

McPake Aims for 7th Place and Scottish Cup Win



Hibs skipper James McPake insists that last May's cup final defeat to Hearts will be the last thing on his mind when he lines up against Falkirk in this weekend's William Hill Scottish Cup Semi Final. Speaking at the weekly press conference, the defender said:- "We can't think about it. That's in the past. We can't think about that game or we will struggle. It was a hard one for everyone, there is no hiding from that. No-one is going to say it didn't bother us. To lose any final is hard to take. That was my first final, I still don't know if I'll ever get to another. To have the chance again is good. It's what you play football for, but we have to focus completely on Falkirk, and not look to the final.

"There is a bigger thing here than losing that final in May. That is the 111 years since we last won this Cup. I've never won a cup, maybe Kevin Thomson will have some trophies but I can't think of too many others in the team who have medals. So there are a lot of different things going on, a lot more than just that final in May. Yeah, it was a bad day for everybody involved and the fans are probably still hurting.

"But we'd be as well quitting if that's the only game we look back on. Am I going to look back on my career and say, 'I was a footballer, but that day in May, that was my career?' I'm not going to do that. What we're looking at is changing the history of this football club. If we do that, yeah, it'll take care of that day in May.

"The main aim is to change everything. Making up for last year is the small part of it. The bigger part is going on to win this Cup for the club, as it's been so long. We've had a tough

run – Hearts, Aberdeen and Kilmarnock in that order in the Cup. It's not been easy. We've done well in the Cup so far but probably our hardest game is the one coming up. It's the semi-final.

Despite the fact that Hibs have had to beat three SPL teams, Hearts, Aberdeen and Kilmarnock to reach this stage, McPake believes that Falkirk will provide their toughest test to date.

He continued: "There's a lot of expectation on us but it's a massive game for them as well. I expect Falkirk to be lively. They're a decent team. There isn't too much between the First Division and the Premier League in my eyes.

"Dundee have come back and although they're going back down they beat us up there and got a point at Easter Road. That's our gauge on what the First Division is like. Falkirk will want to impress the new manager and will be up for it. I don't think what division you're in counts for anything in a game like this."

With the possibility of relegation long gone, most fans believe that defeat on Saturday would all but end the season, with five relatively meaningless games remaining, but McPake is adamant that failure to reach the top six has resulted in a new objective: He added: "We wanted to finish in the top six. We haven't done it but we can't dwell on the fact. Our aim now is to finish seventh and win that mini-league, then go on and try to win the cup."

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