

# RAITH

OFFICIAL CLUB PROGRAMME £1.50



# ROVERS



**RAITH ROVERS  
V.  
CELTIC**

Tuesday  
26th December '95

Kick off 3pm

Bell's Premier  
Division

**PREMIER**

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## **RAITH ROVERS F.C.**

Founded 1883

Turned Senior 1889

Admitted to League 1902

### **GROUND**

Stark's Park

Pratt Street, Kirkcaldy

### **CHAIRMAN**

Alex Penman

### **PRESIDENT**

John Urquhart

### **DIRECTORS**

William Shedden

Charles Cant

William Gray

### **TEAM MANAGER**

Jimmy Nicholl

### **ASSISTANT MANAGER**

Martin Harvey

### **GENERAL MANAGER**

Billy McPhee

### **YOUTH COACHES**

Jimmy Thomson

Derek Smith

### **PHYSIOTHERAPIST**

Gerry Docherty

### **CLUB DOCTOR**

Dr G. K. N. Hall

### **COMMERCIAL**

### **ADMINISTRATOR**

Lynn Penman

### **GROUNDSMAN**

Scott Paterson

### **CLUB PHOTOGRAPHER**

Tony Fimister

### **PROGRAMME COMPILED**

#### **BY**

John Greechan

Colin Hume

### **PRINTED BY**

COLORPRINT

### **HONOURS**

First Division Champions

1994-95, 1992-93

Second Division

Champions

1948-49, 1937-38,

1909-10

1907-08

Scottish Cup

Runners up 1912-13

League Cup

Winners 1994-95

Runners up 1948-49

## **Jimmy Nicholl Says ...**

# **HOPING FOR A CLASSIC GAME**

**W**ELCOME back to Stark's Park for what should be a classic game of football.

I hope all of our fans had a super Christmas - and I hope we send you all home happy today.

We took the first team to Majorca for a week just before

Christmas and hopefully the lads will have benefited from a bit of sunshine, some

good training and plenty of relaxation.

And, of course, they were all still basking in the glory after the performance at Easter Road.

I thought it was great the way they fought back from a goal down in the first half.

It was super to see both strikers scoring again - and a couple of very good goals at that.

I was really pleased with all the hard work put in by everyone on the pitch. And they won the game

by playing a bit of football.

I changed the formation around to add a bit of balance to the defence, and I thought Neil McKilligan did quite well in his first game.



Today will be a different kind of game.

Any time you play one half of the Old Firm there's a bit of extra buzz around the place, with a guaranteed full house.

And of course there's still a bit of spice between us and Celtic.

The fact that they're pushing Rangers so hard for the League will spur them on and the expectations of their supporters are higher than ever.

Our lads will be up for the challenge and I've no doubt our fans will more than match the visitors when it comes to vocal support.

We'll do our best to keep them cheering from start to finish.

## **RAITH NEED SUPER 10 AGENTS!**

**Do you need extra cash?**

**Phone Wendy on 201993 (See page 19).**



## CELTIC AIM TO BREAK GERS' STRANGLEHOLD



**Brian McLaughlin**

**C**ELTIC have taken on a more settled look this season and all the signs are that they will take Rangers all the way as their Glasgow rivals aim to make it eight title triumphs in a row.

For all their undoubted talent, however, the Parkhead side haven't found it easy going against Rovers this year.

The first meeting of the sides took place back in August, with Tommy Burns' men going all out to avenge their Coca-Cola Cup final defeat at the hands of

Rovers the previous season. However, it took a late goal from Pierre Van Hooijdonk to deny Rovers a point and only a controversial extra-time strike edged out Jimmy Nicholl's men in their Coca-Cola Cup meeting at Celtic Park a few days later.

But when the sides met in Glasgow last month a solid defensive performance by Raith earned them a vital point.

While Scott Thomson and his defence took most of the plaudits that night Celtic know that in GORDON MARSHALL they at last have a keeper who can fill the boots of PAT BONNER, their undoubted No.1 for many years.

And 31-year-old Marshall, who ironically began his career at Rangers before moving on to East Fife and Falkirk, will no doubt be just as pleased to have a settled defensive unit in front of him.

For, while Celtic have always been renowned as a team that likes to attack, it is the form of their back

four which has helped them maintain their challenge this season.

Operating on the flanks will be JACKIE McNAMARA (22), who was snapped up from Dunfermline earlier this season, and 31-year-old TOSH McKINLAY who finally earned his dream move to Celtic just over a year ago after a career which had seen him serve Dundee and Hearts.

Barring any injuries, the central defensive positions will be filled by TOM BOYD and JOHN HUGHES.

Thirty-year-old Boyd, who captained Motherwell to the Scottish Cup win in 1991, was signed from Chelsea the following year, while Hughes is a more recent acquisition, moving from Falkirk in August.

Celtic have a wealth of riches in midfield and, although no one at Parkhead is guaranteed a place, it's a fair bet that PAUL McSTAY and JOHN COLLINS will feature today.

### CELTIC FACT FILE

- Founded: 1888
- Ground: Celtic Park
- Manager: Tommy Burns
- Colours: Green and white
- Record attendance: 92,000 v Rangers, 1938
- Record victory: 11-0 v Dundee, 1895
- Record defeat: 0-8 v Motherwell, 1937

#### HONOURS

- European Cup winners 1967
- League champions 35 times
- Scottish Cup winners 30 times
- League Cup winners Nine times



Some people have said that McStay, now 31, who was rewarded for his service to Celtic with a testimonial last month, and 27-year-old former Hibernian Collins can't play together but it is difficult to believe a system couldn't be worked out that could utilise the talents of two such gifted players.

Tough tackling **PETER GRANT** (30), who has been at Celtic for over 13 years, is



**Simon Donnelly**

another almost certain starter but who is best suited for the final midfield spot is open for debate.

Twenty-three-year-old **PHIL O'DONNELL**, signed from Motherwell last year, would be many people's choice but he has been in and out of the team this season and faces stiff competition from the likes of 21-year-olds **SIMON DONNELLY**, who has dropped back into the midfield this season, and winger **BRIAN McLAUGHLIN** who, on his day can unlock the tightest of defences.

Also fighting for a place is Danish star **MORTEN WIEGHORST**, snapped up recently after some impressive performance. Up front it is likely that **PIERRE VAN HOOIJDONK** and **ANDREAS THOM** will continue their increasingly fruitful partnership.

Dutchman Van Hooijdonk was signed from Breda last season and was an instant hit, going on to score the goal which won Celtic the

Scottish Cup, while Thom, an experienced German international, was bought from Bayer Leverkusen during the summer.

Ready to step in to the breach in case of injury or suspension is **ANDY WALKER**, now enjoying his second spell at Parkhead, and **CHRIS HAY**, one of a number of young hopefuls determined to force their way into the reckoning.



**Tom Boyd**



**Peter Grant**



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## PLOTTING A PATH TO SAFETY

**T**HE SEASON reached its halfway point when Raith played Hibs at Easter Road 10 days ago.

And, make no mistake, victory in Edinburgh brought Rovers much more than just another three points.

On their second visit to the Premier League, Jimmy Nicholl's men have shown they're a far better team than the group which flew the Kirkcaldy flag two seasons ago.

OK, it is still only halfway - and we all know how things can go all bell-shaped in the month of January.

But even the most pessimistic fan must have enjoyed Crimbo - screaming weans, screaming relatives and auld greetin'-face's speech and all - that bit more this year.

And, even more than the points already accrued and wins beside Raith's name, it's the overall standard of performance which gives me most cause for optimism.



**With**

### JOHN GREECHAN

Sure, we've had a couple of right good gubbings. Rangers toyed with Rovers at Ibrox, Aberdeen rolled them over at Pittodrie - even Hearts and Killie have had some joy.

But most of these results have been fairly well cancelled out, with Raith holding the Gers, beating the Dons, unlucky to get only a draw with the Jambos and absolutely destroying Kilmarnock at Stark's Park.

In fact, looking back, the only team Rovers haven't taken anything off of are Falkirk - strange but true.

And, inspecting those hammerings a bit closer,

you'll notice that they all came either immediately before or after a big European game. Who among the fans, after all, was in any mood for a trip to Rugby Park on the Saturday after the party in Munich?

The bare facts indicate that another 20-odd points would probably all but guarantee safety for Rovers, and that could be achieved a good four or five weeks before the end of the season - surely an unthinkable scenario at the start of the campaign, when scraping to safety was all most fans were hoping for.

Of course, it could all still come down to a scrap at the end of the season and, after all, as long as Raith survive 1, for one, would accept safety on goal difference.

But a repeat performance of the first half of the season would be better.

So same again lads - but let's miss out that 1-0 home defeat by Celtic this time.



BARRY WILSON



### How did you get your big break in football?

My first big break was when playing with Ross County at 19 when the Southampton scout came up to see me. He came to watch a couple of games and I scored in both so I signed for them but it didn't really work out. My next big break was playing against Raith for County in the Coca-Cola Cup, impressing Jimmy Nicholl and getting the chance to come here.

### Who has been the biggest influence on your career?

Without a doubt it's been my Dad. He brought me through the ranks at Ross County and, although the Highland League wasn't that high a standard, I was playing in the first team at 17 or 18. Jimmy Nicholl has also been a big influence.

### How do you relax before a big game?

I like to just sit in and watch TV or play my Sega - the football, golf or any of the sport games.

### What has been the high point of your career?

Winning the First Division Championship last year.

### And the low point?

The two Bayern Munich games - not being involved at all, for at least one of the matches. Especially not even getting on the bench with 16 places available.

### Which is your favourite ground?

Parkhead. The playing surface is the best I've played on and the stadium will be wonderful when it's finished.

### Least favourite?

Cowdenbeath on a cold Wednesday night playing in the Reserve League East is the worst place on earth. There are a few bad grounds in the Highland League but Central Park is definitely worse.

### Who is the best player you've ever played alongside?

At Southampton I played alongside Matt Le Tissier and Alan Shearer but not for the first team, unfortunately.

### The best you've ever played against?

Brian Laudrup that day at Ibrox when he destroyed us. As a winger I admire him for the way he goes past players so easily.



## Personal File

Name:

**BARRY WILSON**

Age: 23

Height: 5'11"

Weight: 12st 4lbs

Previous clubs:

Ross County (twice),  
Southampton

### And the best of all time?

Kenny Dalglish. I just caught the tail end of his career and he was still brilliant - he was always my hero.

### How much of your ability is natural and how much is down to hard work?

Most of it is hard work. Obviously you're born with something like pace but I have to work really hard on my crossing.

### Do you stick to any particular diet or training regime?

I try to stay off chips and things like that, eat a lot of pasta, although I do have the odd McDonalds.

### Do you ever take any notice of what fans shout from the terracing?

Not now, not since I came here. But playing under my Dad at Ross County I was the target for a lot of stick sometimes.

### Have you ever been tempted to shout back?

There were times I shouted back. With being on the wing it's easy to turn round and respond but that was a long time ago.

### What has been your most embarrassing moment?

Once playing against Buckie Thistle in the Highland League I took a penalty, it hit the underside of the bar and I put away the rebound myself. Everyone celebrated and the ref even gave a goal before the linesman flagged to correct him - of course the taker can't score if no-one else has touched the ball. My celebrations had been a bit over the top so it was pretty embarrassing.

### How do you think the Scottish game could be improved?

I think every team should play more wingers - especially ours! Seriously, we need to slow the pace down, educate the crowd and make them realise the way forward is to hold on to the ball. And a 16-team Premier League might help teams bring on younger players.

### What is your biggest passion outside football?

Golf. I like to play whenever I get the chance and I just manage to play off a 10 handicap.

### Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

I'm happy with Raith just now and obviously I'm hoping to help them become a bigger club.

### What do you think the future holds for Raith Rovers?

It looks quite bright. If we can consolidate our position for two or three years, get established as a team with a bit of ambition, then there's no reason why we can't challenge teams for a place in Europe every season or so. That would do!

### If you had to give up football tomorrow, what would you do?

I would probably go back to my old job working with the regional council back up in Inverness. They always said there would be a job for me - but hopefully I don't have to take them up on it.