

OFFICIAL PRE-SEASON SOUVENIR

ONLY
£1

Celtic



DEN BOSCH

Wednesday July 1, 2015



DUKLA PRAGUE

Saturday July 4, 2015



REAL SOCIEDAD

Friday July 10, 2015



HOOPS ENJOY HOME COMFORTS AS PRE-SEASON KICKS OFF

THE Celtic squad reported back for pre-season training on June 23, and this year the preparations for the new campaign are taking place at the club's Lennoxtown Training Centre.

The first competitive fixture will be the UEFA Champions League second qualifying round tie against Icelandic champions, FC Stjarnan.

And the three pre-season games at St Mirren Park – against Den Bosch, Dukla Prague and Real Sociedad – will give the players vital game-time ahead of the Euro clash.

Ronny Deila is pleased to be staying at home for

pre-season and hopes it will prove beneficial to the squad for the season ahead.

"It's important as everything for me is energy," said the Celtic manager. "Everybody knows that if you take a plane every second day in a long period you get tired and don't train as well as you can in the one place.

"We have a short time to the Champions League and it's important to use every minute in a place where we know everything like here in Glasgow. It's also a good chance for our supporters to see us in pre-season and playing good games and see international opponents as well. It's a win-win situation."







YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE TEAM IS ONE OF CELTIC'S BIGGEST STRENGTHS

IT'S only been a few weeks since we celebrated winning the league title with a trophy day celebration at Celtic Park, but already we're preparing for the new campaign with three pre-season matches here at St Mirren Park.

I'm delighted to be playing here in front of our own supporters, and I'd like to thank St Mirren for making their stadium available to us for these games.

Our first challenge will be the forthcoming UEFA Champions League qualifier against FC Stjarnan from Iceland, and



“ I HOPE YOU ALL ENJOY THE EXPERIENCE OF CELTIC PLAYING 'HOME' GAMES AT ST MIRREN PARK ”

these three fixtures – against Den Bosch, Dukla Prague and Real Sociedad – will provide some much-needed and valuable match action for the players.

We're determined to do everything we can to reach the group stages of the competition, and that means being focused and prepared for every opponent.

This year, our pre-season preparations have been at home, using the excellent facilities at Lennoxton. It has cut down on the travelling being done by the players, which can be very tiring. Hopefully, we'll see the benefits of

that in a couple of weeks' time when we play FC Stjarnan.

The squad has been training well, and they're now looking forward to some game-time, and it will be a good opportunity for our fans to come along here to St Mirren Park to see the team in action.

Our three opponents in these pre-season fixtures will test us in different ways, and while we always want to win every game we compete in, the matches will also be a good platform for us to see how the players are performing and how we are developing before

the competitive action begins. I hope you enjoy the experience of Celtic playing 'home' games at St Mirren Park.

It's a stadium we've always enjoyed playing at in the past when we've faced St Mirren, and I'm sure the players will relish this opportunity of playing pre-season matches here in Scotland.

Thanks, as always, for your support for the team. It is one of Celtic's greatest strengths and I know it will be vital for us again throughout the season ahead as we look to build on the success we enjoyed last season.

Enjoy the games.

Den Bosch



HISTORY

Den Bosch were founded in 1965 and are the successors of two previous clubs – BVV (1906) and Wilhelmina (1890). The club, known as the Blue and White Dragons, have played their football between the top two tiers in Holland over its 50-year history. Their most recent success was the Eerste Divisie title win in 2004, which saw the team promoted to the Eredivisie before being relegated after one season. Den Bosch attract a passionate support to every home and away game with their main supporters' group known as the M-Side. Former Manchester United and Real Madrid star Ruud van Nistelrooy started his professional career at the club.

LAST SEASON

Den Bosch finished the 2014/15 season in 16th place in the 20-team Eerste Divisie but recently hired a new coach, Rene van Eck, in a bid to turn around their fortunes.

Van Eck played for Den Bosch between 1986 and 1990 and was most recently working with German side Alemannia Aachen as a coach between 2012 and 2013.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Celtic and Den Bosch are meeting for the first time at St Mirren Park in this pre-season friendly. Celtic have faced Dutch opposition on seven previous occasions in European football – four times against Ajax and once each against Feyenoord, Utrecht and Go Ahead Deventer. In 13 matches, which included the 1970 European Cup final, Celtic have won seven games and lost five, while they also drew on one occasion.

STAR PLAYER

One of the most notable figures in Den Bosch's current first team is their Irish-Dutch midfielder Barry Maguire, who was born in Holland but played for Ireland up until

Factfile

Founded: 1965
Stadium: De Vliert
Capacity: 9,000
Nickname: Blue & White Dragons
Manager: Rene van Eck
Honours:
Eredivisie: 1948 (as BVV)

Under-16 level. Maguire started his career at Den Bosch in 2006 but moved to FC Utrecht in 2008. He scored Utrecht's fourth goal in their 4-0 home win over Celtic in the UEFA Europa League play-off in 2010 and later returned to his first club in 2013. Maguire is a versatile player with experience of playing in defence as well as midfield but he is also a potent attacker, with six goals to his name last season from a deep-lying midfield role.



Dukla Prague



HISTORY

One of the most famous names in Czech football, Dukla were founded in 1948 as part of a multi-sport organisation run by the Czechoslovak army. The club grew in stature in the 1950s, taking their first of 11 league titles in 1953 and adding two more championships before the end of the decade. Greater glories were just around the corner. Inspired by the likes of 1962 European Footballer of the Year, Josef Masopust, Dukla dominated the domestic scene in the early 1960s, winning four-in-a-row between 1961 and 1964 and emerging as a force in the fledgling continental competitions.

The closest they came to success on this stage was in 1967, when Celtic defeated them in the European Cup semi-final on their way to becoming legends in Lisbon. This marked the end of Dukla's golden era, but they continued to challenge for major honours until their fortunes declined at the start of the 1990s with the dissolution

of Czechoslovakia. After a spell in the lower leagues, Dukla – now independent of the army – has established itself back in the Czech top flight.

LAST SEASON

It was another consistent league campaign for Dukla as they achieved a sixth-place finish in the Czech Liga, missing out on qualification to the UEFA Europa League by five points. It was the third time in four years that the club had finished in this position, having won promotion to the top flight under current head coach Lubos Kozel in 2011. There would be disappointment in the Czech cup, however. After reaching the quarter-finals in the previous season, Dukla exited the competition at the second round stage, losing 3-1 to third-tier side TJ Jiskra Domazlice.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Dukla Prague may only have met Celtic once competitively but they

are recognisable name for all Hoops supporters, for it was Czech side who Jock Stein's side put to the sword in the last four of the memorable 1967 European Cup campaign. A brace from Willie Wallace and a Jimmy Johnstone goal gave Celtic an imposing 3-1 lead in the first-leg at Celtic Park. In the return match in Prague, the Hoops defended resolutely and the game ended in a goalless draw. There would be a similar outcome when the sides met 12 months ago in a pre-season friendly in Austria, with the match ending in a 0-0 stalemate.

STAR PLAYER

Striker Jean-David Beauguel topped the scoring charts for Dukla last season, netting eight goals in 21 starts in his first season in Czech football, and the 23-year-old will be aiming for further success over the next 12 months. The Frenchman previously starred for Dutch side RKC Waalwijk, Esperance Tunis and Toulouse.



Factfile

Founded: 1948
Stadium: Stadion Juliska
Capacity: 8150
Nickname: Dukla
Manager: Lubos Kozel

Real Sociedad



Factfile

Founded: 1909
Stadium: Anoeta
Capacity: 32,200
Nickname: La Real, Txuriurdin
Manager: David Moyes
Honours:
La Liga: 1980/81, 1981/82
Copa del Rey: 1909, 1987
Supercopa de Espana: 1982

HISTORY

Real Sociedad started life by competing in the Spanish cups under a string of different monikers in the early 20th century before they received Royal Patronage from King Alfonso XIII and became founding members of La Liga in 1928. The club underwent another name change in 1931, switching to Donostia Club de Futbol but changed back to Real Sociedad after the Spanish Civil War in 1939. The Basque side have played most of their football between the First and Second Divisions in Spain but enjoyed a period of sustained success in the 1980s when it recorded back to back La Liga title wins from 1980/81 to 1981/82 and reached the semi-finals of the 1982/83 European Cup after defeating Celtic in the second round over two legs. And 1987 also saw La Real win the Copa del Rey by beating Atletico Madrid 4-2 on

penalties. More recent times have seen the club finish runners up in La Liga in 2003 and bring through modern talents such as Xabi Alonso.

LAST SEASON

Real Sociedad finished 12th in last season's La Liga, a dip in form from their 2013/14 finish of seventh place, but marked an improvement from their mid-season standings. Former Celtic defender David Moyes took over as manager in November 2014 with the team lying in 15th place and he has faced a testing first season in charge. However, he found success not long after when he steered Sociedad to a historic 1-0 victory over Barcelona in January 2015 and subsequently helped the club finish in mid-table.

PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Celtic faced Real Sociedad in the second round of the 1982/83 European Cup, having knocked out

Ajax in the previous round. The Hoops lost the first leg 2-0 away, and when the Basque side took the lead in the return leg at Celtic Park, it proved too big a hurdle to overcome, although two Murdo MacLeod goals gave Celtic a 2-1 win on the night.



STAR PLAYER

Mexican striker Carlos Vela is the main attacking threat for Real Sociedad and a household name in world football. The 26-year-old hit-man bagged nine goals in 29 games last season as well as providing a string of assists for his team-mates and is tipped to star for his country at this summer's Gold Cup.