

# Football – When Liverpool last visited the capital



With all eyes on Tynecastle tonight for the 'Battle of Britain' Europa League qualifying round between Hearts and Liverpool, The Reporter's Football correspondent, John Hislop, looks at the last time the Anfield giants visited the capital on competitive business.

On Wednesday 17 September 1975, a confident Liverpool arrived at Easter Road to take on a Hibs side in transition, after the break-up of the 'Turnbull Tornadoes' but the available players were to prove more than a match for their more illustrious opponents.

Hibs fans were desperate for some success in the club's centenary year, and Chairman Tom Hart had backed manager Eddie Turnbull by paying the largest transfer fee ever paid by a Scottish club for Scottish international centre forward Joe Harper from Everton.

The fee was £120,000, which even today would be considered a major investment by any Scottish team outside the Old Firm, but back then was front page news.

Unlike today, the UEFA cup was taken seriously by the top English clubs, and Bob Paisley selected his strongest team, which included England international goalkeeper Ray Clemence, England captain Emlyn Hughes and the rising star of English football Kevin Keegan. The reds also had a familiar face in their line up with former Hibs midfield star Peter Cormack returning to his home town.

Hibs still had John Brownlie, Erich Schaedler, Pat Stanton, John Blackley, Alex Edwards and Arthur Duncan from the League

Cup winning team of 1972, as well as Jim McArthur, Roy Barry, Bobby Smith and Ian Munro to compliment Harper.

Harper was a controversial signing having been banned from playing for his country after a late night drinking session in Copenhagen, but Turnbull knew him from his Aberdeen days and felt sure that he could reproduce his prolific goal-scoring form in the green and white jersey. The Liverpool fans amongst the near 20,000 crowd didn't agree and taunted Harper from the start for being an 'Everton reject.'

Within 19 minutes, Harper had silenced his critics with a stunning goal. Iain Munro went deep to collect a short throw from McArthur. The skilful midfielder sent an inch perfect pass down the wing and Arthur Duncan was onto it in a flash. Phil Neal the Liverpool full back misjudged the pace on the ball, and the Hibs winger was able to send in a first time cross hard and low across the face of the goal. The ball was met by Joe Harper at the far post and the Hibs number nine made no mistake, hammering the ball past Clemence to the delight of the ecstatic Hibs fans.

Both side attacked and Liverpool had a goal chalked off after 57 minutes, before Hibs missed a great chance to double their lead near the end. With ten minutes remaining, Duncan was brought down by both Chris Lawler and Phil Neal inside the penalty box, and the Ditch referee had no hesitation in pointing to the spot.

John Brownlie struck his penalty well, but Clemence showed his class diving to his right to produce a world class save.

Two weeks later, Hibs went out of the tournament after losing 3-1 at Anfield. John Toshack opened the scoring after 22 minutes, but Hibs fought back and Alex Edwards equalised ten minutes later, smashing a 20 yard strike past Clemence following a cross by Des Bremner.

At half time, the away goal meant Liverpool needed two goals

to progress and they both came from Toshack headers.

Liverpool went from strength to strength, winning the tournament after a 4-3 aggregate victory over Club Brugge from Belgium. By the end of the decade, they had won two European Cups, whilst Hibs were relegated.