



BILLY McNEILL

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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 dissociate 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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BILLY McNEILL

HAIL! HAIL! CESAR

World Football Weekly

BILLY McNeill had many roles throughout his life. He was a son, a husband, a father, a grandfather, a team-mate, manager and a friend.

For those who knew him best, their loss is the most painful and profound, and our thoughts and prayers go to his wife, Liz, their children, Susan, Paula, Libby, Carol and Martyn, and their grandchildren at this very sad time.

Even amidst their grief, though, the family asked that Billy's life be celebrated through stories, songs and, today, with a minute's applause inside Paradise.

For the countless thousands who did not know Billy, or who never met him, he was still someone as familiar as a member of the family, a father-figure for everyone who pledges faithful devotion to Celtic Football Club.

We are, of course, a family - the Celtic Family - with a love of the club and the green and white Hoops that bonds friends and strangers alike.

Billy McNeill was one of us, a supporter before he became a player, captain, manager, legend and, latterly, ambassador, and he always remained a Celtic supporter, taking his place in the main stand at Celtic Park to cheer on his team.

It was his team, just as it is our team, but what Billy McNeill



contributed to Celtic, what he achieved while wearing his beloved Hoops, and then later when he managed the club, has no equal.

No man has ever made more appearances for Celtic than Billy McNeill, who played 790 competitive games for the club, along with countless more

matches. As a player, he won nine league titles, seven Scottish Cups, six League Cups and the European Cup while, as Celtic manager, he won four league titles, three Scottish Cups and the League Cup.

It is an incredible roll of honour, and emphasises what his contribution to the club meant

over many years. The crowning glory, of course, came on a sunny Thursday afternoon in Lisbon's Estadio Nacional.

What Billy McNeill and his team-mates achieved on May 25, 1967 transcended a mere sporting achievement, though that, in itself, still represented an extraordinary football success.

That 11 men, all born within a 30-mile radius of Celtic Park, could become the Kings of Europe was the stuff of legend - a fairytale, if you like, which is what Billy always described the Celtic story.

It's significance, however, went beyond the fact that Celtic became the first non-Latin side to win the competition and Billy, the first British player to lift the trophy.

It was a victory of cultural significance - the team born from the efforts of Irish immigrants with the noble aim of raising money to feed the poor and tackle poverty has risen to the heights of club football, and nothing would ever be the same again, both in terms of Scottish football, but also Scottish society.

It gave confidence to people that the impossible was achievable in Scotland, and beyond, for those who had perhaps been previously perceived as second-class citizens.

Those 11 young men, led by the greatest manager Scotland has ever produced in Jock Stein, just wanted to play football and they did - pure, beautiful, inventive football - but they carried on their shoulders the hopes and expectations of a community. It was a weight they bore with dignity, class and humility, and in turn, received the eternal gratitude and love of every Celtic supporter, then, now, and forevermore.

In a team of world-class talents,



there was one leader and that leader was Billy McNeill. He led by actions rather than words, and his team-mates faithfully followed the man they called Cesar from one incredible success to another, creating a golden era in whose glow we all still bask.

For Celtic supporters lucky enough to see him play, they, too, acknowledged him as the leader, while for subsequent generations, who either celebrated the successes he enjoyed as manager or who quickly learned of Billy's pivotal role in our unique history, he has become a revered Celt, an almost mythical figure spoken about with awe and wonder.

Yet, despite all the success

and adulation, Billy McNeill was always a humble man, happiest amongst his family, friends and fellow Celtic supporters, and he always gave his time for the fans.

Billy McNeill has always been the epitome of everything that is great about Celtic Football Club, and someone who is rightly considered a legend of world football.

He will be missed by everyone - those closest to him and for all of us who idolised him as our greatest ever captain.

As Paradise rings out with applause for Cesar, it will do so with immense gratitude for a great man who gave everything for this grand old team that all of us love.





'Those of us who have been privileged to wear the armband have done so knowing we have to follow Billy's inspirational example'



GOOD afternoon and welcome to Celtic Park for what I'm sure will be a very emotional day.

This week, the Celtic Family is in mourning following the death of Billy McNeill, and today is the first opportunity for us to gather at our stadium for a match to pay our respects to a truly great man.

Billy was our greatest ever captain, and led the club to the finest triumph in its history – the historic European Cup win in 1967.

The Lisbon Lions were a group of extraordinarily talented footballers, and Billy was their leader. He set the benchmark for all Celtic captains, and for those of us who have also been privileged to wear the armband, we have done so knowing we have to follow his inspirational example.

The image of Billy holding aloft the European Cup is one of the most

iconic in football, and it is captured brilliantly in the statue which stands at the front of The Celtic Way, there to welcome everyone to the stadium.

It's where fans have gathered all week to pay their own tributes to Billy, and it is an indication of just how much Billy meant to every Celtic supporter.

He was a Celtic player, captain, manager and ambassador, and is rightly acknowledged as a Celtic legend. He was also a supporter, and fans always loved him as one of our own, someone who lived the dream of wearing the green and white Hoops, and who always did so with great pride and dignity.

Today, we welcome Kilmarnock to our stadium, and amidst the emotion of the day, we also know that we have an important game of football to play.

Our aim, as always, is to win the

game and we want the three points to take us closer to securing the league title, although we know we will face a tough test from Steve Clarke's side.

We know that our supporters will provide the most fitting of tributes to Billy McNeill, and we too, as management and players, want to deliver our own tribute in the form of a performance and result in the best traditions of our wonderful football club.

Neil Lennon

new balance

AUDAZO

#RUNTHEGAME



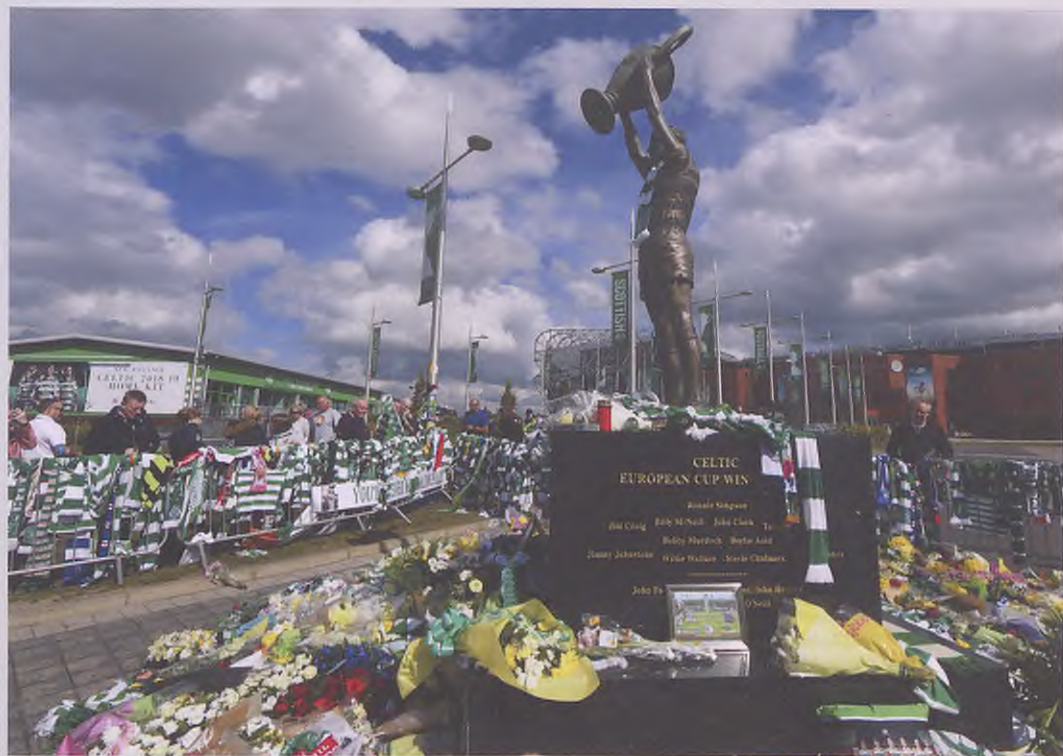
**RUN
THE
GAME**





A word with our captain...

SCOTT BROWN



Billy will always be the perfect example for every Celtic player and captain to follow

IT has always been one of my proudest achievements as a Celtic player that I have been able to wear the captain's armband for these past few years.

In doing so, I'm following in the footsteps of Celtic legends, none more so than Billy McNeill – our greatest ever captain.

We are mourning his loss, and all the players want to pass on their thoughts to Billy's family at this extremely sad time.

The fact that we will all wear black armbands with the number 5 on them today, and then wear the No.5 on our shorts for the cup final next month is a sign of just how much Billy means to every one of us.

What he and his team-mates achieved was incredible, and it's something that every player and supporter knows of and admires.

That picture of Billy holding up the European Cup is amazing, and it is the perfect image for his statue, which welcomes us to Celtic Park for every home game.

In that team of great players, Billy was always the leader, and he will always be the perfect example for every Celtic player and captain to follow.

I'm sure that the pre-match tributes for Billy will do him proud, while we, as players, want to produce a victory this afternoon which would also be a fitting tribute for a great man who

gave so much to this club.

We know how important today's game is in terms of us wanting to win the league again, so we will be doing everything we can to ensure we take all three points today.

Our focus, once the first whistle goes, will be on the 90 minutes of the game, although I'm sure that when the 67th minute comes around today, it will be an emotional moment for everyone.