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SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
TANNADICE PARK, SATURDAY, 11th SEPTEMBER, 1976

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Andy ROLLAND

Frank KOPEL

George FLEMING

Alex. RENNIE

Dave NAREY

Paul STURROCK

Gordon WALLACE

Paul HEGARTY

Tom McADAM

Graeme PAYNE

Celtic

Peter LATCHFORD

Danny McGRAIN

Andy LYNCH

Pat STANTON

Roddy McDONALD

Pat McCLUSKEY

Johnny DOYLE

Ronnie GLAVIN

Paul WILSON

Tommy BURNS

Kenny DALGLISH

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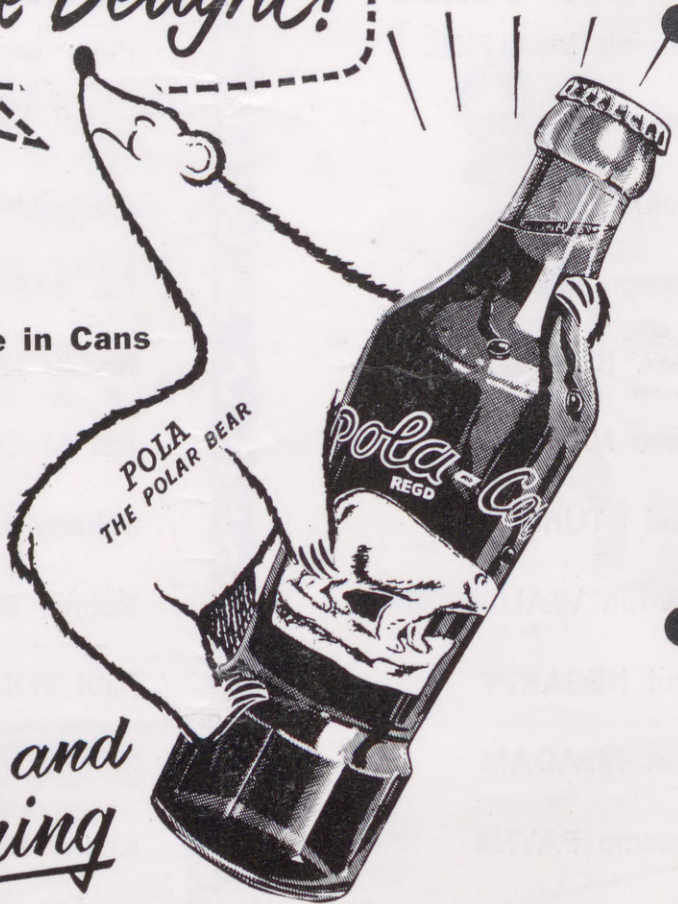
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THE BOSS'S SPOT . . . By JIM McLEAN

Welcome back to Tannadice for what looks certain to be a terrific first home Premier League game of the new term with Celtic as our visitors.

Having now almost recovered from the disappointment of allowing the Parkhead side to edge us out of the League Cup latter stages we are more determined than ever to gain revenge this afternoon.

Our fine win at Easter Road last Saturday set us off to a satisfactory start and now the main task is to maintain that winning form in a run of consistency.

The shortcomings of our League Cup challenge can be set full square on our failure to beat Dumbarton in our last game played here. As previously occurred the chances were there but were not taken — and we suffered for it.

However, one thing which did come out of the game was the splendid support given the side — and Tom McAdam in particular. This is greatly appreciated by the players especially and the fact that it has been carried on in games away from home since then gives a tremendous boost to those on the field. Keep up the good work.

Taking everything into account I am reasonably satisfied with the progress we have made since the start of the term. Our youngsters generally attract most of the praise and it would be wrong of me to ignore the outstanding contributions made by Dave Dodds, Raymond Stewart, Dave Narey, Paul Sturrock and Graeme Payne during the early games.

However, the experienced men have also come through with flying colours and in my opinion players like skipper Hamish McAlpine and defender Alex Rennie have never performed better than they are at the moment.

Why Hamish has never been mentioned for international recognition over the past few seasons puzzles me, with Scotland manager Willie Ormond the only man capable of providing the answer to that one.

Finally, Celtic's great second-half comeback to share the points with Old Firm rivals Rangers last week must take them into this afternoon's clash with a new surge of confidence. Our task is to shake that confidence and gain total revenge for our opening League Cup defeat here — and we can do it.



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INSIGHT INTO OUR OPPONENTS . . .

PETER LATCHFORD (goalkeeper) — One of the few Englishmen playing north of the border since Celts purchased him from West Brom last year. This highly successful member of an equally successful footballing family has come good at Parkhead following a somewhat sticky start. Signed up by Celtic after several other keepers had failed to match the high standard required he has gone from strength to strength over the past year and now seems set to hold down the spot on a permanent basis.

DANNY McGRAIN (right-back) — This superbly talented defender is probably the leading full-back in the world at the moment. Signed from Maryhill Juniors way back in 1967 he was nursed through the grades at Parkhead before finally being blooded at the top. He has bounded to the very top at international level and few will argue with his world rating the way he has played over the past couple of years. Allies a sound defensive strategy with the ability to move forward with purpose.

ANDY LYNCH (left-back) — One of the success stories of Scottish football in recent years. A former under-23 international winger when with Hearts and transferred to Celtic as such three years ago. He appeared to be drifting out of the Parkhead plans after failing to gain a regular spot when suddenly he burst onto the scene in his new full-back role. Needless to say tremendous pace has been his greatest asset both in a defensive role and when moving forward in augmenting his attack.

PAT STANTON (midfield) — The man around whom such a storm has arisen in the past couple of weeks since his move to Parkhead from Hibs. He has the class, experience and drive to make him into the inspiring force behind a Celtic surge for honours this season. Equally at home at the back but started off his Celtic career last week in a midfield role and starred in the Old Firm draw at Parkhead.

RODDY McDONALD (defender) — An ex-Highland League defender who was signed principally to become the successor to former skipper and centre-half Billy McNeill at Parkhead. Reserve team schooling saw him play alongside McNeill prior to the captain retiring and now he looks set to hold down the spot for years to come. Last season he was forced to abandon his defensive ways in an emergency when he was tried as the side's main striker for a few weeks.

PAT McCLUSKEY (defender) — Recently returned to the side after sitting out Celtic's opening League Cup games. A hard, resolute defender who has often in the past sealed the road to goal against promising United raids both here and at Parkhead. Icelander Johannes Edvaldsson was preferred during the early games of the term but now the former Scottish under-23 cap can stake his claim again for the regular spot.

JOHNNY DOYLE (winger) — The latest of Celtic's big-money buys when they handed Ayr United a cheque for £90,000 for the international earlier this year. A highly talented individual type who proved himself to be a potential matchwinner with each of his appearances for Ayr in recent seasons. A real entertainer and a player who is certain to hold most of the attention of the Parkhead legions in the term ahead. Once he finally settles down at Parkhead a return to the international arena seems likely.

RONNIE GLAVIN (midfield) — A big-money transfer buy from Partick Thistle last year but injury and form lapses last season curtailed his first team appearances. Undoubtedly a player of the finer arts of the game and a man whose ability to prise open defences from his midfield role make him a key asset to the future at Parkhead. While with Thistle his name was seldom off the scoring charts and Celts will be hoping that Ronnie has regained that goal urge in time for the new season.

PAUL WILSON (striker/winger) — The man of the moment at Parkhead following his point-saving second half double against Rangers last Saturday. On his day a potential matchwinner with power and pace to equal his finishing prowess. In and out of the side in recent seasons but those two goals last week appear certain to have earned him a lengthy first team run at this important time of the season.

TOMMY BURNS (midfield) — One of the main Celtic finds of last season and a big hope for the future. This ginger-haired youngster has all the cheeky characteristics of a true crowd-pleaser at Parkhead and his late season performances allied to what he has already shown in pre-term preparation promises much. Has a cool, calculating head on his young shoulders and must have a tremendous future ahead of him.

KENNY DALGLISH (striker/midfield) — Another world class player on the Celtic first team scene. This outstanding forward has made a meteoric leap into the international scene since joining Celts from Cumbernauld in 1967. His progress was emphasised last term when he was appointed as successor to McNeill as captain of the club. The scorer of countless key goals for the club and a potential matchwinner at any grade, as was borne out by his winner for Scotland against England at Hampden this year.

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WITH THE RESERVES



David Dodds

The United colts survived a photo-finish with neighbours Dundee to gain a place in the final stages of the Reserve League Cup — by a solitary counter in goal difference.

And it was their closing 3-0 win against a strong Aberdeen side at Pittodrie which finally settled things in their favour. To win at any time in the north-east is an achievement as the Dons generally field an eleven packed with experience, but such a convincing scoreline was surely deserving of that qualifying prize.

Centre-half Kenny Brown gave us the lead early on but it took some sterling defensive work, especially from goalkeeper Dave McKellar, to prevent a fighting Aberdeen side from drawing level.

Having withstood the home storm our youngsters settled down again and second half

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goals from William Kirkwood and Raymond Stewart confirmed the promise displayed by United's young side during their earlier games.

Unaffected by the loss of the ever-improving Raymond Stewart on first team duty at Easter Road the side got their Reserve League programme off to a similar successful start when Hibs were visitors here last Saturday.

Striker Dave Dodds was undoubtedly the hero with a tremendous hat-trick in the 3-1 win. A diving header, a cracking angled drive into the far corner and a blistering 20-yarder saw United into a comfortable lead before Hibs grabbed a late consolation goal to reduce the leeway.

While the young men in the side have been grabbing the limelight let us not forget the invaluable contributions given by those with the first team experience who are providing the cool, calm approach to match the exuberance displayed by the kids.

Henry Hall, Billy Steele, Derek Addison and John Holt have all been in great form along with youngsters Allan Boath and David Rae.

A GORDON FOR US

Into the seemingly never-ending list of unknown young talent which manager Jim McLean and his scouting colleagues keeps producing and improving upon here at Tannadice, the signing of experienced Gordon Wallace over the past couple of weeks appeared out of place.

But far from it as the former Dundee striker proved with his perfectly timed winner at Easter Road last Saturday — to silence the doubting Thomases.

And former Scottish "Player of the Year" Gordon is adamant that last week-end's contribution will be far from his last for United in a season in which he is convinced that the Tannadice men can sparkle.

Says Gordon, "The first thing that impresses me here is that every single player, from youngsters upwards, wants to help everyone else — and that attitude can only lead to success.

"My main job on the field is obviously to carry on where the boss has left off in the dressing-room talks and to act as an on-the-field coach to some of my forward mates. Things have gone tremendously well in that respect from my first outing.

"The potential talent at Tannadice is astounding and as I have said before everyone is only too eager to listen and act on advice for the benefit of the club in general."

With so many youngsters on his staff, boss McLean was in need of an "auldheid" up at — and it would appear from the admiring comments of Wallace's team-mates that the old boss has chosen well.

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FIXTURES 1976-77

		OPPONENTS		F.	A.
1976					
Aug.	4—Montrose (F.C.)	(h)	3	1	
	7—Aberdeen (A.-S.T.)	(h)	1	0	
	11—Aberdeen (A.-S.T.)	(a)	1	3	
	League Cup Competition				
Aug.	14—Celtic	(h)	0	1	
	18—Arbroath	(a)	3	1	
	21—Dumbarton	(a)	2	1	
	25—Arbroath	(h)	2	0	
	28—Dumbarton	(h)	1	1	
Sept.	1—Celtic	(a)	1	1	
	League				
Sept.	4—Hibernian	(a)	2	1	
	11—Celtic	(h)	.....	.....
	18—Ayr United	(a)	.....	.....
	25—Partick Thistle	(h)	.....	.....
Oct.	2—Motherwell	(h)	.....	.....
	9—Rangers	(a)	.....	.....
	16—Kilmarnock	(h)	.....	.....
	23—Hearts	(a)	.....	.....
	30—Aberdeen	(a)	.....	.....
Nov.	6—Hibernian	(h)	.....	.....
	13—Celtic	(a)	.....	.....
	20—Ayr United	(h)	.....	.....
	27—Partick Thistle	(a)	.....	.....
Dec.	4—Motherwell	(a)	.....	.....
	11—Rangers	(h)	.....	.....
	18—Kilmarnock	(a)	.....	.....
	25—Hearts	(h)	.....	.....

		OPPONENTS		F.	A.
	League				
1977					
Jan.	1—Aberdeen	(h)	.....	.....
	3—Hibernian	(a)	.....	.....
	8—Celtic	(h)	.....	.....
	15—Ayr United	(a)	.....	.....
	22—Partick Thistle	(h)	.....	.....
	29—Scottish Cup 3rd Round				
Feb.	5—Motherwell	(h)	.....	.....
	12—Rangers	(a)	.....	.....
	19—Kilmarnock	(h)	.....	.....
	26—Scottish Cup 4th Round				
Mar.	5—Hearts	(a)	.....	.....
	12—Aberdeen	(a)	.....	.....
	19—Hibernian	(h)	.....	.....
	26—Celtic	(a)	.....	.....
Apr.	2—Ayr United	(h)	.....	.....
	9—Partick Thistle	(a)	
	13—Aberdeen	(h)	
	16—Motherwell	(a)	
	20—Hearts	(h)	
	23—Rangers	(h)	
	30—Kilmarnock	(a)	

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TESTIMONIAL MATCH

Crowd-pleasing winger Iain McDonald, whose career with United was tragically brought to a premature end on the advice of a specialist last season, returns to Tannadice on Monday, October 11, as beneficiary of a city "derby" challenge match against Dundee.

Neighbours Dundee have kindly consented to provide the opposition for the occasion, kick-off 7.30 p.m., when it is hoped that a large attendance will display their gratitude to the unfortunate Iain for the pleasure he undoubtedly gave audiences throughout the country during his spells with both Rangers and United.

Contrary to present trends, admission prices will be brought down for the game, stand seats costing 70p while a straight 50p is to be charged for the terracings. Needless to say, season tickets are not valid that night but any stand holder wishing to maintain his regular seat can do so by contacting the club secretary by October 1. Tickets for the game will be on sale within the next week.

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