


# Hibs launch new home top




Over a hundred Hibs fans: men, women and children, braved the rain today to get their hands on the latest Edinburgh fashion accessory, the newly launched Hibs home strip for next season.

The design had been kept a closely guarded secret and the  shutters were down at the Hibs shop before the midday release, with fans gathering thirty minutes before opening time.

The top is manufactured by Puma and is a modern interpretation of the original bottle green worn by players before the change to the lighter emerald green in the 1930s. The jersey continues to bare the name of last season's sponsors, Leith based company Crabbies who sell alcoholic ginger beer.

When the shutters went up, the general opinion amongst the supporters was positive, and an improvement on last years 'down the slope' design. Within half an hour, the shop was full as customers continued to arrive.

First in the queue was Pamela Shiels from Northfield. She is a genuine candidate for 'Mum of the Year' and was using her lunch break from her work at nearby Cyrenians Homelessness Prevention Service to collect the top for her twenty nine year-old son, Cameron, who has been a season ticket holder at Easter Road since he was three. Although she thought the top looked nice, she admitted that she was not a football fan, unlike the next group.

 Pamela was followed by the Aitken family from Leith who are all season ticket holders in the West stand lower, and can be described as 'dyed in the wool' Hibs fans, with a family tradition linking them to the famous old club.

The jersey was for son Marc (14) who didn't wait to leave the shop before trying it on. Marc currently plays in goal for Bonnyrigg Rose and was last season's player of the year, drawing attention from a number of senior clubs. His favourite Hibs player was giant centre half Rob Jones who captained the team to their last honour, winning the League Cup in 2007, along with current stars Ivan Sproule and Eoin Doyle. Dad Ronnie who has been watching Hibs for 56 years, also harboured ambitions to play professional football, but when he was attracting the attention of Dundee United, the family moved to England, ending that dream.

The Hibs connection however started with Marc's grandfather and Ronnie's dad, also called Ronnie Aitken, who was on Hibs books as an inside left shortly after the war.

"He joined the club from Dumbarton," Ronnie told The Edinburgh Reporter. "At that time his signing on fee was £10 and a club tie, which is a bit different from what the players get today. Unfortunately he never made the first team as he played in the era of the famous five, although when he was in the RAF, he played alongside Matt Busby and Tom Finney."

It had been rumoured that the new strip would be modelled by a new signing, hopefully last year's captain James McPake who joined the club on loan from Coventry City in January, but this was not to be. Meanwhile, the club have formally announced the departures of last season's first team coach Billy Brown and director Fife Hyland. Both leave with the best wishes of all concerned at Easter Road.

