

Butcher denies moves for Jason Scotland and Dean Shiels



Hibs' boss Terry Butcher yesterday denied reports linking both Jason Scotland and Dean Shiels with moves to Easter Road during the winter transfer window.

The former Dundee United and St Johnstone striker who is currently with Barnsley is known to be keen to return north of the border to end his career, whilst former Hibs' favourite Dean Shiels is desperate to play first team football after languishing on the side-lines at Ibrox.

Speaking at the club's training centre, Butcher said: "I spoke to his (Scotland's) agent yesterday and said 'no, we wouldn't be pursuing it'," he said. "The next thing I read is that we're keen on doing it. That won't happen.

"As for Shiels, he added: "No. I've not spoken to his agent but we wouldn't be interested in that. We are looking at other areas of the team to try to strengthen first and foremost.

"We're working hard. It's still early days in January; nothing normally falls into place until the latter part.

"Defensively we're pretty strong. Going forward and scoring goals is something we want to improve upon."

Butcher took in the Sunderland v Stoke City Under 21 game on Monday night, along with several representatives from other SPFL clubs but was unusually reticent about discussing whether any players on show would be moving north during the transfer window, although Stoke's goal scorer James Alabi caught the eye, but having been loaned out twice already this season, to

Mansfield Town and Forest Green Rovers, FIFA rules now prohibit a third temporary move for the former Celtic youngster.

After two away games against Dundee United and Aberdeen, Hibs return to Easter Road this weekend where they will face St Mirren.

After a calendar year with only three home wins, everyone at the club is determined to improve upon that dismal record and Butcher believes that the nervousness which surrounded the players in the past has been removed.

He continued: "The most pleasing aspect is that we are now really looking forward and anticipating playing at Easter Road again – that's a difference from what it has been. It is a real thrill to be playing there again. We have won the last two games there and won well, so the target is three points against St Mirren."

Photo by John Preece

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