

# Nicholl and Vine finally team up after 13 years



Hibs' new signing Rowan Vine has answered the supporters keen to know his favoured position by stating that although he was used wide on the left at St Johnstone, he believes that he would be more influential through the middle, and hopes that assistant manager Jimmy Nicholl who has followed his career with interest since spotting his potential in a reserve fixture with Portsmouth 13 years agrees.

The 30-year-old hitman also insists that everyone at Easter Road will have to pull together to compensate up for the loss of Leigh Griffiths' goals, and cites his previous club as an example of what can be done without an prolific striker in the team.

Speaking ahead of the club's European trip to Sweden, Vine said: "I had not played for three years due to injury and had fallen out of favour at QPR, so wherever I was going, I was desperate to play. I was probably used to being a centre-forward, but I'd played so much out wide and in different positions. I'm an attacker, I want to attack and if I can all I think about is attacking and scoring goals.

"I haven't spoken in depth with the manager on where he intends to play me. I'm a centre forward, but I've been played out wide a lot. I'm an attacker and all I want to do is attack. My preferred position is up front.

"It wasn't a bone of contention for me at Saints, because I hadn't played much for the previous three years due to injuries. So I was just desperate to play. I was playing up front during an early spell of the season when we won a few games on the bounce and I enjoyed it. But then someone got

injured and it was reshuffled. I got moved wide.

“I have spoken to Jimmy Nicholl and he told me he’s known me since I was 17 or 18 playing for Portsmouth reserves. He said he’d seen me a few times. Apparently, he puts a star against your name if he likes you and follows you, which I see as a compliment that he thinks you are good enough a player. He says he was always interested in working with me if the chance came up, and he has seen me play up front, or just off the front man. So hopefully I get the chance to play there.

I’m at the stage of my career where I need to play games, and no disrespect to St Johnstone, they are a smaller club in the SPL. They have over-achieved in the last few seasons. Hibs set their standards a lot higher and expect to be finishing a lot higher up the league. Hibs are a much bigger and better club than St Johnstone in my eyes.”

“I went back down the road for a break during the summer but I spoke to a couple of people who look after me up here. They asked me what I thought of the league here. I told them I enjoyed myself, the standard is fine and it would be one of my preferred destinations if the chance came to come back up. Hibs were top of the list for me.”

The former Luton Town, Birmingham City and Queens Park Rangers star insists that the whole team will have to pull together to make up for the loss of last season’s talisman Leigh Griffiths, but his experience at St Johnstone shows what is possible.

“At every club, there should be pressure on the attacking players to score. Last season, for Leigh to get 28 goals was unbelievable. To have done it for a team which finished outside the top six, you can look at it different ways. At St Johnstone, we finished third with no player in the team scoring more than ten goals. A lot of our goals came from midfield, but I think the whole club here at Hibs knows those

goals Leigh scored will be missing so everyone has to try that little bit harder to contribute but it would be a bit of a disservice to the boys here to say they were too reliant on Leigh last season.”