



Celtic

Programme No. 13

v Hibernian



Scottish Premierleague
Celtic Park, Saturday Dec 4, 2004
Kick-off 3pm

£2



Celtic 





*Carling are proud to be
supporters of Celtic F.C.*

LOVEFOOTBALL

A WARM welcome to Celtic Park for today's game against Hibernian. It comes at the end of a week when we haven't had a midweek match, a rare occurrence so far this season.

It has given the players the opportunity for a few days' rest, which is so important in an otherwise hectic schedule.

Our game last Sunday against Dundee, coming just after our magnificent result in the Nou Camp against Barcelona, saw us draw 2-2. It also means that we are no longer top of the league, the first time this has been the case in over a year, a fact that speaks volumes for the consistency our players have shown over a long period of time.

However, there is still a long way to go and the only thing guaranteed is that points will be dropped by all teams in the league in the remainder of the campaign.

I have already said that a good indicator of how the league campaign is going is to look at it once we have played every team twice, and we won't have reached that point until we have played Aberdeen in January next year.

There are many important games before then, starting with this afternoon's match against Hibernian.

Having finished in the bottom six last season, they have enjoyed an impressive start to this season and all credit to Tony Mowbray for the job he and his staff are doing.

We know only too well that today will be a tough game. The first points we dropped in this league campaign were against Hibernian at Easter Road and it was an extremely hard-fought affair



indeed. There is absolutely no doubt that this will be a difficult game to win.

However, even though there is a big game on Tuesday evening, which could distract people's attention from SPL games, I have a strong feeling the supporters will be right behind the team today.

'We have no intention of giving up the Championship meekly and everyone connected with the club is ready for the challenges ahead. I hope it starts today'

We have no intention of giving up the Championship meekly and despite recent league setbacks, everyone connected with the club is ready for the challenges ahead. I hope it starts today.

There were a number of positive points about the Dens Park game. I thought that Stephen Pearson

played particularly well for lengthy periods of the match.

He gained much confidence from getting into the game early on, and he drove forward with the ball as often as he could.

Naturally, he got tired towards the end but, all things considered, he should be quite pleased with his contribution.

Aiden McGeady's run for the second goal was simply terrific and he continues his excellent development. He is learning all the time and his contributions are becoming even more valuable as the season progresses.

Good news also arrived this week with the return of Shaun Maloney. He played and scored in the reserve game on Tuesday afternoon and did very well indeed.

It shouldn't take him too long now, maybe a couple more games, before he puts himself right back into contention. Anyway, it's good to have him back in the fold.

The tremendous result against Barcelona has put our future participation in European competition in our own hands. We know that if we beat AC Milan then we will qualify for the UEFA Cup, regardless of how Shakhtar Donetsk fare against Barcelona.

However, that task on Tuesday night will be an extremely tough one. Our only focus at the minute is on this afternoon's SPL match with Hibernian and the requirement of a victory.



Formed: 1888
Stadium: Celtic Park (capacity 60,506)
Home strip: Green/white hooped shirts, white shorts, white socks
Away strip: Green shirts, white shorts and green socks
Third strip: Black shirts, black shorts and socks with gold trim
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 (39)
 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, 2003/2004
Scottish Cup (32)
 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, 2004
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 plc DIRECTORS Brian Quinn, Peter Lawwell, Eric Riley, Dermot Desmond, Tom Allison, Eric Hagman
CFAC DIRECTORS Peter Lawwell, Eric Riley, John Keane, Michael McDonald, Kevin Sweeney
MANAGER Martin O'Neill
ASSISTANT MANAGER John Robertson

COACH Steve Walford
HEAD OF YOUTH Tommy Burns
YOUTH TEAM COACH Willie McStay
UNDER-21 COACH Kenny McDowall
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS Tim Williamson & Gavin McCarthy
CLUB DOCTOR Roddy Macdonald
KIT CONTROLLER John Clark

Celtic Football Club, Celtic Park, Glasgow G40 3RE 0845 671 1888

CELTIC **HIBERNIAN**

Momo Sylla	3	1	Simon Brown
Jackie McNamara	4	2	Gary Smith
Joos Valgaeren	5	3	David Murphy
Bobo Balde	6	4	Gary Caldwell
Juninho	7	5	Colin Murdock
Alan Thompson	8	6	Ian Murray
Chris Sutton	9	9	Garry O'Connor
John Hartson	10	10	Derek Riordan
Stephen Pearson	11	11	Stephen Glass
David Fernandez	12	12	Kevin Nicol
Paul Lambert	14	13	Daniel Andersson
Ulrik Laursen	16	14	Guillaume Beuzelin
Didier Agathe	17	15	Steven Whittaker
Neil Lennon	18	17	Stephen Dobbie
Stilian Petrov	19	18	Scott Brown
Robert Douglas	20	19	Kevin Thomson
Magnus Hedman	21	20	Sam Morrow
David Marshall	22	21	Jonathon Baillie
Stanislav Varga	23	22	Dean Shiels
Henri Camara	27	23	Alen Orman
Shaun Maloney	29	24	Jay Shields
Ross Wallace	33	25	Kevin McDonald
Craig Beattie	37	30	Alistair Brown
Rocco Quinn	38		
John Kennedy	41		
Stephen McManus	44		
Kevin McBride	45		
Aiden McGeady	46		
Michael McGovern	47		
Scott Cuthbert	49		

<p>TODAY'S OFFICIALS</p> <p>Referee: IAIN BRINES Assistant Referees: ANDY DAVIS MARK DOYLE CHRIS BOYLE</p> <p>Fourth Official: CHRIS BOYLE</p>	<p>RECENT FORM</p> <p>Scottish Premier League, Nov 28, 2004 DUNDEE 2 v 2 CELTIC (Camara, Hartson)</p> <p>UEFA Champions League, Nov 24, 2004 BARCELONA 1 v 1 CELTIC (Hartson)</p> <p>Scottish Premier League, Nov 20, 2004 RANGERS 2 v 0 CELTIC</p> <p>Scottish Premier League, Oct 24, 2004 CELTIC 3 v 0 INVERNESS CT (Sutton, Hartson 2)</p> <p>CIS Cup, Nov 10, 2004 RANGERS 2 v 1 CELTIC (ACT) (Hartson)</p>	<p>FORTHCOMING FIXTURES</p> <p>UEFA Champions League CELTIC v AC MILAN WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER 7.45pm</p> <p>Scottish Premier League DUNFERMLINE v CELTIC SUNDAY 12 DECEMBER 2pm</p> <p>Scottish Premier League CELTIC v DUNDEE UTD SATURDAY 18 DECEMBER 3pm</p> <p>Scottish Premier League HEARTS v CELTIC SUNDAY 26 DECEMBER 3pm</p>
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ULRIK'S VISION OF THE FUTURE

Interview: STEPHEN SULLIVAN

IT'S now two years and four months since Ulrik Laursen swapped one green and white jersey for another by ditching Scotland's East Coast for Glasgow's East End, and the change in the Hibernian team during that time has been nothing short of remarkable.

A look back to his final match for the Hibs – a 4-1 defeat to Rangers which saw him stretched off – shows Ian Murray and Gary Smith to be the only players still plying their trade at Easter Road, with the likes of Ulyses de la Cruz, Derek Townsley and Francesco Luna now little more than distant memories.

The same, too, could be said of the Edinburgh club's then manager, Frank Sauzee, though at Ibrox that bleak, rainy night, the soon-to-be-sacked Frenchman did leave some hope for his team's demoralised supporters by way of his two substitutes.

One went by the name of Garry O'Connor, the other Derek Riordan, and both, it's fair to suggest, have done rather well in the time since.

"I MUST SAY, I'M REALLY DELIGHTED FOR THEIR PLAYERS AND MANAGEMENT BECAUSE HIBS' SUCCESS THIS SEASON IS DUE ENTIRELY TO THEM"

It's changed days at Hibs since Ulrik Laursen left, but the defender had already glimpsed the promise of the capital club's young stars

Certainly, Laursen – having surveyed the pair's rise to prominence – had nothing but praise for the talented young duo, and he reserved special praise for Riordan, a player whose spectacular ascent has left him not only delighted, but surprised.

"I remember most of the young lads who're playing well for Hibs at the moment," said the Dane. "Guys

like O'Connor and Murray were already establishing themselves by the time I left and I expected them to do well anyway.

"But Riordan has maybe been the big surprise because he was just coming through at the time and, to be honest, I worried that he might be a bit too skinny to really make it.

"He always had plenty of skill,

though, and he's a beautiful striker of a ball as everyone can see. And he's learning all the time. The credit for how well he has developed must go to Tony Mowbray and to the lad himself, and it says something for how far he's come that he'll be one of the main dangers to us today."

It was, of course, during the reign of Bobby Williamson that Riordan first began to shine, but Laursen's praise of Mowbray would appear not to be entirely out of place. The

current Hibs boss and former Hoops favourite has, after all, and as Laursen points out, succeeded in harnessing the talents of the likes of Riordan, O'Connor and Steven Whittaker to transform the Easter Road club from a team that flirted occasionally with relegation last season into genuine contenders for a European place.

Laursen said: "I must say, I'm





ON THE BALL:
Ulrik Laursen in
action for Celtic



DEFENCE MOTION:
Stan Varga and Bobo
Balde have been
difficult to displace
while, right, Ulrik
Laursen at Hibs



really delighted for their players and management because Hibs' success this season is due entirely to them. Tony Mowbray had a tough job there and not much of a budget to work with, but he's put his faith in the young players and given them a bit of belief in themselves.

"Consistency's obviously still a bit of a problem. I've seen that, sometimes, they've gone away and won by a few goals and then come back and played badly at home the following week. But I think that's

always going to happen with a young squad.

"It's been the same against us. Either they've given us a really hard game or they've been beaten by three or four goals – there's been no in-between. It's a dangerous game for us in that respect and I'm sure the gaffer will be happy with any result that gets us the three points.

"Hibs will feel this is a good time to play us and they'll have a go because they'll maybe see us as

being vulnerable. But we have to show that we're hurting from what's happened over the past month, and I'm sure we'll do that."

Laursen's belief in Celtic's status as Scotland's premier team certainly remains utterly unshaken by recent disappointments, though he admits that the only way for the Bhoys to re-affirm their domestic superiority is to return to winning ways, and fast.

He said: "Man-for-man, we should definitely win the league. But you always know that it's out on the park that you win titles – not on the teamsheet – and we have to give credit to Rangers because that's twice they've beaten us now.

"HIBS WILL FEEL THIS IS A GOOD TIME TO PLAY US... BUT WE HAVE TO SHOW WE'RE HURTING FROM WHAT'S HAPPENED IN THE PAST MONTH"

"There's no point in us talking forever about how we're better than them. We have to go out and prove it, and I'm sure that's just what we'll do."

What part Laursen has to play in the remainder of Celtic's title defence, meanwhile, remains to be seen. To date, the likeable big Dane has made just five league appearances this season – all of which have been from the substitutes' bench – with his only start coming in the 8-1 crushing of Falkirk in the CIS League Cup.

Yet, while it would be no surprise if this was a source of some bitterness – particularly as it's been well documented that the likes of Stan Varga and Bobo Balde

have been pressed into action while not fully fit – Laursen insists he views it instead as a challenge to make it more difficult for Martin O'Neill to leave him out.

He said: "There haven't been many bad spells in the defence over the past few years, but we've been a bit unlucky in that respect recently, and I think that's mainly down to the fact that the boys have been stretched to their limit.

"It's hard because we still have quite a big squad and it's not always fair to expect people to come in and be at their best right from the start. But that's life at a club like Celtic and, if you want to play here, you have to accept the demands and expectations.

"Obviously some of the boys haven't been at 100 per cent and the manager has admitted that. But, rather than getting frustrated at that, I just view it that he obviously can't think I'm fit enough. I have to take it as a challenge and it's now time for me to start moving things forward.

"At the start of the season, after all the problems I had last year, I was happy just to be part of the team again and involved in a few matches.

"But I haven't started a league game in goodness knows how long, and that's my target. And, if the gaffer doesn't see me as fit enough or good enough for the first-team, I know I'll just need to work harder."