

Review of the Scottish Season

One of the beauties of any game is the vast opportunity it gives for comment – and it is not unknown for the loudest comments to come from the least expert and least knowledgeable. This season has produced ample talking points, but the game has gone on, and has been none the worse for them.

The enforced break in mid-season because of the weather was an unmitigated nuisance to most clubs, to say the least. It was disastrous financially, and an appalling wrecker of training programmes. When matches were played, the crowds consisted of the hardy – perhaps foolhardy – few, who froze while the players slid and slipped. Loud was the cry for a proper break, and football through the summer.

One effect of this enforced break was a rip-roaring finish to the season. Each league held its interest to the end. Last season Dundee United looked to be slightly flattered by their position, but this year they were for the most part business-like and assured. It was in many ways a tragedy that, in the final days, they lost to both Rangers and Celtic, and in doing so seemed overawed in finding themselves so near to the promised land. Congratulations to them, and to manager Jim McLean, for so long acting as convincing leaders; they are a young team with much potential, and their turn must come if they stay together. It was good to see several of their players receiving international recognition at different levels.

For a long while the top clubs were within easy reach of each other; even well into February, only five points separated the first eight teams, and it looked to be almost anyone's championship. Such is the league, however, that one suspects that, at the end of the day, Rangers and Celtic will be at the sharp end: so indeed it was. Celtic looked anything but good early on, and as far on as April, when they were convincingly beaten by Dundee United at Tannadice, they seemed oddly uncertain of themselves. What was it that gave them the urge to reach the summit? Can there be any doubt that the return of Danny McGrain inspired them, and gave them the confidence in themselves so badly missing before.

Rangers puddled away as usual: a poor start, a strong middle period, and then, in the end, they lost the vital game to Celtic, and that was that. Injuries upset their plans more than others – Tom Forsyth's, in particular. But they seemed to lose their way when the atmosphere was lacking: contrast their magnificent displays in Europe with some of the lack-lustre episodes in front of meagre crowds on the lesser grounds.

Hearts had a long spell down the table. Although once or twice they almost broke free, they never did, and they finished the season in some disarray with ten consecutive losses. Hibs, whom they overhauled for a brief moment, finished strongly. Of the rest, St Mirren might have achieved more with greater consistency; Partick always looked safe, but had a thin finish, whilst Morton were inevitably entertaining – Andy Ritchie was never long out of the picture, and frequent moments of magic earned him a well-deserved Player of the Year award.

Motherwell lost touch and, apparently, heart early in the season. A period of rebuilding, with youth in evidence, suggests that there may be a realistic challenge in the First Division next season. It was an unsettled term for them, both on and off the field: as early as mid-September they were at the foot of the table, and they never left it.

Dundee emerged quickly as solid front-runners in the First Division. When they fell behind in number of games played, Clydebank, never far from the top, and Kilmarnock,

working their way up from the nether regions, disputed the lead, with assistance from Ayr United and – thanks to the devoted pitch preparation of many enthusiasts – Hamilton Academicals. In the end Kilmarnock pipped Clydebank by the narrowest of margins for the honour of joining Dundee in the move upwards. At the other end, Arbroath looked to have lost their way in the first half of the season, but they had a good run and emerged well up the table, leaving Queen of the South and Montrose stranded, though St Johnstone only pulled away during the final fixtures.

So to Division Two, where there was an extraordinary conclusion to the competition: for some time Falkirk moved confidently forward in command of a large lead, and Dunfermline, with games in hand, looked a snip. Then things started to go wrong: East Fife, lacking any consistency, none the less took Falkirk to the cleaners three times; Dunfermline huffed and puffed; and all the while Berwick Rangers calmly garnered the points and, all of a sudden, were clear at the top and uncatchable. Well done! Falkirk and Dunfermline were left to fight it out for the other promotion place, and the latter managed the draw they needed in the battle of the giants, in mid-May, by which time winter was nearly over.

The League Cup again proved successful in its present form, though the final was not contested until late March. For once Celtic failed to reach it, having lost to Rangers in an exciting semi-final. There were few early surprises, though Montrose, Arbroath and Ayr did well in reaching the quarter-finals. Rangers took the trophy in the final against Aberdeen, and thoroughly deserved to do so.

The Cup started in the thick of winter, and there were heavy delays. Falkirk eventually played their second round match in Inverness at the end of February, and just about achieved a record in the number of 29 postponed dates. There was little giant-killing, and events moved smoothly to a final between Rangers and Hibernian, who had managed to reverse a League Cup semi-final result against Aberdeen. The first final was a pretty boring do, and the second achieved little more except an extra half-hour. The third game, before a sparse crowd, was a good and exciting contest with Rangers deserving their success, but Hibs gaining very much from a stout effort. Victory in the Cup has eluded them for a very long time: they cannot be denied if they continue to show this sort of dedication.

Internationally Jock Stein obviously has a bit to do to reorganise, but he refuses to be hurried, and there are many ready to trust him and his experience, and to wait. The vociferous vandals who wreck our national image and Wembley Stadium do not give us much encouragement, but there is no doubt that the players are there. There have been distinct signs of revival, but, as the game against the Argentinians showed, there is a long way to go. This is the time to get behind the manager we have all wanted and to give him the support and understanding he needs.

Alan Elliott

Scottish League Referees 1978-79

H Alexander (Irvine)
W Anderson (East Kilbride)
R R Cuthill (Edinburgh)
M Delaney (Cleland)
D S Downie (Edinburgh)
A Ferguson (Giffnock)
I M D Foote (Glasgow)
A C Harris (Liff)
K J Hope (Clarkston)
T Kellock (East Kilbride)
W P Knowles (Inverurie)
A G M McFaul (Glasgow)
B R McGinlay (Glasgow)
A McGunnigle (Glasgow)

T Muirhead (Stenhousemuir)
D A Murdoch (Bothwell)
E H Pringle (Edinburgh)
D Ramsey (Edinburgh)
J R S Renton (Cowdenbeath)
B Robertson (East Kilbride)
G B Smith (Edinburgh)
K Stewart (Glasgow)
D F T Syme (Rutherglen)
R B Valentine (Dundee)
A W Waddell (Edinburgh)
J A R Wales (Cumbernauld)
C J White (Clarkston)

DUNDEE UNITED

PREM. DIV.

Year Formed: 1910 as Dundee Hibernians, became Dundee U. in 1923.
Ground: Tannadice Park. **Size:** 110 x 74 yds. **Capacity:** 28,500 (2,500 seats).
Telephone: Dundee 86289.
Secretary: Mrs Helen Lindsay. **Physiotherapist:** Andy Dickson.
Manager: Jim McLean.
Club Colours: Tangerine shirts/black trim, black shorts/tangerine trim.
Club Nickname: 'Terrors'.
Record Attendance: 28,000 v Barcelona, Fairs Cup, 1966.
European Competitions Entered: Fairs Cup, 1966-67, 1969-70, 1970-71, European Cup Winners' Cup: 1974-75, UEFA Cup: 1975-76, 1977-78, 1978-79.
Record Transfer Fee Received: £100,000 from Aston Villa for Andy Gray.

1978-79 LEAGUE RECORD

Match No.	Date	Venue	Opponents	H/T	League Result	Score	Pos'n	Goalscorers	Attendance
1	Aug 12	H	Hibernian	D	0-0	0-0	—	—	6000
2	19	A	Partick T	D	1-1	1-0	4	Frye	4500
3	26	H	Aberdeen	D	1-1	0-1	5	Hegarty	10,000
4	Sept 9	H	Morton	L	1-2	0-0	6	Hegarty	5531
5	16	A	Motherwell	W	1-0	1-0	6	Dodds	3372
6	23	A	St Mirren	W	3-1	2-1	4	Dodds, Narey, Hegarty	8000
7	30	H	Hearts	W	3-1	3-0	4	Kopel, Kirkwood 2	6312
8	Oct 7	A	Rangers	D	1-1	1-0	4	Kirkwood	27,000
9	14	H	Celtic	W	1-0	1-0	2	Kopel	17,726
10	21	A	Hibernian	D	1-1	0-1	2	Payne	8000
11	28	H	Partick T	W	2-0	0-0	1	Dodds, Narey	6055
12	Nov 4	A	Aberdeen	L	0-1	0-1	1	—	14,850
13	11	A	Morton	L	1-3	0-1	1	Addison	6500
14	18	H	Motherwell	W	2-1	2-1	1	Stewart, Kirkwood	5876
15	25	H	St Mirren	D	1-1	1-1	1	Kirkwood	6896
16	Dec 9	H	Rangers	W	3-0	2-0	1	Dodds, Fleming, Narey (pen)	15,247
17	16	A	Celtic	D	1-1	0-1	1	Narey	21,000
18	23	H	Hibernian	W	2-1	1-0	1	Payne, McNamara (og)	7194
19	Jan 20	A	St Mirren	L	1-2	0-1	1	Sturrock	5000
20	Feb 10	A	Rangers	L	0-1	0-0	2	—	22,000
21	Mar 3	A	Hibernian	L	0-1	0-0	4	—	5000
22	7	A	Motherwell	W	4-0	3-0	—	Narey, Sturrock 2, Stewart (pen)	2653
23	10	H	Morton	W	4-1	3-1	1	Stark, Sturrock 2, Kirkwood	6433
24	14	H	Partick T	W	2-1	1-0	—	Holt, Hegarty	6200
25	17	A	Aberdeen	W	2-0	0-0	1	Fleming, Sturrock	10,000
26	24	A	Morton	L	1-3	1-0	1	Dodds	5500
27	28	A	Partick T	W	2-1	1-1	—	Fleming, Kirkwood	4000
28	31	H	Motherwell	W	2-1	0-0	1	Addison 2	3633
29	Apr 4	A	Hearts	L	0-2	0-1	—	—	6700
30	7	H	St Mirren	W	2-0	0-0	1	Hegarty, Holt	6608
31	11	H	Celtic	W	2-1	1-1	—	Holt, Dodds	14,424
32	14	A	Hearts	W	3-0	2-0	1	Dodds 2, Kirkwood	7800
33	21	H	Rangers	L	1-2	0-2	1	Stewart (pen)	20,264
34	25	H	Hearts	W	2-1	2-0	—	Dodds, Kirkwood	6005
35	28	A	Celtic	L	1-2	1-0	1	Dodds	37,000
36	May 5	H	Aberdeen	D	2-2	1-0	1	Payne, Stewart	7822

Final League Position: 3

Goalscorers

League (56): Dodds 10, Kirkwood 9, Sturrock 6, Hegarty 5, Narey 5 (1 a pen), Stewart 4 (2 pens), Addison 3, Fleming 3, Holt 3, Payne 3, Kopel 2, Frye 1, Stark 1, own goal 1.
 League Cup (2): Fleming 1, Sturrock 1.
 Cup (0).

Honours

Scottish League: Division 2, Champions: 1924-25, 1928-29, Runners-up: 1930-31, 1959-60.
 Scottish Cup: Runners-up: 1973-74.
 Scottish League Cup: None.
 Record Victory: 14-0 v Nithsdale Wanderers, Scottish Cup, 1st Rd. Jan. 17th, 1931.
 Record Defeat: 1-12 v Motherwell, Division 2 1953-54.
 Most League Points: 51, Division 2, 1928-29.
 Most Individual League Goals in Season: 41, John Coyle, Division 2, 1955-56.
 Most Capped Player: Paul Hegarty, 5

McAlpine H	Kopel F	Stark D	Smith W	Fleming G	Hegarty P	Narey D	Robinson R	Sturrock P	Holt J	Kirkwood W	Stewart R	Addison D	Frye J F	Payne G	Dodds D	Honeyman G	Phillip I	Match No.
1	2	4*	5	6	7	10	9	3	8	12	11							1
1	2		5	6	4	7	10	3	8	9	11							2
1	12	2*	4	5	6	7	10	3	8	9	11							3
1	3		4	5	6	13	12	10	9	2*	8	7†	11					4
1	3	13	7	8*	5	6	4	10	2		9†	12	11					5
1	3		7	5	6	4		10	2	8	9	11						6
1	3		7*	8	5	6	4	12	10	11	2		9†	13				7
1	3		7	4	5	6	8*	11	10	2	9†	12	13					8
1	3		7	4	5	6	8	10	2	11	9							9
1	3	7*	4	5	6	8	10	2	11	12	9							10
1	3	7	4	5	6	8	10	2	11		9*	12						11
1	3	7	4	5	6	13	8	10	2	11†	9*	12						12
1	3*	7	4	5	6	8	10	2	11		9†	12	13					13
1	3		4	5	6	9	8	10	2	11	12		7*					14
1	3		4	5	6	9*	8	10	2	11	12			7				15
1	3		4	5	6	8	9	11	2	12		10*	7					16
1	3		4	5	6		9	11	2	8	10	7*	12					17
1	3		4	5	6	8	7	10	2		9*	11	12					18
1	3		4	5	6	8	11	10	2		9	12	7*					19
1	12	3	9	5	6	8	11	10	2		7		4*					20
1	3		8	5	6	9	7	10	2	13	11†	12	4*					21
1	3		10	5	6	8	7	11	2		9		4					22
1	3		10	5	6	8	7	11†	2	12	13	9	4*					23
1	3		10	5	6	8	7	11	2	12		9	4					24
1	3		10	5	6	8	7	11	2	12		9	4*					25
1	2	3	10	5	6	8	7	11	4	9								26
1	3		10	5	6	4	8	11	2	12	9		7*					27
1	3		4	5	6	13	8	12	10†	2	7	11	9*					28
1	3		9	5	6	11	8	10	12	2	7		4*					29
1	3		4	5	6	8	10	11	2	7	9							30
1	3		4	5	6	8	10	11	2	7	9							31
1	3		4	5	6	8	10	11	2	7*	12	9						32
1	3		4	5	6	8	10	11	2	7	12	9*						33
1	3		5	6	8	10	11	2	7	4	9							34
1	12	3	4	5	6	8*	10	11†	2	7	13	9						35
1	3		4	5	6	8	10	12	2	7*	11	9						36
36	11	30	5	33	36	36	8	31	26	32	34	24	5	19	19	2	9	
	+	+					+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
	3s	1s					3s	2s	1s	2s	4s	4s	7s	8s	1s	1s		

ST. MIRREN

PREM. DIV.

Year Formed: 1876. Ground: St Mirren Park (Also known as Love Street). Capacity: 53,000.
 Telephone: 041-889-2558
 Manager: Jim Clunie, Secretary: J. Aitken, Club Colours: Black and white stripes, white shorts and white stockings, with two black bands. Club Nickname: 'The Buddies'.
 Record Attendance: 47,428 v Celtic, Scottish Cup, 4th Rd, Mar 7th, 1925

1978-79 LEAGUE RECORD

Match No.	Date	Venue	Opponents	H/T Result	League Pos'n	Goalscorers	Attendance
1	Aug 12	A	Rangers	W 1-0 0-0	—	Torrance	28,000
2	19	H	Motherwell	L 0-1 0-1	6		8000
3	26	A	Morton	W 3-1 1-0	3	McGarvey, Fitzpatrick, Abercromby	12,000
4	Sept 9	A	Hibernian	L 0-1 0-1	5		8000
5	16	H	Partick T	W 1-0 0-0	4	Stark	8000
6	23	H	Dundee U	L 1-3 1-2	6	Bone	8000
7	30	A	Celtic	L 1-2 0-1	7	Hyslop	26,000
8	Oct 7	A	Hearts	D 1-1 0-1	7	Fitzpatrick	9475
9	14	H	Aberdeen	W 2-1 0-0	6	McGarvey, Bone	10,973
10	21	H	Rangers	L 0-1 0-1	7		22,000
11	28	A	Motherwell	W 2-1 1-1	7	Stark (pen), Richardson	6007
12	Nov 4	H	Morton	D 0-0 0-0	7		10,000
13	11	H	Hibernian	W 1-0 0-0	5	Stark	8000
14	18	A	Partick T	L 1-2 1-2	8	Young	11,000
15	25	A	Dundee U	D 1-1 1-1	6	Torrance	6896
16	Dec 9	H	Hearts	W 4-0 1-0	5	Stark 2, Torrance, Hyslop	6640
17	16	A	Aberdeen	D 1-1 1-0	5	Stark	12,700
18	23	A	Rangers	L 0-1 0-0	6		20,000
19	Jan 20	H	Dundee U	W 2-1 1-0	5	Bone, Torrance	5000
20	Feb 10	A	Hearts	W 2-1 0-1	3	Bone, Fitzpatrick	8000
21	17	H	Motherwell	W 1-0 1-0	2	McGarvey	7600
22	24	H	Aberdeen	D 2-2 0-1	1	McGarvey, Copland	11,500
23	Mar 10	A	Motherwell	W 3-0 2-0	2	McGarvey 3	4795
24	17	H	Morton	W 3-1 1-0	2	McGarvey 2, Bone	8500
25	24	H	Hibernian	L 2-3 1-1	2	McGarvey, Bone	10,000
26	27	H	Rangers	L 1-2 1-1	—	Stark	20,000
27	31	A	Partick T	L 1-3 0-1	3	Bone	5000
28	Apr 4	A	Hibernian	W 2-0 1-0	—	McGarvey, Stark	6000
29	7	A	Dundee U	L 0-2 0-0	3		6608
30	11	A	Morton	L 0-1 0-1	—		7500
31	14	H	Celtic	L 0-1 0-1	5		19,712
32	21	H	Hearts	W 2-1 2-1	5	Torrance, Abercromby	5800
33	25	A	Celtic	L 1-2 1-0	—	McGarvey	18,000
34	28	A	Aberdeen	W 2-1 0-1	5	Torrance, Stark	13,000
35	May 2	H	Partick T	D 1-1 1-1	—	McGarvey	5000
36	11	H*	Celtic	L 0-2 0-0	—		22,000

Final League Position: 6

*At Ibrox

Goalscorers

League (45): McGarvey 13, Stark 9, Bone 7, Torrance 6, Fitzpatrick 3, Abercromby 2, Hyslop 2, Copland 1, Richardson 1, Young 1.
 League Cup (12): Bone 3, McGarvey 3, Fitzpatrick 2, Hyslop 2, Richardson 1, Stark 1.
 Cup (3): Fitzpatrick 1, Munro 1, Stark 1.

Honours

Scottish League: Division 1 Champions 1976-77; Division 2 Champions 1967-68; Runners-up 1935-36.
 Scottish Cup: Winners 1926, 1959; Finalists 1908, 1934, 1962.
 Scottish Cup: 1919-20.
 Scottish Summer Cup: 1943-44.
 Scottish Cup: Finalists 1955-56.
 League Cup: 15-0 v Glasgow University, Scottish Cup 1st Rd, Jan. 30th, 1960.
 Record Victory: 2-9 v Dundee, Division 1, Feb. 29th, 1964.
 Record Defeat: 6-2, Division 2, 1967-68.
 Most League Points: 62, Division 2, 1967-68.
 Most Individual League Goals in Season: 45 Dunky Walker, Division 1, 1921-22.
 Most Capped Player: Tommy Jackson, 6, Scotland.

McLean A	Thomson W	Fitzpatrick A	Mowat J	Young J	Copland J	Dunlop A	Abercromby W	Hyslop D	Stark W	McGarvey F	Torrance R	Richardson A	Munro I	Bone J	Sharp R	Docherty B	Beckett A	Wair P	Match No.	
1	4	2	6	5	10	7*	11	12	3	9								8	1	
1	4	2	6	5	10	7*	11	12	8	3	9								2	
1	4	12	6	5	10		8	11	7	3	9								3	
1	4		6	5	10		8	11	7*	3	9	12							4	
1	4		6	5	10		8	11		3	9	7							5	
1	4		6	5	10		8	11	12	3	9	7*							6	
1	4		6	5	10*	7	8	11	12	3	9								7	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8*	11	12	7	3	9							8	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							9	
1	4	2*	6	5	10		8	11	7		3	9						12	10	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							11	
1	4	3	2	6	5	10*	13	8	11†	7		9	12						12	
1	4	2	6	5			8	11	10	7	3	9							13	
1	4	3	2	6	5		9	11	10	7	9								14	
1	4	2	6	5	11	12	8*	10	7	3	9								15	
1	4	6	5	11	12	8	10*	7	3	9									16	
1	4	6	5	10	12	8	11*	7	3	9									17	
1	4	12	6	5	10†	13	8	11		7	3	9							18	
1	4	6	5	12	8*	11	10	7	3	9									19	
1	4	6	5			8	11	10	7	3	9								20	
1	4	6	5			8	11	10	7	3	9								21	
1	4	2	6	5			8	11	10	7	3	9							22	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11	10	7	3	9							23	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							24	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8*	11	12	7	3	9							25	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							26	
1	4	2	6	5	10.		8	11*	12	7	3	9							27	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							28	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							29	
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	11		7	3	9							30	
1	4	2	6	5	10†		8*	11	13	7	3	9						12	31	
1	4*	2	6	5	10		11	8	12	3	9								7	32
1	4	2	6	5	10		11	8		3	9								7	33
1	4	2	6	5	10		7	9	11	13	3*							12	8†	34
1	4	2	6	5	10		8	9	11	7									3	35
1	4	2	6	5	10		7	9	8	3									11	36
2	34	36	2	25	36	36	30	3	32	33	14	28	33	33	2	1	12	4		
								†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†	†		
								2s	1s	5s	6s	4s	2s	1s	2s					