

Hibs star Paul Cairney determined to prove Buddies wrong



Paisley born Hibs midfielder Paul Cairney returns to his hometown club this Saturday determined to prove them wrong for dispensing with his services as a seventeen year old on the grounds that he was too small.

Cairney still has many friends who support the 'Buddies', including his next door neighbour, but he is hoping to spoil their weekend by taking the three SPL points back along the M8 to Leith.

Speaking at the weekly press conference, the former Partick Thistle star said: "I'm from Paisley, but I supported Manchester United although all my friends and family support St Mirren. My next door neighbour Brian also supports St Mirren so I think it will be good to play against them. If I score, I think he will chap my door, but I'm going there for the three points. I know St Mirren like to pass the ball about so hopefully we can get a win.

"I was at St Mirren when I was a youngster between 15 and 17 then I left and went to Queens Park after I was told that I was too wee by my youth coach, but I'm here now and happy to be here. I was disappointed at the time but that gave me a wee bit of urge to work a bit harder."

Cairney has done well since his move to Hibs, although he admits that he is still finding his feet in the SPL, particularly since he is playing in an unfamiliar role.

"I think it's just having the confidence coming from a lower

league. This is my first time playing in the holding role so it's taken a wee bit time to adjust to it as I prefer playing out wide and a bit further forward. This is a massive club and last year where they finished was unacceptable. Adding boys like Tim, (Clancy) Deegs (Gary Deegan) and McPake means we have real fight and hopefully we can do well this year."

Although he did not sign for the Easter Road club until the close season, Cairney was aware that he was on Pat Fenlon's radar as the Hibs boss used to watch Partick Thistle to check on the form of on-loan player Sean Welsh.

He continued: "The manager came to a few Partick games last year. Hibs had a boy out on loan (Sean Welsh) and I did well when he was watching him. Thankfully he was there the day I scored a hat trick against Dundee. I knew before that game as the manager and agent told me I had to go out and perform so I did.

"I knew toward the end of the season they were in for me so I watched the Dunfermline game on TV and was happy with that."

During last week's Edinburgh derby, many fans were concerned to see Cairney being physically sick inside the centre circle and some questioned his fitness level, however he is keen to set the record straight as to what happened.

"At half time I was absolutely roasting and I drank too much water, but I was fine afterwards. I'll be keeping away from the water bottles this week."

Cairney is likely to retain his place against St Mirren at New Love Street on Saturday, and may be joined in the first team by new signing Shefki Kuqi.