

Celtic

V KILMARNOCK

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PREMIER DIVISION
SATURDAY, JAN 14
1995. KICK-OFF 3PM.**

INSIDE

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**MARK McNALLY
INTERVIEW**



OFFICIAL PROGRAMME £1





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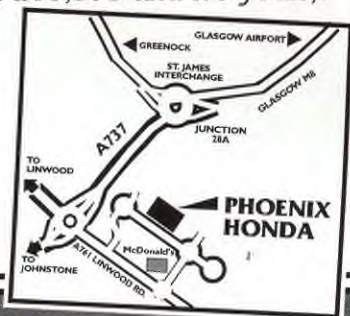
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PHOENIX HONDA

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TOMMY BURNS



THIS is the last of our three home games in a row, and we are hoping to finish with a win.

Obviously you want to win all your home matches and by now we should be used to Hampden and be winning here.

The results may not have been the best recently and we may only have won one of our last 10 matches, but we have not been beaten in any of them either.

We wanted to make ourselves a difficult team to beat, and we have done that. But now we have to concentrate on making ourselves better than the teams we are playing against and getting the wins.

That will not happen immediately, but as long as we keep working away and feel things are changing I'm sure we will get there.

No-one deliberately goes out to get draws, and we know we still have to strengthen the squad.

Pierre van Hooydonk is the first of a few signings. He had a good debut against Hearts on Wednesday and scored a fantastic goal.

He is definitely something special. I know a lot of people would have been surprised at his style of play.

Because he is a big lad you would think he is great in the air, but Pierre is more comfortable with the ball on the ground.

He is decent enough with his head, but he prefers it at his feet, controlling the ball and laying it off. That's the way the Dutch are taught to play the game.

I'm sure we will be seeing a lot more of Pierre this season and a few other new faces as well.

Billy Stark and I want to get our own team together and that will take time.

Today I hope we can get our first win over Kilmarnock this term.

They have done well, and worked hard this season but we have to be winning these games.

There have been a lot of things we could have used as excuses this season but we haven't.

For example in defence the back four has changed so often it's not true.

‘ We want to get our own team together and that will take time ’

And when there are enforced changes there are bound to be a few problems.

But I think it is important that the spirits of the players are lifted and that is the way it is at the moment.

Everything won't come at once, but with confidence there you will begin to see progress being achieved bit by bit I'm sure.

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PAT BONNER



TOM BOYD



STUART GRAY



TOSH MCKINLAY



BRIAN O'NEIL



PHIL O'DONNELL



BRIAN McLAUGHLIN



PAUL McSTAY



PIERRE VAN HOOYDONK



ANDY WALKER



JOHN COLLINS



WILLIE FALCONER



CHRIS HAY



Referee:
W N M Crombie
(Edinburgh)



Linesman:
S Dougal
(Burnside)



Linesman:
E J Young
(Prestonpans)

STAND-BYS:
Celtic - Gordon Marshall (GK), Jim Slavin, Barry Smith
Killmarnock - Colin Meldrum (GK), Derek Anderson, Mark Roberts.



MASCOT:
NICOLA MACKIN
(AGED 8)
GLASGOW

DRAGOJE LEKOVIC



ANGUS MCPHERSON



TOM BLACK



MARK REILLY



MARK SKILLING



NEIL WHITWORTH



ALLY MITCHELL



JOHN HENDRY



COLIN MCKEE



ROBERT CONNOR



STEVE MASKREY



TOM BROWN



CRAIG NAPIER



+ TODAY'S VISITORS +



THEY may have been tipped to go down this season but Kilmarnock have continued to show that fighting spirit that may keep them in the top flight this season. Below we take you through some of their playing staff who could cause Celtic a few problems this afternoon.



★ **BIG MAC ...Gus McPherson** has been one of the Kilmarnock heroes over recent years and has helped them re-attain their top flight status

BETWEEN the sticks for Kilmarnock this afternoon will be the club's newest signing.

DRAGOJE LEKOVIC has been an inspired buy by Alex Totten who snapped the experienced keeper up from Red Star Belgrade. Has taken to the job of ensuring the ball stays out of the Killie net well although the recent match at Firhill where he missed the ball when trying to clear was definitely not a highlight.

GUS MCPHERSON is one of the handful of Killie stalwarts. Since arriving from Rangers he was played in a number of positions but has over recent seasons has made the right back slot his own. A 100 per cent performer he must be one of the first names on manager Alex Totten's team sheet.

TOM BLACK is one of the breed of attacking full backs and can often create dangers with his crosses. Often finds his name on the score sheet and is skillful with a dead ball.

MARK REILLY is one of the few naturally left-sided players in the Premier League and uses that to his advantage. A real terrier in the midfield he can always be found at the heart of things. His pace is always a threat.

MARK SKILLING has developed into a fine player since breaking into the team as a youngster. Learned from the mature players around him and is now fulfilling his potential. Did well to get over a nightmare injury period.

NEIL WHITWORTH was one half of the inspired Alex Totten trade with Manchester United. Almost a cult figure with the Rugby Park faithful he is a tough centre half. Good on the ground as well in the air, opposing attackers have often come a cropper when up against him.

ALLY MITCHELL is full of energy and packs a mighty punch with his lethal shot. Usually plays wide on the right he covers the entire pitch with his tenacious attitude.

JOHN HENDRY really has come on to his



+ TODAY'S VISITORS +

Totten's lads are out to beat the drop



game since his move from Clydebank. One of these players who does most of his work on the edge of the box and is always around to feed off any scraps. Like most of the Killie side he enjoys being involved in the build-up.

COLIN MCKEE was the other half of the Manchester United deal but took a little longer to settle at Rugby Park than his pal Neil Whitworth. Is beginning to feel at home now and his proven goal scoring ability is something that will prove very useful as Kilmarnock battle to beat the drop.

ROBERT CONNOR was one of the most underrated midfielders in the country during his time at Aberdeen. He could prove to be Alex Totten's best buy this season as his experience is hard to find. A real general in the middle of the park he will compete for the entire 90 minutes.

STEVE MASKREY has a good deal of pace and can always be relied on to get his share of goals. Often runs beyond the back four looking for that all important long ball.

TOM BROWN made the big leap from junior football to the Premier Division in his stride although he has gone off the boil a little since bursting on to the scene last season. His incredible pace is always a threat and he can leave even the fastest defenders standing.

CRAIG NAPIER is a true utility man which every club needs if they are going to survive. Has played almost every position.

★ *Mark Skilling (above) has matured into one of the finest players on Kilmarnock's books and has learnt from the experienced players around him like Tom Black (below)*

+ Lowdown + Lowdown +

DRAGOJE LEKOVIC (Age 31)
Signed from Red Star Belgrade, 1994

GUS McPHERSON (Age 25)

Signed from Rangers, 1986

TOM BLACK (Age 30)

Signed from St Mirren, 1992

MARK REILLY (Age 25)

Signed from Motherwell, 1991

MARK SKILLING (Age 22)

Signed from Saltcoat Vics, 1991

NEIL WHITWORTH (Age 22)

Signed from Manchester Utd, 1994

ALLY MITCHELL (Age 26)

Signed from East Fife, 1991

JOHN HENDRY (Age 22)

Signed from Clydebank, 1994

COLIN MCKEE (Age 21)

Signed from Manchester Utd, 1994

ROBERT CONNOR (Age 34)

Signed from Aberdeen, 1994

STEVE MASKREY (Age 32)

Signed from St Johnstone, 1994

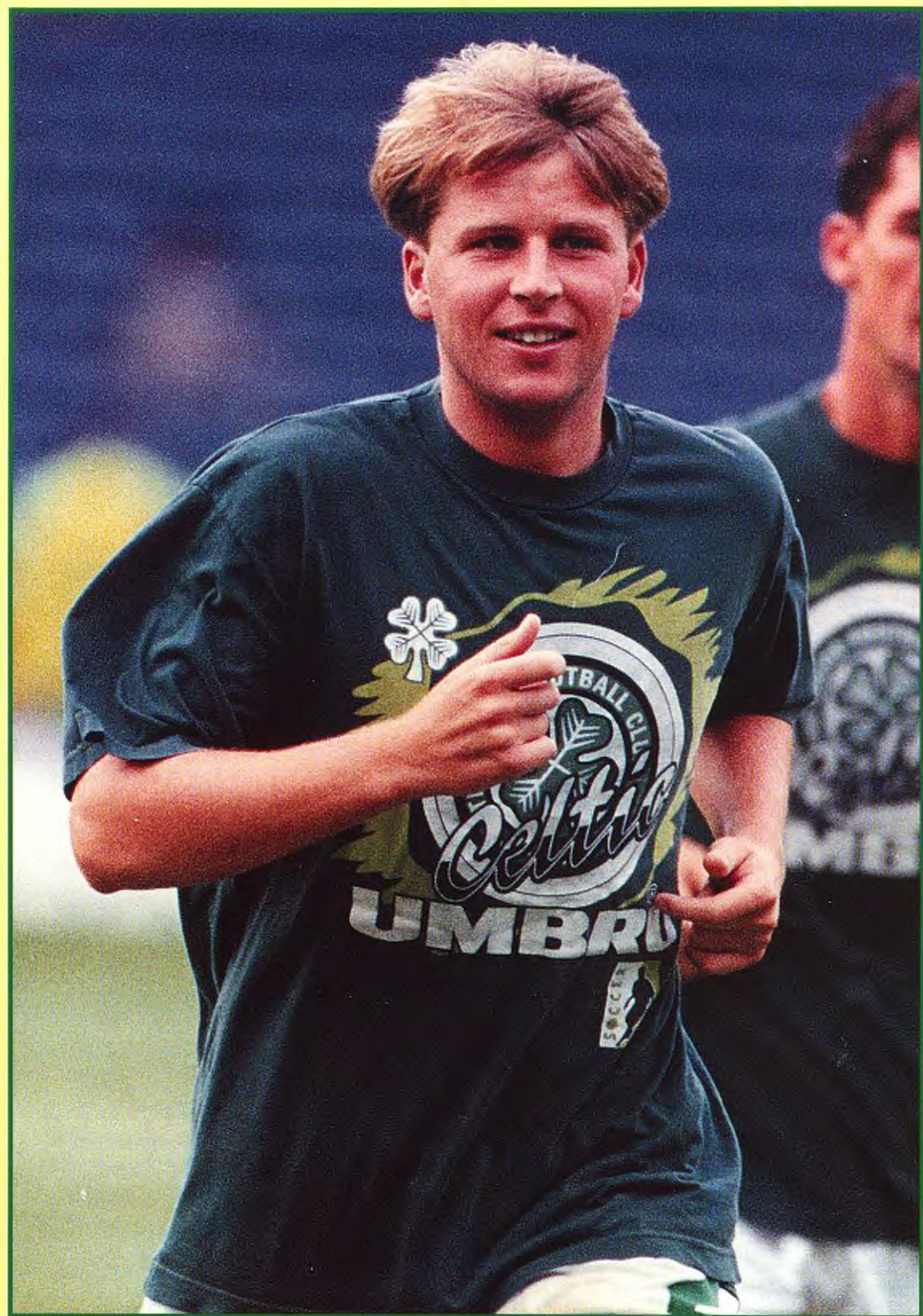
TOM BROWN (Age 26)

Signed from Glenafton, 1993

CRIAG NAPIER (Age 29)

Signed from Hamilton, 1994





Defender strives for perfection

The big INTERVIEW

MARK McNALLY

“ I've not played as well recently as I have in the past ... in my position I have to be consistent ”

IF Mark McNally was writing his own end of year report card it would read something like '...could do better'.

For the 23-year-old defender admits that during 1994 Celtic fans did not see the best of him.

Mark reckons his year was a very patchy one, with some good performances and some he would rather forget. But now he is hoping a new year can bring about a fresh start for him - and the team.

He is back in contention for a place after being out since before Christmas with a thigh strain, and is hoping he can return to the side and start turning in some impressive performances to help Celtic get back to their winning ways of old.

He said: "I've probably not played as well recently as I have in the past. I seem to have come onto a bit of form only in patches - and I know that isn't good enough for a defender. In my position you've got to be consistent.

"It's easier for the forwards and midfielders to get away with things, because if they make a mistake most of the time it's not going to lead to a goal for the other side, whereas that is usually what happens if it's a defender, and they will get crucified, be it a bad pass-back or a bad clearance.

"At the end of last season I felt I was doing alright, but at the beginning of this season I had a few shaky games and things haven't picked up a lot.

"I guess that is bound to happen at times though - it's not the first time and probably won't be the last, that is just the way it is in football. You can't perform perfectly all the time.

"A couple of games not performing as I can isn't going to ruin everything for me.

"The thing is, this season I really only think there has been one bad mistake and that was against Kilmarnock at Hampden back in August.

"I know it was a bad one and it's

Interview: MERLE BROWN

been publicised enough.

"I just have to forget it and get on with things."

Mark has been a regular in Celtic's first team since he was 19 and people may tend to forget that he is still only 23.

With Brian O'Neil beside him only 22, Celtic's central defence is one of the youngest in the country.

Experience

But the Celt is not about to use his lack of years as an excuse.

He said: "I'm old enough to know what people expect, and I should have enough experience, because I have played a lot of games."

Mark also feels however that his contract situation could be taking away from his play.

At the moment he's signing monthly deals and admits it is not the best situation to be in.

He said: "Being on month-to-month deals doesn't help. It's been that way all season, but I suppose I just have to live with it.

"I've tried to ignore all the press speculation about me going to this club or that, and I just have to see what happens. It's up to the manager in the end."

Mark has yet to pick up a winner's medal with Celtic, and still feels disappointed that his first appearance in a final for the club ended in a defeat back in October in the Coca-Cola Cup.

But he is sure that, with the help of the youngsters coming into the team at the moment, Celtic will get it right in the near future.

He said: "We really should have won the Coca-Cola Cup final, we all know that. It has to be the biggest disappointment I've had in football so far.

"But I'm sure there will be more chances to win medals in the future.

"There are a lot of good players making the step up to the first team now and that is encouraging.

"The lads that have come in like Brian McLaughlin, Simon Donnelly, Stuart Gray and Chris Hay have all done well.

"I know what it's like to come into the top team at that age, and you've got nothing to lose. When you're young you don't feel the pressure.

"I think it's only when you get a bit older that you realise what it all actually means.

"Everyone here wants to win something soon as we haven't done so for years.

"This season though, perhaps we'll have to settle for the Scottish Cup. The league isn't beyond us, but Rangers will be hard to catch.

"It's hard to put your finger on why we lost the form we showed in the first quarter of the term. Hopefully we can regain it soon.

"We've got the Scottish Cup to look forward to as well now though. The cup games are a one-off, and it would be nice to do the same in this competition as we did in the last, only go one step better by actually winning it."

