

SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE
Saturday, 18 December, 1976



Celtic v Ayr United

KICK-OFF 3 p.m.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME 10p

HOW CELTIC'S TEAM HAS CHANGED

AYR UNITED, who had a successful points-gathering run in November, are today's visitors to Celtic Park to contest two valuable Premier League points.

Before recounting the Premier League visits of the Ayrshire club to Celtic Park last season, it's interesting to recall a meeting of the two clubs just under three years ago. The match in question was a Scottish League game, played on March 16, 1974, and only Kenny Dalglish remains in the Celtic team, although Dennis Connaghan is still with the club, and Paul Wilson was a substitute.

The two teams that afternoon were—

CELTIC: Connaghan; Hay and Brogan; Murray, McNeill and Connelly; Johnstone and Bone; Deans; Callaghan and Dalglish. Substitutes: Wilson and Hood.

AYR UNITED: McLean (A); Filippi and Murphy; McAnespie, Fleming and Mitchell; Doyle and Graham; Ingram; Ferguson (R) and McCulloch. Substitutes: Ferguson (A) and Tait.

Referee: Mr R. H. Davidson (Airdrie).

Celtic won that match by 4-0, and Dixie Deans and Jimmy Johnstone shared the goals.

Dixie opened the scoring for the home side, and later shot Celtic into a two-goal interval lead.

Shortly after the start of the second half, Kenny Dalglish was brought down in the

penalty area, and Jimmy Johnstone scored from the spot.

Twelve minutes later a Dixie Deans shot was handled in the box and Jimmy Johnstone, in his unusual role of spot-kick taker, made an excellent job with the shot from the 12-yard mark.

In the two Premier League meetings last season at Celtic Park both teams recorded a win apiece.

The first game was played at Celtic Park on December 27 last year, and the teams were as follows:

CELTIC: Latchford; McGrain and Lynch; Edvaldsson, McDonald and McCluskey; McNamara and Dalglish; Deans; Callaghan and Lennox. Substitutes: Glavin and Wilson.

AYR UNITED: Sproat; McDonald and Murphy; McAnespie, Fleming and McSherry; Doyle and Graham; Ingram; McCulloch and Robertson. Substitutes: Cameron and Wells.

Referee: Mr J. R. P. Gordon (Newport-on-Tay).

Johannes Edvaldsson (2) and Kenny Dalglish were the scorers in Celtic's 3-1 win.

Between that game and the next encounter on April 24, 1976, Johnny Doyle had been transferred from Ayr to Celtic, and he again played in the losing side as Ayr won that game by 2-1.

Dixie Deans scored the solitary Celtic counter, and Malcolm Robertson got both goals for the Somerset Park team.

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THERE'S A TOUGH SCHEDULE AHEAD



IT'S welcome back to football after two blank Saturdays. No club likes the enforced break the winter weather imposed on the game, but we've done our best at Parkhead to keep going the momentum that we built up in November.

Kilmarnock were our last visitors and they gave us a timely warning about the supposedly "easy" games in this Premier League. Having won against Hearts and Rangers a great many people thought the fixture with foot-of-the-table Killie was a formality.

I certainly didn't and told the players so before the game. Killie made us go all the way.

Today's visitors to Parkhead are second from the foot of the Premier League, but nobody should automatically reach the conclusion that Celtic has a couple of points in the satchel. I saw Ayr against Hearts last week-end. They had over 90 per cent of the play and while they lost by the only goal of the game they'll give us a real test all right.

It is a futile exercise to look at what other teams do against your immediate opposition. Ayr United will assuredly raise their game against Celtic, just as every other side does.

The team that goes into the New Year in the lead can clearly be optimistic about taking the championship, and if we are able to do that we must make sure of winning today and set ourselves up for the following games against Aberdeen, Motherwell and Rangers.

That's quite a formidable trio and will require our best effort. After the way the team came through against Hearts and Rangers it is certainly not beyond their capabilities and we all look forward to the challenging schedule.

This represents a challenging time too, for our latest signing Johnny Gibson, he will get his chance to help us in the championship race. Bobby Lennox, the man whose absence prompted the Gibson signing, is, I am happy to say, coming along nicely and he's determined to be playing again long before the season ends. Bobby is still hungry for football and wouldn't mind adding one more championship medal to his already impressive collection.

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HONOURS:

League Champions (29 times)

1893, 1894, 1896,
1898, 1905, 1906,
1907, 1908, 1909,
1910, 1914, 1915,
1916, 1917, 1919,
1922, 1926, 1936,
1938, 1954, 1966,
1967, 1968, 1969,
1970, 1971, 1972,
1973, 1974.

Cup Winners (24 times)

1892, 1899, 1900,
1904, 1907, 1908,
1911, 1912, 1914,
1923, 1925, 1927,
1931, 1933, 1937,
1951, 1954, 1965,
1967, 1969, 1971
1972, 1974, 1975.

League Cup Winners (8 times)

1957, 1958, 1966,
1967, 1968, 1969,
1970, 1975.

Empire Exhibition Cup 1938

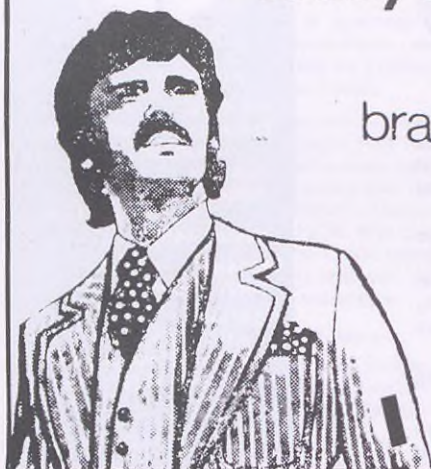
Coronation Cup 1953

European Cup 1967



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THE DALGLISH MAGIC



A swift change of direction and Celtic skipper Kenny Dalglish is away from Ayr's highly experienced Alex McAnespie.

TODAY'S VISITORS

CHIPS ARE DOWN FOR AYR UNITED

WITH ONE YEAR'S experience of the Premier League behind him, manager Alex Stuart of Ayr United, admits: "There are tremendous pressures in the set-up," but quickly adds: "I'm enjoying it a lot."

Stuart, who moved from Montrose to Somerset Park, believes the pressures are created because the league "is just one or two clubs short," an opinion that is shared by one or two other team bosses.

"It doesn't allow the slightest leeway for errors and that means you don't really have the opportunity to try out things.

"You cannot gamble or take risks of any kind. Every point is a vital one. But, having said that, I have enjoyed the year with all its problems and pressures.

"From the fans' point of view, there is perhaps too much emphasis on results and not enough emphasis on how the results are obtained. But that, I feel, is because the league is just too small."

At the moment, Alex Stuart feels the breaks are going against his United side. After the club's performance against Hearts last week, the Ayr fans will agree with him.

The manager put it this way: "I have never seen such a one-sided game in my life. Hearts got a quick goal . . . and simply held on after that. We made enough chances to win ten games. But that's what can happen in football, and you've got to accept it. It was pleasing, though, to see how the team plugged on and they showed plenty of fire and enthusiasm.

"The result was disappointing. It was a very important game for us, because Hearts were fellow strugglers."

However, don't expect a heads-down Ayr to run out on to the Parkhead pitch this afternoon. "A game against Celtic couldn't be better for us after losing to Hearts," says manager Stuart. "The chips are down now, and it is just the sort of game in which we can pick ourselves up again. We'll lift our game alright, though we know it is a most difficult assignment.

"They are on the crest and that calls for a great effort on our part. I know my lads will make that effort. Like myself, they welcome this game rather than another against a side struggling like ourselves."

Ayr's record in November was pretty encouraging, with five points from eight against Partick Thistle (h), Aberdeen A), Dundee United (a) and Motherwell (h).

During his year, manager Stuart has brought a number of players to Somerset . . . like Malcolm Robertson from Raith Rovers (his first signing), goalkeeper Andy Geoghegan, and striker Walker McCall from Aberdeen, the busy midfielder Gordon Cramond from St Johnstone, and defender Brian Rodman from Kilmarnock.

Danny Masterton was a young fellow in the Reserve team when Stuart arrived, and now he and the tall McCall are forging a most promising attacking link that could produce a lot of goals in the future.

Stuart has considerable praise for the seasoned players who have given great

service in the past, and are still there doing their stuff for the club.

"Like Alex McAnespie, who has been in the colours since 1964. "Only John Murphy can point to a longer spell with the team (1963)," says manager Stuart.

"You know Alex was out of the first team for 11 months through injury, and since he returned to it he has shown tremendous enthusiasm for the game. I have great respect for him on and off the field. After his injury, he returned for extra training to reach fitness in the shortest possible time. He's a great example — as is John Murphy — for the young players."

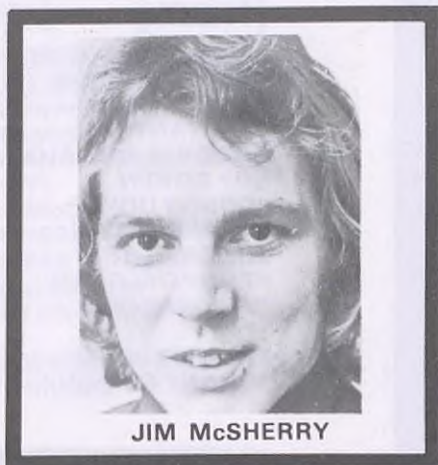
Injury to Brian Rodman gave McAnespie his first team chance again. Now McAnespie's form is so consistent that Rodman, fit again, cannot reclaim his position.

Another Somerset casualty, Alex Reid, is fit again, and he might get a recall today.

A big Somerset favourite who hasn't figured regularly is striker Alex Ingram. Increasing business commitments is

the cause, but Alex is still anxious to play, and manager Stuart "has a job for him to do for Ayr when time arises".

But it is the job his club have to do today that has held Stuart's attention all week, and he expects his players to face it with confidence.



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TODAY'S TEAMS AND OFFICIALS

CELTIC (from)

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DANNY McGRAIN
ANDY LYNCH
PAT STANTON
RODDY McDONALD
ROY AITKEN
JOHNNY DOYLE
RONNIE GLAVIN
JOE CRAIG
KENNY DALGLISH
PAUL WILSON

PAT McCLUSKEY
JOHNNY GIBSON

Referee:

Mr J. R. P. Gordon
(Newport-on-Tay)

Linesmen:

Mr D. McCartney
(Edinburgh)
Mr J. C. B. McRoberts
(Wishaw)



Spectators are requested to
take care—particularly leaving
the ground after the match

AYR UNITED (from)

ANDY GEOGHEGAN
DAVID WELLS
JOHN MURPHY
RIKKI FLEMING
ALEX McANESPIE
JOE FILIPPI
WALKER McCALL
JIM McSHERRY
DANNY MASTERTON
DAVE McCULLOCH
GORDON CRAMMOND

MALCOLM ROBERTSON
GERRY PHILLIPS

HALF-TIME SCOREBOARD

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|------------------------------|--|----------|---------------------------|--|----------|------------------------------|--|----------|----------------------------------|--|
| A | ABERDEEN RANGERS | | E | AIRDRIE FALKIRK | | I | EAST FIFE MONTROSE | | M | ASTON VILLA NEWCASTLE | |
| B | HEARTS MOTHERWELL | | F | ARBROATH MORTON | | J | HAMILTON RAITH ROVERS | | N | IPSWICH DERBY COUNTY | |
| C | KILMARNOCK DUNDEE UNITED | | G | DUMBARTON ST JOHNSTONE | | K | ST MIRREN QUEEN OF SOUTH | | O | MANCHESTER CITY COVENTRY CITY | |
| D | PARTICK THISTLE HIBERNIAN | | H | DUNDEE CLYDEBANK | | L | ARSENAL MANCHESTER UNITED | | P | WEST HAM LIVERPOOL | |

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SIDELINES

Presents galore

CHRISTMAS presents galore at today's game for the Celtic Pools Agents. The top prize is a portable television set, and there are radios, cameras, calculators, bottles of whisky, pens, and books to be won. Manager Jock Stein will help in the draw to be staged at half-time.

Joe on Hot Line

CENTRE Joe Craig is the guest on the Hot Line in next week's Celtic View. If you want to pose a question to him, telephone 041-551-8103 (the Celtic View) and ask for the Hot Line. His answers appear in Wednesday's edition of the View.

Top scorers

WITH 16 goals from Premier League, League Cup, and UEFA games, Kenny Dalglish is the leading marksman at Celtic Park. In second spot is Ronnie Glavin with eight, seven of them scored in the Premier Division games.

Ne'erday tickets

NEXT HOME GAME for Celtic is on Sunday, December 26, against Aberdeen. At this match, there is likely to be the opportunity to purchase tickets for the January 3 game with Rangers. And don't forget the Ne'erday fixture kicks-off at 1 p.m.

League positions

PREMIER LEAGUE

| | P | W | L | D | F | A | Pts |
|-----------------|----|---|---|---|----|----|-----|
| Aberdeen..... | 13 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 24 | 12 | 19 |
| Dundee utd..... | 13 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 28 | 19 | 19 |
| Celtic..... | 12 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 26 | 13 | 17 |
| Rangers..... | 13 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 20 | 13 | 15 |
| Motherwell..... | 13 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 23 | 23 | 13 |
| Hearts..... | 14 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 20 | 24 | 11 |
| Partick Th..... | 12 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 13 | 19 | 11 |
| Hibernian..... | 13 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 12 | 16 | 10 |
| Ayr Utd..... | 14 | 3 | 8 | 3 | 18 | 33 | 9 |
| Kilmarnock..... | 13 | 1 | 8 | 4 | 17 | 29 | 6 |



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LONE CELT TAKES ON FOUR — AND WINS



There's disbelief on the faces of four Ayr defenders as the lone Celt, Kenny Dalglish, slams in one more goal for the Park-head side.

"PREMIER" SEASON FIXTURES

1975

JULY

30—Inverness Thistle (A) 6 0

AUGUST

2—Ross County (A) 4 0

7—PENAROL (H) 3 0

GLASGOW CUP (1975-76 final)

AUGUST

10—RANGERS (H) 1 3

CHALLENGE MATCH

NOVEMBER

14—Ipswich Town (H) 1 2

LEAGUE CUP

AUGUST

14—Dundee United (A) 1 0

18—DUMBARTON (H) 3 0

21—Arbroath (A) 5 0

25—Dumbarton (A) 3 3

28—ARBROATH (H) 2 1

SEPTEMBER

1—DUNDEE UNITED (H) 1 1

22—Albion Rovers (A) 1 0

OCTOBER

6—ALBION ROVERS (H) 6 0

25—HEARTS (Hampden, S/Final) 2 1

NOVEMBER

6—ABERDEEN (Hampden, Final) 1 2

UEFA CUP

SEPTEMBER

15—GKS WISLA KRAKOW ... (H) 2 2

29—GKS Wisla Krakow (A) 0 2

PREMIER LEAGUE

SEPTEMBER

4—RANGERS (H) 2 2

11—Dundee United (A) 0 1

18—HEARTS (H) 2 2

25—Kilmarnock (A) 4 0

OCTOBER

2—HIBERNIAN (H) 2 2

9—PARTICK THISTLE (H) post.

16—Ayr United (A) 2 0

20—DUNDEE UNITED (H) 5 1

23—Aberdeen (A) 1 2

30—MOTHERWELL (H) 2 0

NOVEMBER

20—Hearts (A) 4 3

24—Rangers (A) 1 0

27—KILMARNOCK (H) 2 0

DECEMBER

4—Hibernian (A) Post.

11—Partick Thistle (A) Post.

18—AYR UNITED (H)

26—ABERDEEN (H)

1977

JANUARY

1—Motherwell (A)

3—RANGERS (H)

8—Dundee United (A)

15—HEARTS (H)

22—Kilmarnock (A)

29—Scottish Cup, third round ...

FEBRUARY

5—HIBERNIAN (H)

12—PARTICK THISTLE (H)

19—Ayr United (A)

26—Scottish Cup, fourth round ...

MARCH

5—Aberdeen (A)

12—MOTHERWELL (H)

19—Rangers (A)

26—DUNDEE UNITED (H)

APRIL

2—Hearts (A)

9—KILMARNOCK (H)

13—Motherwell (A)

16—Hibernian (A)

20—ABERDEEN (H)

23—Partick Thistle (A)

30—AYR UNITED (H)

RESERVES by JOHN CLARK



Freeze up had an advantage

FRUSTRATION. That's been the lot of the Reserve squad members at Celtic Park as well as the Premier League side these last two weeks.

We've put in our training as hard and as conscientiously as the vagaries of the Scottish weather allowed . . . and then came Saturday's with that dreary announcement: Match Off.

You'd think everybody would be glad of a day off. But I feel now (as I did when a player) that one had been 'cheated' out of something when a game was postponed.

The young fellows at Parkhead today think the same way, and sitting at home watching

television is no substitute for real on-the-spot action with the atmosphere of the event around one. Certainly I didn't enjoy my time at the 'telly'.

Of course, the players managed a couple of real hard practice games at Troon and Largs during the freeze-up, the seaside pitches allowing them a freedom of movement that was impossible in town.

Out of the 'holiday' came one good thing, though. It has allowed players with niggling injuries to throw them off completely and come back after this mini-close season thoroughly refreshed.

One has read all sorts of suggestions about making pitches playable in these winter conditions. I've come to the conclusion there's nothing to be done . . . but grin and bear the weather until it improves.

The game has survived these interruptions for 100 years and the current break, I hope, will have the fans' appetite for the resumption as sharp as that of the players.

HALF-TIME QUIZ

1. Name the former senior clubs of Celtic's latest signing Johnny Gibson.
2. Who were the players who cost Everton almost £400,000 in recent transfers?
3. Who were Scotland's golf representatives in last week's World Cup?
4. The managers of the Welsh and Irish international squads are . . . ?
5. Name the only club to defeat Ayr United in November.

ANSWERS

1. Partick Thistle, Ayr United, St Mirren.
2. Bruce Riech, Duncan McKenzie.
3. Brian Barnes, Sam Torrance.
4. Mike Smith, Danny Blanchflower.
5. Aberdeen.

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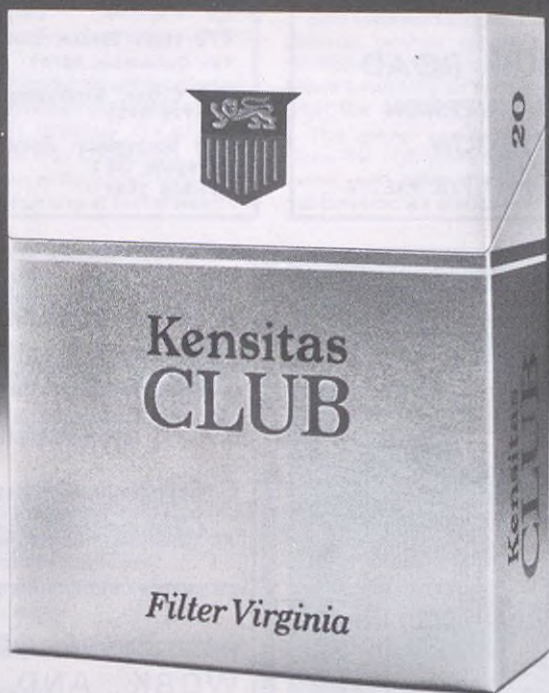
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