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THE DON



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IAN ROBERTSON

Matchday Magazine Price 50p

ABERDEEN v

CELTIC

Fine Fare League Premier Division
Saturday 14th March, 1987



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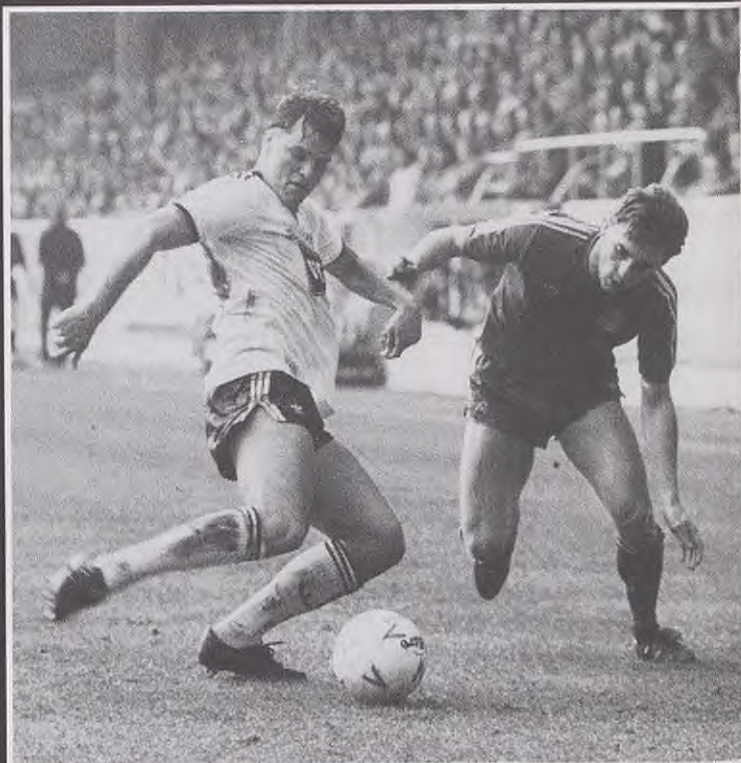
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FRONT COVER

... **JIM LEIGHTON**, undisputably the best Scottish goalkeeper of the 1980s and once again one of Dons' most consistent players of the season.



A disappointing result against Dundee United at Pittodrie but there were some encouraging individual moments. (Above) John Hewitt dispossesses John Clark. (right) Peter Weir rips between Kevin Gallagher and Eamonn Bannon. (Below) Weir takes on Bannon.



IAN PORTERFIELD

● To point out that the two teams who meet here today know a wee bit about each other would be the understatement of the season.

In the four months I have personally been at the club we have already played Celtic on five previous occasions. Taking the season as a whole this will be the EIGHTH meeting.

Interestingly I note that the first six games ended as draws so Celtic hold the balance only by that ill-fated Scottish Cup second replay at Dundee.

The lesson from that game was that, as I said at the time, they gave greater commitment and showed more desire than we did and it cost us dearly.

Consequently I need hardly point out the major requirement today which is to give one hundred per cent and then look for more if that were possible.

BETTER

It is maybe a shade superfluous also for me to add that the last three games have been a disappointment to us. I don't propose to give a full breakdown on all three but we were certainly looking for a better return than defeats by St. Mirren (away) Dundee United (home) and an away draw with Hibs.

I'm a great believer in taking each game as it comes and doing everything possible to win that game rather than looking ahead all of the



time and trying to work out what you have to do overall.

Consequently the fact is that although we have made things more difficult there is certainly no need to regard ourselves as out of the race.

In that spell of 10 days we basically gave away some silly goals by losses of concentration, we did not always show total commitment and we did not take the chances as they came our way. In addition it is fair to point out that we had very good goals scored against us.

There is no way we can be happy about a spell like that. It is uncharacteristic and it is not good enough for Aberdeen FC.

Of the three games the one which I found most disappointing was at St. Mirren. The goal we gave them ought to have been cleared and also we should have been capable of getting back into it.

In the case of Dundee United they have their tails up just now and, as we all know well enough, local derbies of this kind can always go either way. It was a remarkable goal which settled it in their favour so, had we done better at St. Mirren, we perhaps would not have felt so bad about it.

An added problem has been the loss of Stewart McKimmie because of the need for a cartilage operation.

Stewart has had problems with that knee for a while now but he has soldiered on because he was getting through the games OK and we did hope he could last out to have the operation in the close season.

WELL-BEING

Unhappily it was not to be. The most important consideration at all times must be the player's well-being and when he twisted his knee in training and it locked about 10 days ago we consulted a specialist immediately.

There was no way we would delay the operation after that. With modern surgery the recovery can be quicker than it used to be but we will not be rushing him. He will get himself back to complete fitness in whatever time scale is necessary.

Another recent development has been John Hewitt's decision that he wishes to leave the club. When he first told me he thought it was time he made a move. I asked him to reconsider or to put it in writing.

As we now know he then made his formal request and the directors and I decided that there is no point in trying to keep him if he feels it is a time to leave.

I have to say that it surprises me slightly because it is not long since he signed a new contract.

However, now for our latest huge challenge against Celtic. It is no good saying that it is 'our turn'. I have said before in this column you only get out of football what you put in.

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IAN PORTEOUS - a fine club man who gives a one hundred per cent performance either in helping the Reserves to challenge for the title or on his excursions into the Premier Division.

CLUBS CALL

Fochabers Branch Out

● It's great news to hear that the two-year-old Fochabers Branch is thriving and taking such a lively interest in AASC affairs.

A group of loyal Dons formed together to introduce the new club when it was felt they would be far better pooling resources than travelling to games independently in separate cars.

Secretary of the branch is *Robbie Sutherland* who can be contacted on 820202. The President is *Jim Brander*, treasurer *Ken Gauld* who is also a bus steward along with *Eric and Ally McLeod*.

"Anyone interested in hearing more about us should contact any of the above officials," they say.

Meetings are staged at the Grand Arms Hotel, first-class facilities which they are very pleased to enjoy.

One recent event staged by Fochaber was a 'Speed Pool' match which was won by *Graham Murray* with a time of 1 min 11 seconds, rattling all the necessary balls down with an overworked cue.

Fochaber would now like to throw down a pool challenge to take on all-comers (within reason!).

Among the members of the branch who have many years of loyal service to the Dons are the *McLeod brothers* who have been following the team ever since they started walking, a dedication that has taken them to many corners of the football map.

Gothenburg was, of course, their most



JOE MILLER

memorable trip.

Other branches have similar activities on the go and many members with tales to tell of their years behind the club. Let's be hearing from them.

Granite City Dinner

● **Joe Miller** visited the Granite City annual dinner dance at the Holburn Suite as guest of honour to collect his Young Player of the Year Award.

Joe was accompanied by another future star *Ian Robertson* who is constantly on the verge of a first-team future.

"A great success all round," chorus the members who will be looking for more events on the branch's social calendar.

Turriff Choose Bett

● **Scottish international Jim Bett** was Turriff's choice of Player of the Year and though Jim was unable to make that particular function in person he had a distinguished representatives.

It was in fact manager *Ian Porterfield* who accepted the award on his behalf. Other guests included *Brian Irvine*, *Peter Weir* and *Billy Stark* — so the Turriff turnout was quite outstanding.

"Starky does a mean birdie dance" was an item of intelligence which filtered out from that particular do. Sounds like a good night!

Thanks to secretary *Eileen Raffan* for keeping The Don posted on branch activities.

Turriff reached the final of the AASC quiz by beating Inverurie in the regional qualifier in Peterhead. Five clubs, comprising the hosts, the finalists, Fraserburgh and Alford, took part in the heats.

Peterhead FC player *Nat Causer* acted as questionmaster. Turriff eventually beat Inverurie narrowly to progress to the later stages of the competition (see Quiz Finalists).

Quiz Finalists

● The annual AASC quiz competition has been busily taking shape around the regions and there are now six finalists to contest the final stages at a date and venue to be arranged.

The Super Six: (Group I) The Wee County of Alloa, (Group II) Inverness (Group III) Portknockie (Group IV) Turriff (Group V) BP Pedeses (Group VI) Bucksburn.

Arrangements for the finals will be discussed at the Association meeting scheduled for Pittodrie on Monday night (March 16).

This provides all those who attend with the first official chance to meet Mr Porterfield and his recently appointed No2 *Jimmy Mullen*.

"All members will join with me in wishing Mr Mullen a long and successful career at Aberdeen FC," said AASC secretary *Isobel Fyfe*.

Fun Run

● Inverurie members have been involved recently in a fitness campaign which, (while not quite matching the routines of Pittodrie!) has got RID of some of the Xmas-New Year cobwebs.

Reason for the rush of exercise is the 'Dons Fun Run' which takes place on Sunday April 5. The distance is five miles (ten miles for some of the older members) and details are available from Secretary *Brian Rae*, 25 Allan Place, Inverurie.



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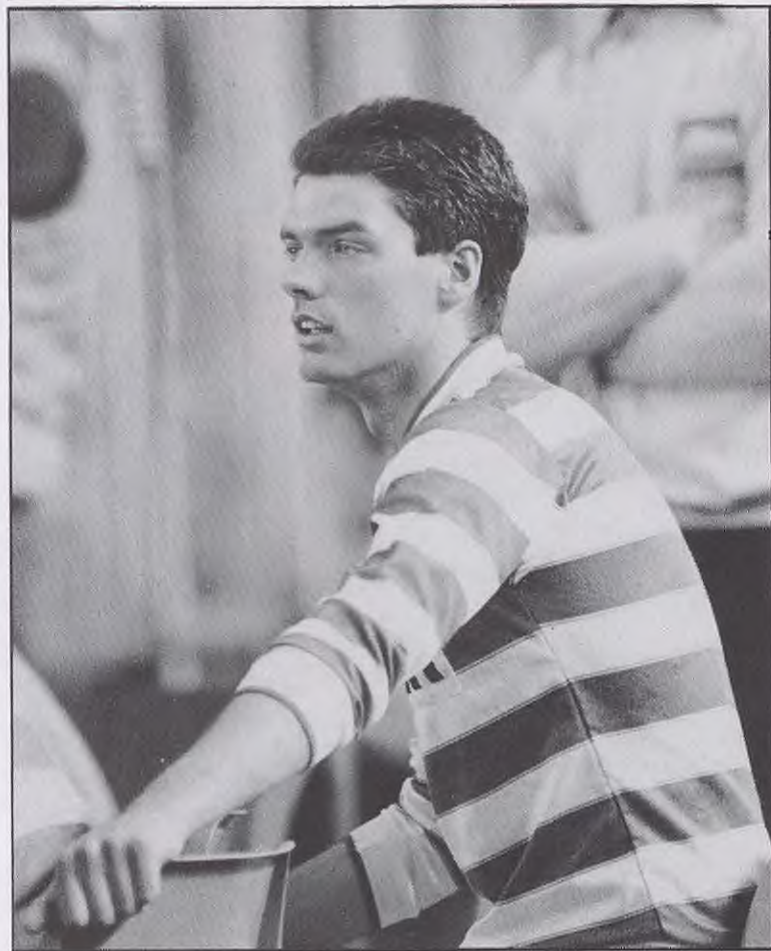
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CELTIC



PAUL McGUGAN

● Of all visitors to Pittodrie, Celtic definitely need less introduction than any. Apart from rarely being off television this season, today is their fourth visit of the term to Pittodrie.

In all the teams will have clashed a staggering eight times by 4.45 p.m. today. To say they know each other inside out is the understatement of the season. Especially as two of the cup-ties went to extra-time. In fact the Skol cup-tie was eventually settled on penalties.

There is hardly anything to choose between the sides. The previous three league encounters have finished tied at 1-1. Two of the Scottish cup-ties were drawn before Celtic finally squeezed through 1-0 at neutral Dens Park. And of course the Skol cup-tie at Pittodrie finished 1-1, after extra-time, before Celtic finally won through on penalties.

Despite eliminating Aberdeen from both cup competitions, Celtic are still searching for their first piece of silverware of the season. They lost in the Skol Cup Final to Rangers then went out of the Scottish Cup to Hearts.

That's why Davie Hay's men will be their usual formidable opponents this afternoon. The Premier League title chase is their last chance of glory. Same as Aberdeen.

So don't look for too many changes in the Celtic ranks this afternoon. Despite their cup disappointments.

The biggest controversy at Celtic Park just now centres around Scotland striker Mo Johnston. Celtic have offered what's been described as their best offer ever to a player to

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re-sign.

When Johnston held out beyond what the club feel is a reasonable time to make up his mind, he was sensationally put on the transfer list at a price of £800,000.

Under freedom of contract, Johnston will be free to move to a club of his own choice at the end of the season. And if a fee can't be agreed, it will be fixed by an independent tribunal.

If that happens, Celtic won't get anything like their asking price of £800,000. So any potential buyer is almost certain to hang fire until then leaving Celtic in a no win situation.

To date 23 year old Johnston has scored 24 goals this season. A fine performance in anyone's language. Yet his striking mate Brian McClair is ahead of him on the 30 mark.

That's an even better achievement when you consider Celtic have used McClair on numerous occasions in midfield this season.

What every way you look at things, Johnston and McClair form the most exciting partnership in Scotland. And it will be a tragedy if they are broken up. Not just for Celtic's sake. But for the good of Scottish football.

Because if Johnston doesn't remain at Parkhead, he'll definitely be lost to Scottish football. And that's something to be avoided at all costs.

While crowds are returning to our national game in encouraging numbers, they'll only continue as long as they are seeing quality players.

And lets be brutally honest. Our game isn't that good that it can afford to lose players like



PAT BONNER

Johnston.

What has pleased everyone at Parkhead this season has been the emergence of young defenders Anton Rogan and Derek Whyte.

Manager Davie Hay tried to strengthen his defence earlier this season. When he wasn't successful in the transfer market the 18 year old Whyte was moved from left-back to centre-half and 20 year old Rogan introduced at left-back.

Whyte is a player of endless potential. He is just under six foot tall and all going well will be at the heart of Celtic's defence for years to come.

Rogan, snapped up cheaply from Distillery in Northern Ireland, has slotted in perfectly at left back. Like Whyte, he's outstanding in the air and very quick on the ground.

Even if Celtic end up without any honours to show this season, the mere fact these two have broken through and become completely established must make it a successful season for Celtic.

BACKTRACK

A glance at Aberdeen v Celtic clashes in the past 5 Premier League seasons.

1981-82	
Aberdeen 1 (Strachan)	Celtic 3 (Burns, McGarvey(2))
Celtic 2 (McGarvey, McCluskey)	Aberdeen 1 (Strachan)
Aberdeen 1 (McMasters)	Celtic 3 (McCluskey, MacLeod, McStay)
Celtic 0	Aberdeen 1 (Kennedy)

1982-83	
Celtic 1 (Nichols)	Aberdeen 3 (Strachan, Simpson, McCrene)
Aberdeen 1 (McCrene)	Celtic 2 (McLeod, Provan)
Celtic 1 (Nichols)	Aberdeen 3 Back (3)
Aberdeen 1 (McCrene)	Celtic 0

1983-84	
Aberdeen 3 (Howitt, McLeish, Strachan)	Celtic 1 (Aitken)
Celtic 0	Aberdeen 0
Aberdeen 1 (Howitt)	Celtic 0
Celtic 1 (McLellan)	Aberdeen 0

1984-85	
Celtic 2	Aberdeen 1 (McDougall)
Aberdeen 4 (Black(2), McKinnon, McDougall)	Celtic 2 (Johnston, McGarvey)
Celtic 2 (Johnston, McStay)	Aberdeen 0
Aberdeen 1 (Miller)	Celtic 1 (Aitken)

1985-86	
Celtic 2 (McClair)	Aberdeen 1 (McDougall)
Aberdeen 4 (McDougall(4))	Celtic 1 (Provan)
Celtic 1 (Grant)	Aberdeen 1 (Miller)
Aberdeen 0	Celtic 1 (Johnston)

Aberdeen's Premier League record v Celtic is as follows:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
47	18	14	15	70	58	50

Aberdeen's All-time League record v Celtic is as follows:

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
189	51	39	79	214	294	—

THE DON

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Ian Porteous (No. 14) gives the Victory salute but frustration was the name of the game this time. The Dundee United defence is in a panic as the ball bounces off their crossbar.

MEMORY MATCH

By
JIM RICKABY

● **The recent meeting of Aberdeen and Celtic in their Scottish Cup 3rd Round 2nd Replay will not invoke many pleasant memories for Dons fans but the trip to Dens park on Scottish duty certainly brought back pleasant thoughts of previous visits to Dundee's home ground.**

Some of you older fans can no doubt recall the Dons 1-0 triumph over Dundee Utd in a 1967 Scottish Cup Semi-Final that won Aberdeen the right to face Celtic in the Final at Hampden.

More recently the Dons met St. Mirren in a Semi-Final replay at the Dundee stadium and what a game that turned out to be.

The first tie at Celtic Park had been a fairly scrappy affair that was largely decided by two controversial refereeing decisions that led to a goal for each side.

The replay went ahead on April 7th at Dens Park and it turned out to be a real old fashioned affair with both sides having to do battle with inclement weather. The rain played its part in keeping the game in the balance until the final whistle sounded.

Just under 16,000 fans braved torrential rain to see their heroes do battle for a Cup Final place.

The teams lined up as follows:

Aberdeen: Leighton, Rougvie, McMaster, Cooper, McLeish, Miller, Strachan, Simpson, McGhee, Hewitt, Weir.

St. Mirren: Thomson, Beckett, McCormack, Richardson, Fulton, Coplaw, McDougall, Stark, Somner, McAvennie, Scanlon.

Pools of water were dotted about the pitch as play got under way and from the outset it became obvious that long ground passing in the centre of the park was not going to pay dividends.

Aberdeen were first on the attack and Peter Weir put Billy Thomson under early pressure with a testing cross that the tall keeper did well to deal with.

Lex Richardson was spoken too for a wild sliding tackle on Weir.

With 6 minutes on the clock the Dons went ahead for the first time in the tie. Neale Cooper and Gordon Strachan combined for the latter to slip the ball to Mark McGhee in full flight. The powerful striker rode two tackles before firing an angular left shot at goal. Thomson dived to cover the shot but the slippery ball slithered through his grasp and rolled into the net.

St. Mirren appeared to be rattled by that early setback and Aberdeen kept up the pressure in a bid to increase their lead. Peter Weir came close to scoring a 2nd when he guided a header just wide of the mark.

With 14 minutes gone a misunderstanding between Leighton and Miller saw the two collide in the mud and Frank McAvennie was left with the simple task of poking home St. Mirren's equaliser.

With St. Mirren threatening to take control, Gordon Strachan stepped in to prompt the Dons on to greater things. With 31 minutes gone Peter Weir slipped past two defenders before testing Thomson with a grounder. 4 minutes later the Dons went ahead again when John Hewitt laid the ball into the path of Neil Simpson who crashed the ball home from 20 yards out. Aberdeen pressed hard for a 3rd goal before the break but St. Mirren held firm.

Gordon Strachan continued to cause all sorts of problems for the "Buddies" rearguard in the 2nd half and St. Mirren increasingly relied on desperate measures to stop the "wee man".

10 minutes into the 2nd half the game took another twist when Aberdeen were denied a penalty claim when Hewitt went down in the box. St. Mirren swept upfield and after a bit of a scramble Doug Somner found himself in front of goal six yards out with the ball at his feet. The big striker needed no second chance and St. Mirren were level.

With a Cup Final place at stake, play surged from end to end with both sides coming close to taking the lead. John McCormack headed off his own goal line and then Willie Miller blocked a McAvennie shot with Jim Leighton out of his goal. With 17 minutes to go Mark McGhee sent the ball over the bar after carving an opening with John Hewitt but within a minute Aberdeen grabbed a third goal. Doug Rougvie slung over a cross and Peter Weir hit the ball first time as it came over. Billy Thomson lay with his head in his hands as the ball slipped through him once again to make it Aberdeen 3 St. Mirren 2.



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