



# Heart of Midlothian

**V**  
**CELTIC**

Tynecastle Stadium  
4th February 2001  
Kick-off 6.05pm







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## **Heart of Midlothian plc** Tynecastle Stadium, Gorgie Road, Edinburgh EH11 2NL

Telephone +44 (0) 131 200 7200

Facsimile +44 (0) 131 200 7222

Website [www.heartsfc.co.uk](http://www.heartsfc.co.uk)

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# Craig Levein

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Our aim for the remainder of the season must be to end up in as high a position in the final League table as possible. That is why it was so important for us to have secured all three points against St. Mirren last Wednesday. In certain games in order to get points we will have to battle it out. Games against teams who are placed lower in the Division than ourselves are always going to be difficult and can at times be extremely frustrating for both players and supporters alike. The opposition are looking for points to secure their very existence in the top division and we have our own reasons for ending up certainly within the top six and as high a place as possible to give us a chance of European competition.

I thought without doubt that we deserved to win the game against the Saints. During the first 45 minutes we played well but just failed to hit the target. Indeed I cannot recollect during this period Antti Niemi having to make one save. At half time I emphasised to the players that they must continue to be patient and to keep plugging away and creating chances. In effect that is exactly what they did, until we got the goal from the penalty spot. It was only after taking the lead that St. Mirren threatened, with Antti making one great save. But it would have been an injustice had we not ended up taking all three points at the end of 90 minutes.

Tonight's opponents, Celtic, present us with an even sterner challenge. They are a class outfit and their performances over the season fully justify their position at the top of the League. They have some very good players, all with varying degrees of qualities and we





will have our work cut out tonight if we are to get anything at all out of this game. As a player I used to always look forward to playing against a member of the Old Firm, especially here at Tynecastle. I have many fond memories of some of these games but I can always remember arriving with an extra bounce in my step. You knew that over the 90 minutes you were going to be in a game! It should be no different for the players in our squad today. They should be up for the challenge and relish the prospect of playing against players of the stature that Celtic have in their squad.



Tonight's game is being shown live on Sky Television to not only a nationwide audience but to many other parts of the globe. This is another chance for both players and supporters to demonstrate the unique atmosphere at Tynecastle.

Enjoy the game.



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# Captains Corner

## Colin Cameron

It was good to get the three points against St. Mirren on Wednesday night. At the end of the day, the victory was more important rather than the final result and even more so when you consider the results elsewhere on the evening.

I thought we fully deserved our victory over the ninety minutes and we should have won by more than the final score-line. During the first 45 minutes we made numerous chances but the final effort either just slipped past a post or was saved by the St. Mirren goalkeeper. Again this pattern of play continued in the second period where we continued to dominate but failed to find that elusive strike in front of goal. As for the penalty, dubious, controversial or not – it was not going to stop me picking up the ball, placing it on the spot and dispatching it home for our one and only goal.

You also have to remember that St. Mirren came here with a purpose and by defending in depth they were making it very difficult for us to break them down.

We also had a couple of new players in our squad, with both Steven Boyack and Kieran McAnespie making their debuts at Tynecastle. Once they are both match fit they will make a valuable contribution to our squad.

Tonight's visitors to Tynecastle are Celtic who, prior to the winter break, were undoubtedly the team in top form. They have so many quality players in every department that you can understand why they are a good side and now Martin O'Neill has added the organisation that was missing from their teams in previous seasons. In encounters against Celtic this season we have ended up losing on the three occasions. However, the last game here at Tynecastle in the CIS League Cup Quarter Final was a classic where the game flowed from end to end, at least over the full 90 minutes. You may recollect that it was only in extra time that this game was finally lost but if we can repeat that same kind of performance tonight, then we have a good chance of taking something out of this game.

Please give the team your vocal backing. It is worth an extra man, believe me! This could make all the difference to the final result tonight.

Enjoy the game.

