

‘Yogi’ named as new manager of Inverness ‘Caley Jags’



Former Hibs fan, player, captain and manager John ‘Yogi’ Hughes has beaten off competition from former team-mate Paul Hartley and ex Kilmarnock boss Kenny Shiels to land the manager’s job at Inverness Caledonian Thistle.

Hughes was unveiled at a press conference at 11am today where he said: “I’ve got big shoes to fill in Terry Butcher’s. I’ve met the players and told them that it’s business as usual. Terry and Maurice did a wonderful job at this club. The position that they are in might have scared one or two people, but it excites me and I feel that I have the experience and personality to bring success to the club.

“I’m delighted to get back (into football) and the spirit in this dressing room that Terry has built up is fantastic. They are proud of always having the underdog tag and that creates a siege mentality and if I can match the lofty heights that Terry Butcher did at this club then I am doing a right good job.

“I’ve been a manager for 11 years and have great experience of Scottish football and have a knowledge of the English game and bringing up one or two players, exactly what Terry has done.

“I like to see the game played as total football and this team play good football in the right areas and I’ve said that to the players, it’s business as usual. In two weeks time if someone says to the chairman, ‘How’s it going?’ and you wouldn’t think there has been a change then I will have done my job.

“In football you’re only as good as your last result so we

have to keep our feet on the ground, but Terry has built the foundations for me to come in here and have success and hopefully I can carry that on.”

Hughes will take on a side currently second in the league and still competing in both cup competitions having won five consecutive matches. Inverness face Hearts in the League Cup semi-finals at Easter Road on 2 February before facing Clyde or Stranraer in the Scottish Cup the following week. His first game in charge will be at St Mirren Park on Saturday.

Former Inverness manager and current Hibs boss Terry Butcher sent his best wishes saying: “It is a great club for him. He is a big guy and should fit my chair well. There is a big chair waiting for him. He is a lovely guy and, if it is Yogi, then I wish him well. It is a smashing club to take charge of there, there are no problems, no pressure and it will tick along nicely because the dressing room is really tight.”

Hibs skipper Liam Craig also congratulated his former boss: “A lot of people thought we had a fall out after I left Falkirk, but I’ve said on many occasions that I’m not silly enough to fall out with Yogi. He was great for my career, obviously he gave me my first professional contract and whenever I see him now, I get on great with him and if he is back in the game then great.”

Born and brought up in Leith, Hibs fan Hughes started his playing career in junior football with Newtongrange Star before moving to Berwick Rangers under Jim Jeffries. After a spell up front, he caught the eye of Swansea City where he played for a year before returning to Scotland with Falkirk. After over 100 games at Brockville, he signed for Celtic then moved to his beloved Hibs.

His ‘never say die’ attitude made him a favourite with the Hibs fans however he was unable to prevent the team being relegated in 1998. He bounced back the following season and

captained the side to the First Division title then helped Hibs to a top six finish.

His Easter Road career came to an end when he was released by Alex McLeish, but the Hibs fans hadn't seen the last of the big defender as he led Ayr United to the League Cup Final, beating the Easter Road side in the semi-final at Hampden en route.

His managing career started with Falkirk whom he kept in the SPL as well as reaching the Scottish Cup Final before he returned to Easter Road, where he guided Hibs to fourth place and a European spot, bringing in quality players such as Anthony Stokes and Liam Miller.

Injuries and forced transfers hampered his time at Easter Road however and a poor start to the following season saw him replaced by Colin Calderwood.

His next move was to Hartlepool he earned a Manager of the Month award after three straight wins, but despite this the club were eventually relegated and he was sacked.