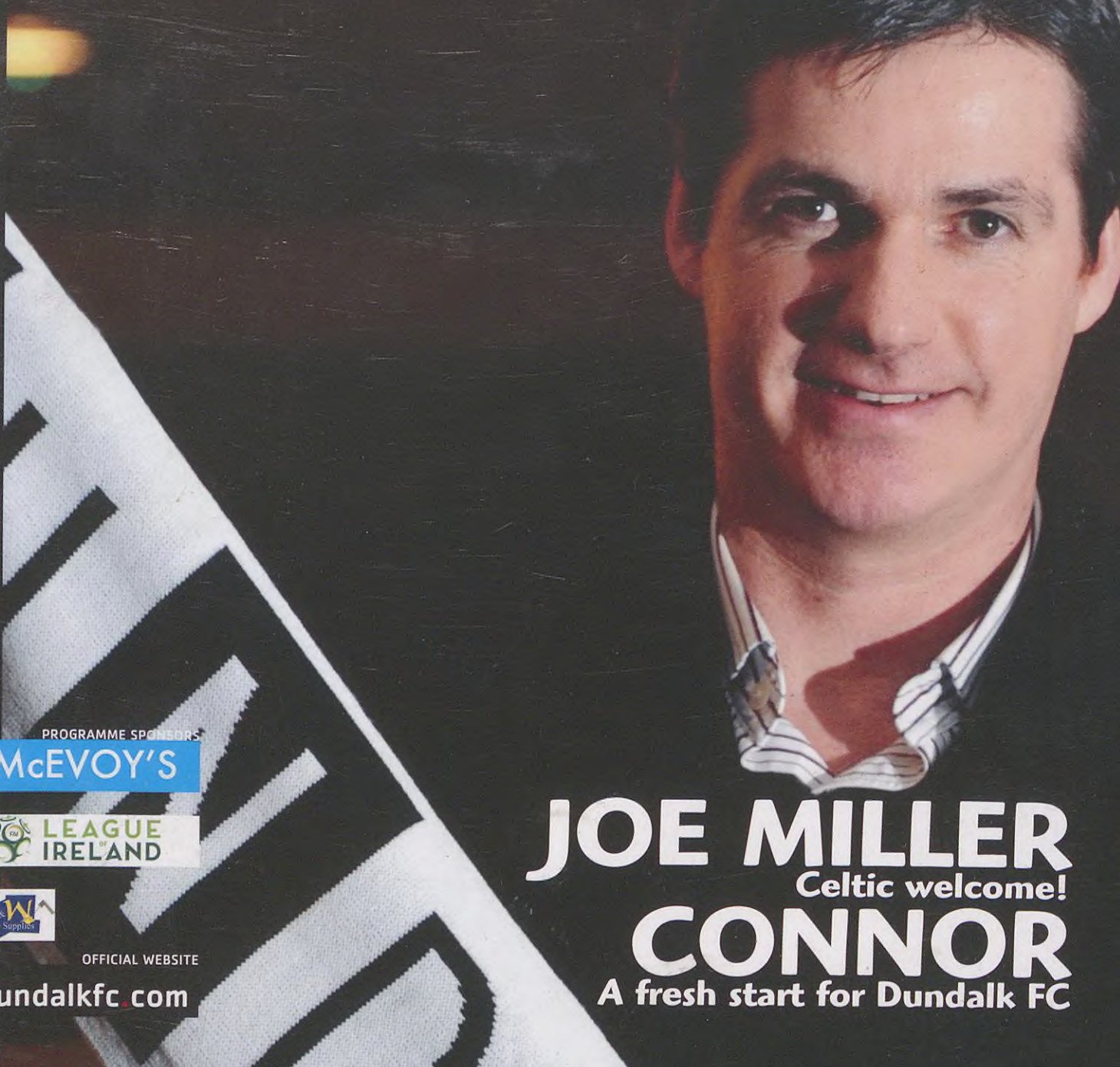


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DUNDALK FC

2009 Season, Issue 1 • Friendly match

MAGAZINE



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JOE MILLER

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CONNOR

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EDITORIAL

COLM MURPHY
DFCTRUST CHAIRMAN



Welcome to Oriel Park for this afternoon's match with Celtic FC. It has been a long time since we had a big team visiting Oriel Park for a friendly. For most Dundalk fans this will be the first chance to see the new team that has been assembled since Sean Connor's appointment last December. Only a few players have survived the reorganization of the team since we won the league on that famous night in Station Road last November. I know that all Dundalk fans will welcome all of the new arrivals to Oriel Park for what is sure to be a very exciting season.

It's 13 years since Celtic were last in Oriel Park for a match so today also will be a treat for the all football supporters in the town and beyond. Celtic are one of the biggest football clubs in the world and with their links it is understandable that they have such a huge following in Ireland. If you are a locally based Celtic fan making a rare trip to Oriel Park then please don't become a stranger. We hope you will be back on Friday night for our opening match in the FAI Premier League against the reigning champions Bohemians!

We hope you enjoy the new look Dundalk FC Magazine. In today's edition Sean Connor writes his first column for us and we also have insights into the team's preparations with articles from Thomas Heary, Gerry Matthews, Paul Johnston and Pdraig McGowan. We also have major interviews with two Celtic legends. Joe Miller talks about his career with Aberdeen and Celtic and how he is settling into life as Sean's number two here at Oriel Park. Elsewhere we profile two players who held the distinction of playing for both Celtic and Dundalk in Dan Lavery and Joe Cassidy.

We also arrive back at Oriel Park having lost a number of major supporters in recent weeks. It is hard to believe that such life-long and well-known supporters as Harry Collins, Mary Conachy and Paul Thornton will not be here today. Everybody at Dundalk FC would like to extend our deepest to the families and friends of all those who have lost family members in the close season.



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 **DUNDALK FC**
MAGAZINE

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FROM THE SIDELINES SEAN CONNOR



Welcome to Oriel Park for this afternoon's match with Celtic Football Club. I am absolutely delighted to be writing my first programme notes as manager of Dundalk FC. It is a very exciting time for the club and the team and myself have been working very hard in pre-season training to get ready for the big kick-off.

I would like to welcome the management, players and officials of Celtic Football Club to Oriel Park today. We are delighted that they have agreed to come to Dundalk today and hope that this can be the first of many visits to the town. Obviously with Joe Miller at Dundalk we have already have a strong connection with Celtic. Over the past few years I have got to know Neil Lennon also. So, a big thank you to Neil, Willie McStay and, of course, Gordon Strachan for agreeing to this match.

Although I am aware that the match today is a big attraction for the thousands of Celtic fans in the local area - at the foremost of my mind will be the performance of my own side. Today's match is an important step in our preparations for the Bohemians match next Friday night. I have been delighted with the atmosphere and professionalism of our players since we started back training in January. The players I have brought to this football club know all about what it takes to be successful. They know that you have to train hard and prepare properly.

Just looking at the players that I have signed - Dave Rogers has won three league championships, Liam Burns,

Harpal Singh and Thomas Heary won the League and FAI Cup Double last year at Bohs, George O'Callaghan has won a league title and was the Player of the Year a few years ago with Cork...we really have a solid structure to our squad. I am very excited about having Darren Mansaram, Mickey Collins and Chris Turner here while the likes of Shaun Kelly and Michael Daly are real prospects for the future who I think will become big names in the League of Ireland in future years.

I can imagine that it might be difficult to understand that the team that delivered promotion after so many years has been dismantled. It might appear to be heartless. But I cannot let emotion rule my head on this. Trust me. When I was at Sligo Rovers we won the league and I dismantled that team also. Why? Because I just didn't think the players that won the First Division were good enough to compete in the Premier. That has proved to be true as none of those players have since come back and haunted me. I finished 5th with Sligo in our first season back in the Premier and then finished 3rd in Bohemians despite all the problems I had. The advantage I have at Dundalk that I didn't have at Bohs is that I know that the entire club - from the players to the Board - are fully supportive of me and Joe. It makes a huge difference.

Despite my decision not to re-sign the vast majority of the players we still have a few important members of Dundalk's league winning team. Originally, I was not too sure if Chris Bennion would be with us this year. Before Christmas we were

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being linked with Darren Quigley of Derry City but Benno insisted that he couldn't care less who I sign - he wanted to stay and fight for place and prove to me that he was a Premier Division goalkeeper. I was very impressed with his attitude. He is a winner and a great professional with an obvious love of Dundalk FC. He has shown in training that he is great goalkeeper too so I am more than happy that he is my number one for the season. The other survivor of the league winning team is, of course, Tiarnan Mulvenna. Like Michael Daly and Shaun Kelly - Tiarnan could well be a big name in this league over the coming years. I can see why the Dundalk fans love him so much. Simon Kelly is also still here from last year and has impressed me greatly in pre-season. Simon has played in three or four positions for us and his versatility will be a great asset to the team.

Last Monday we completed our transfer business. By the time you are reading this we may have signed a few more players who are currently unattached but the signings of George O'Callaghan and Michael McKerr provided a great piece of business for us. We have signed young Michael from Birm... on loan. George O'Callaghan obviously should not need much introduction to any League of Ireland fan. We worked very hard to make the transfer happen and I am confident all that hard work will be well worth it. George is quite simply one of the most naturally gifted footballers that has graced the league of Ireland over the past 5-6 years. We now have a very talented squad.

If we can keep our squad fit I think Dundalk fans are going to really enjoy supporting us this year.

As this is my first opportunity to write in the Magazine, I would like to share my thoughts about my first impressions of Dundalk FC. The first thing I have noticed is how clued in the board are and how the hardworking and business like they are. Gerry Matthews is the third club owner/chairman I have worked for. He is very demanding but has given me complete freedom in my part of the job. I am sure we will have our disagreements. But both of us are man enough and professional enough to deal with those issues. The set up he has provided here in Oriel Park is second to none in the league. I have my own office here, the sponsors have a new area for hospitality in the boardroom, the pitch has gone down very quickly and I believe he is making improvements to the TV Gantry facilities next week in order to accommodate live television coverage of our matches this season. I can only hope that I can leave as good a legacy on the pitch as Gerry is going to leave off it.

I am finishing these notes off just a few hours before our Jim Malone Cup match in Drogheda. On a personal note, I would like to dedicate my programme notes to my son Noah who will be a mascot in today's game v Celtic. It will make me doubly proud to be managing my first game at Oriel Park v Celtic when I see Noah lead the team out on the pitch! Enjoy the game, Sean Connor.

DUNDALK FC ROLL OF HONOUR

LEAGUE

LEAGUE OF IRELAND

Champions (11): 1932/33, '62/63, '66/67, '75/76, '78/79, '81/82, '87/88, '90/91, '94/95
Runners-up (10): 1930/31, '36/37, '42/43, '47/48, '63/64, '67/68, '79/80, '80/81, '86/87, '88/89
First Div. Champions (2): 2000/01, 2008

CUP

FAI CUP

Winners (20): 1942, 1949, 1952, 1958, 1977, 1979, 1981, 1988, 2002
Runners-up (2): 1931, 1935, 1938, 1987, 1993

WOMEN'S FAI CUP

Winners (1): 2005
Runners-up (1): 2004

TOP FOUR CUP

Winners (2): 1963/64, '66/67

LEAGUE OF IRELAND SHIELD

Winners (2): 1966/67, '71/72
Runners-up (2): 1932/33, '41/42, '46/47, '63/64, '67/68, '68/69

LEAGUE CUP

Winners (5): 1977/78, '80/81, '86/87, '89/90
Runners-up (3): 1982/83, '85/86, '88/89, '94/95

LEINSTER SENIOR CUP

Winners (20): 1951/52, '60/61, '70/71, '73/74, '76/77, '77/78
Runners-up (17): 1928/29, '34/35, '35/36, '36/37, '38/39, '58/59, '61/62, '64/65, '66/67, '81/82, '93/94, '94/95

PRESIDENT'S CUP

Winners (9): 1930/31, '51/52, '63/64, '64/65, '79/80, '80/81, '81/82, '88/89, '89/90
Runners-up (3): 1932/33, '43/44, '49/50, '52/53, '58/59, '68/69, '72/73, '76/77, '77/78, '82/83, '86/87, '87/88, '95/96, 2002/03

DUBLIN CITY CUP

Winners (2): 1937/38, '42/43, '48/49, '67/68, '68/69
Runners-up (2): 1935/36, '36/37, '40/41, '47/48, '65/66, '66/67, '70/71, '83/84

INTER CITY CUP

Winners (1): 1942
Runners-up (1): 1949

CASEY CUP

Runners-up (1): 1962/63



DRESSING ROOM



THOMAS HEARY: Club captain for the '09 season

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to Oriel Park for the first time this season. It is a particular pleasure to welcome you as the new Dundalk captain. Myself and all the new players are delighted to be here and we are delighted to be playing a home match as part of our pre-season preparations.

Preparations are going well. All the lads are settling in. It was great to get a few games under our belts with the practice game against Athlone plus the trip to Wexford. Last weekend we played a tough game in Sligo and came away with a win thanks to a great goal from Chris Turner. Since then we have played Drogheda and Monaghan so the fitness levels are very high. There really is a great buzz about the place. Training with the Gaffer and Joe has been top class.

It is pretty much a totally new team for you to watch this year. This should not prove much of a problem with us. Obviously myself, Burnsey, Manse and Harpal knew each other from Bohs. We know Dave Rogers and Declan O'Brien from playing against them. We have a lot of good players here so we hope we can settle and make progress quickly. We are very much looking forward

to Celtic game. We look forward to every game and we have an eye on the big match next Friday against Bohs. Today's game is a real bonus for us. I'm sure there will be a great atmosphere. I hope we can put on a show. We really want to make Oriel Park a difficult place for visiting teams this year and what better way to start our preparations for this than a game against Celtic! This is also our first match on the new surface. We have been training on it and my initial thoughts of the surface are all positive..

Next Friday is going to be another huge night. We will treat it as another game. I'm sure the fans will love it. It's Dundalk's first match back in the Premier Division after a long period out so we hope there is a big crowd to drive us on. Make sure to encourage your mates to come along and support us. Dundalk was well known for its big crowds in the First Division and many of the teams I was playing against would have loved to have the attendances that Dundalk have been getting.

Let's hope it continues now that we are in the Premier!

BRIEF INTRODUCTIONS

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CORINA O'REILLY

The Dundalk FC Magazine will give a proper run-down of our new players in our next issue. By the time you read this there may be a few more new faces or maybe some of the people we mention here will have been let go.

Back at Oriel training and in today's squad is Neil Gallagher. We all remember Gally who made his debut under Trevor Anderson back in 2003 (and saved a penalty in his first act as a Dundalk player!). Gally was at Longford last year and his performances pre-

vented Dundalk from beating Longford at Oriel last year.

Shaun Kelly has arrived from Heart of Midlothian and is set to be Sean Connor's first choice right-back. Dave Rogers has won three league championship medals with Shels and played European football for St Pat's last season when his loan deal with Sporting Fingal ended. Thomas Heary and Liam Burns have arrived from Bohs and bring a wealth of experience. Burns has over 400 first team games with Port Vale. Also arriving into the defence



THOMAS HEARY: In action against Paul Keegan and Drogheda United in last season's charge to the domestic league title

is on-loan signing Michael McKerr. Michael is a 19 year old Northern Ireland youth international who has arrived from Birmingham City. Sean Connor has made great efforts to sign quality midfielders. Harpal Singh arrives from Bohs having played under Sean at Sligo. Chris Turner has a similar track record having followed Sean from Sligo to Bohs. Sean has said that Chris is the best box to box midfielder in the country. Michael Collins arrives from Newry having been one of the top midfielder in the Irish League for

many years. Michael Daly has come from Manchester City while George O'Callaghan played his football in 2008 at Cork City and Tranmere. Up front we have Declan O'Brien who should need no introduction along with Darren Mansaram who is back in Ireland following a spell in England after leaving Bohs. Dwight Barnett has experience in the USA while midfielder Josh Maguire has played in the Romanian top flight with Stauve Bucharest as well as A-League football with New Zealand Knights.

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