then and

STRUCK GOLD

Hartson’s recent rich vein of form has secured him a place in Martin O’Neill’s starting line-up



then recharge his energy supplies.

He remarked: “It’s great to have a little bit of a break in January as well. I wasn’t here the first year that they had the break in Florida but the lads have told me that it’s really good and it’s a chance to recharge the batteries.

“I’ve had a bit of tendonitis so it will do me good to have the chance to rest it for a bit at this stage of the season. It’ll definitely benefit everyone and those carrying little knocks will be able to rest fully.

“It’s like pre-season as well in that once you have a couple of weeks away from it you are desperate to get back into it again and I’m sure everyone will come back refreshed.”

Hartson has just one New Year resolution - to score and celebrate a win over Rangers. The striker has netted twice against the Ibrox side but finished on the losing side, something he is determined to rectify.

“I’ve not had much luck against Rangers,” he said. “There was the time I got sent off, I hit the crossbar in one game, I had a legitimate goal chalked off wrongly for offside last season, I hit a post a couple of weeks ago and the twice that I’ve scored against them I’ve ended up on the losing side.

“When you score but don’t win then you feel as though it doesn’t count.”

It’s a resolution that Hartson will be desperate to keep.

