

Sandy Jardine dies at 65



Sandy Jardine, a man forever associated with the rebirth of Heart of Midlothian FC in the 1980s, has died, 18 months after being diagnosed with cancer. He was 65.

Jardine was brought to Tynecastle by his close friend and then Hearts manager Alex MacDonald in 1982 and the former Rangers and Scotland defender was instrumental in shaping Hearts as a major force in Scottish football.

Many people, including those at Rangers where he had played with distinction for 17 years, believed that his best days were behind him when he moved back to his home city to join Hearts. However, Jardine prove everyone wrong and would be a key player for Hearts for another five years, his experience and knowledge of the game helping the development of youngsters such as Craig Levein.

Jardine was initially assistant to MacDonald but his influence was such that then Hearts chairman Wallace Mercer appointed Jardine joint manager in 1986 – the year forever associated with heartache for Hearts as they lost the league title in the last eight minutes of season 1985/86 with a 2-0 loss at Dundee. Jardine's major contribution to that team, which also reached the Scottish Cup final that year, was such that he was named Scotland's player of the year for the second time at the age of 37.

Jardine played 38 times for Scotland and was part of the Rangers side who won the European Cup Winners Cup in 1972.

In a statement, Hearts offered their condolences to Jardine's family saying they were deeply saddened at the death of a club legend.

The saying goes that only the good die young. Sandy Jardine epitomised everything good about football and his contribution to Hearts will never be forgotten.

The Edinburgh Reporter's thoughts are with Sandy's family at this sad time.