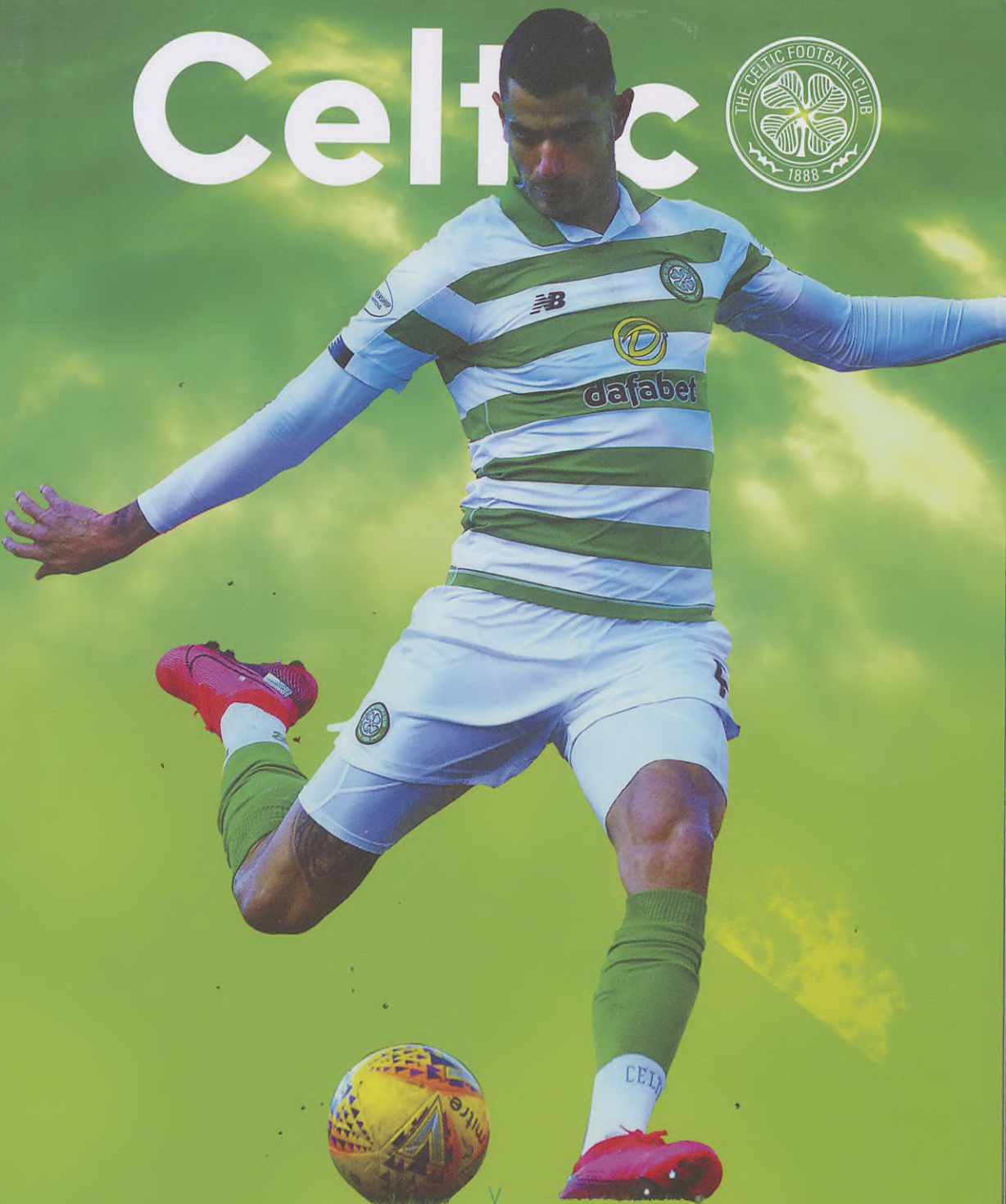


Celtic



KILMARNOCK

SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP

23/02/2020 • CELTIC PARK • KO 3PM





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SOCIAL MISSION STATEMENT

Introduction

Celtic Football Club is legendary and as with most legends as much myth as fact surrounds its history and what the Club stands for today. The Social Mission Statement aims to simply define what the Club stands for and seeks to promote within society.

History

Celtic Football Club was founded in 1888. Its principal founder was a Marist Brother named Walfrid. The Club had two principal aims: The first aim was to raise funds to provide food for the poor of the East End of Glasgow, an area of the City that was greatly impoverished and had a high rate of infant mortality. Within the East End was a large Irish community and friction was growing between the native Glaswegians and the new influx of Irish. Brother Walfrid saw the need for social integration and his vision was a football club that Scottish and Irish, Protestants and Catholics alike could support. A new football club would be a vehicle to bring the communities together and this was the second aim. The Marist brother sought for the Club to have both a Scottish and Irish identity and hence, the Club's name "Celtic" came about, representing a bridge of cultures across the Irish Sea.

Current Positioning of Celtic Football Club

Celtic Football Club is a Scottish football club with proud Irish links. The primary business of Celtic is as a football club. It is run on a professional business basis with no political agenda. However, the Club has a wider role and the responsibility of being a major Scottish social institution promoting health, well-being and social integration.

Who is Celtic Football Club for?

Celtic Football Club is for people who want to support a football club that strives for excellence in Scotland and in Europe, is proud of its history, supportive of its local community and seeks to support the following aims: "To maximise all opportunities to disassociate the Club from sectarianism and bigotry of any kind. To promote Celtic as a Club for all people, regardless of gender, age, religion, race or ability."

Summary

Celtic is a club for everyone who believes in football as a medium for healthy pleasure, entertainment and social integration. The Club always has been and always will simply aim to be the team of the people.

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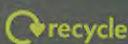
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'We are anticipating a tough 90 minutes ahead, and we know we'll have to be at our best if we want to take all three points'



GOOD afternoon and welcome to Celtic Park for today's Premiership match against Kilmarnock. It's our seventh match in what has been a very busy month of fixtures, but it's one that we're looking forward to, particularly since we're playing at home.

We come into this game on the back of the first leg of our Europa League tie against FC Copenhagen, and due to the programme deadlines, I've had to write these notes ahead of Thursday night's game.

It goes without saying that I hope we're going into today's game on the back of a positive result in Denmark and one that sets us up for the return leg here at Celtic Park this coming Thursday.

For now, though, our focus is solely on the 90 minutes ahead and the challenges that Kilmarnock will pose for us.

We go into this match full of confidence after a strong start to 2020, which included a win over

today's opponents at Rugby Park.

That match, like all our encounters with Kilmarnock, was a tough one and we're expecting that to be the case against this afternoon.

Alex has got his team playing very well, and up until last weekend's result against Hibernian, they had been enjoying a very impressive run of results in February, which included a home win over Rangers and a draw at Pittodrie.

And we know from our own experience of playing away to Aberdeen last weekend just how difficult a venue that is to get anything from.

So we are anticipating a tough 90 minutes ahead, and we know we'll have to be at our best if we want to take all three points.

We've established a lead at the top of the table and that's something we want to maintain. We know that there's still a lot of football to be played between now and the end of the season, and so we will continue with

our approach of focusing on each game as we go into it.

It's an approach which has served us well up to now, and we hope will continue to do so in the future.

I also want to thank all our supporters for their incredible support of the team, both home and away. I've already mentioned the heavy fixture schedule which, for the players, is very demanding.

That is the case for our fans, too, but they turn up to every game in great numbers to give the team the fantastic backing that means so much to all of us, and which plays a crucial part in any success we're able to deliver. I know that backing will be vital again today. Enjoy the game.

Neil Lennon


new balance

THE NEXT WAVE



OF EXECUTION



FURON



'We fully intend to maintain our domestic form that has delivered nine wins from nine games played in 2020'

SINCE my last programme notes, we've played two very potentially difficult SPFL matches but came through them unscathed with the full three points from both games, and we know we will face an equally testing time today with the visit of Kilmarnock.

Of course, we have played another important game since our last home outing, but I'm writing these notes ahead of our UEFA Europa League tie against FC Copenhagen over in Denmark, so I hope that we are all approaching these next two home games on the back of a positive result on the continent.

Today is the only game that matters at the moment, though, and we fully intend to maintain our domestic form that has delivered nine wins from nine games played in 2020 in the league

and Scottish Cup – one of those wins coming in a difficult fixture away against this afternoon's opponents.

Our last home game was the first of those previously mentioned potentially difficult games, and Hearts came here knowing they could possibly cause us problems. However, after a 1-0 half-time scoreline, with the backing of a tremendous crowd here at Celtic Park, we managed to step on the gas after the turnaround and 5-0 was the final score after a really enjoyable 90 minutes.

Then there was the trip to Pittodrie – always a difficult venue to pick up three points at, but we returned with a well-earned 2-1 win and I was once more delighted with the teamwork in the build-up to the goals.

That's the sort of form we will have to show today as Kilmarnock have

picked up a few good results since the turn of the year and they will be keen to test us once more in today's meeting.

We have worked hard this year since our return from Dubai, though, to build up a lead at the top of the table, and we are intent on maintaining, if not, stretching the gap that now exists.

You can play your part in that this afternoon by getting behind the team as you have done throughout this season and the seasons past, and I hope we can repay you with another three points today.

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ANITA MARCOS: PARADISE IS THE PERFECT PLACE FOR ME

FOR Anita Marcos, moving to a new club and a new country is a big challenge, but having swapped Atletico Madrid for a loan spell with Celtic, she's relishing the season ahead.

And she believes that having two fellow Spaniards at the club will help her adjust to life both on and off the park. One of her new team-mates is Brenda Lopez Castellano, the 27-year-old midfielder having joined from CD Femarguin in Gran Canaria, while her manager is Fran Alonso.

For 19-year-old Anita, she's hoping the move to Celtic will also prove beneficial to her command of English, which is already very impressive.

The Spanish striker said: "I spoke to Fran who told me he wanted me to come to Celtic, and when he told me that, I was very pleased because I want to play and I want to be happy here.

"My last game with Atletico was very emotional because I've been there for a few years. My team-mates there were great and I was very happy, but I had to take this decision and now I'm at Celtic, I'm here to work hard and do my best for this team.

"I've always stayed at home with my family and friends, but I took this decision to come to Celtic because I want to grow and I want to win things with this club.

"Fran and Brenda are going to help me in all things, and it's important in another country to have people who know your culture so, for me, it's very nice."



For manager, Fran Alonso, the signing of a player he says has the best CV in Europe as a 19-year-old is a real coup for Celtic.

And he paid tribute to Atletico Madrid for helping to make the move a reality.

"I knew Anita from games, but I didn't know how she trained, how she interacted with team-mates, and the feedback I got was excellent," said the Spanish coach. "She's a very hard worker, great with all her team-mates and has a lot of enthusiasm, desire and passion. That's exactly what I'm about and that's what I love in players.

"I cannot thank Atletico Madrid enough for trusting us with bringing one of their most talented young players over here. They know that she's going to be one of their top players in the future, so for them to trust us to help in her development is

something that makes me very proud.

"We've had great help from Lola Romero at Atletico Madrid, and the club were very supportive, and we got a deal done that I think is going to be amazing for us. At the end of the day, we all want what's best for Anita, and also what is the best for Celtic."

And the Celtic manager believes that the young striker is coming into a squad that is full of top-class talent, as well as one that has created a welcoming environment.

He said: "If you see Brenda Castellano, who has signed for

the club, and who can't speak a lot of English, you've got players telling her things in Spanish and really helping her to settle in, so it's a very supportive group and a very welcoming group, and I'm very proud.

"I told the players that the reason they're here in the first place is that they're good people. Of course, you have to be a good player to play for Celtic but be the best people first.

"They are great girls and very welcoming. Of course, they're competing for positions in the team but they understand that this is what will make Celtic great, and they are very supportive. Brenda is settling in very well, and I'm sure it will be the same with Anita."

