

# Who's next for the Easter Road hot seat?



*Who will be the next Hibs' manager? John Hislop looks at the current odds of the 'names in the frame.'*

Favourite is former captain and current Dumbarton manager Ian Murray at 6/4. Some fans believe that the opportunity has come too soon for Murray who has performed wonders in his short spell with the 'Sons, rescuing them from almost certain relegation two seasons ago then guiding them to mid table safety last year.

Murray remains a popular figure around Easter Road and would be likely to galvanise the supporters.

Second favourite at 5/2 is Motherwell manager Stuart McCall due mainly to his excellent working relationship with new Chief executive Leeann Dempster. The former Rangers star has proved himself at Fir Park, guiding 'Well to second place in the SPFL for the second consecutive year while working on a limited budget.

McCall would be another popular choice but whether he would leave Fir Park and European football for the Championship is another matter.

Former Hibs' player Danny Lennon has moved up to third favourite at 11/2. Lennon's contract with St Mirren was not renewed despite guiding them to safety and winning the League Cup two years ago, beating Hearts in the final.

Lennon has never courted publicity and may be too low profile for the club, but his St Mirren team did like to play a passing game which would be welcome at Easter Road.

At 6/1 is former player and manager John Collins which is surprising given his reputed relationship with Chairman Rod Petrie. Collins was the last Hibs' manager to win a trophy when he secured the CIS League Cup with a stunning 5-1 win over Kilmarnock in 2007.

Collins always insists that his teams play an attacking style of football and is renowned in the game for his professionalism and fitness. His last spell in charge however was marred when a delegation of players approached Petrie to complain about his training methods. In addition a number of his signings were deemed not to be good enough for the club.

Collins divides Hibs' supporters, but would probably be welcomed back by the majority.

Three former Hibs managers then feature, with Alex McLeish installed at 8/1, Tony Mowbray at 12/1 and Mixu Paattelainen at 18/1.

McLeish led the team when they last played in the lower division and signed superstars such as Franck Sauzee and Russell Latapy who thrilled the Easter Road faithful with the best brand of football seen in the capital since the days of Turnbull's Tornados. The club were unable to sustain the high wage bill however and McLeish moved to Ibrox where he had had a successful spell in charge of Rangers.

Mowbray brought through the golden generation of youngsters including Derek Riordan, Garry O'Connor, Scott Brown, Kevin Thomson, Steven Whittaker and Steven Fletcher as well as signing players of the calibre of David Murphy, Ivan Sproule, Rob Jones, Chris Hogg, Dean Shiels, Merouane Zemmama, Abdessalam Benjelloun and Guillaume Beuzelin. After leaving Hibs, Mowbray had a successful spell in charge of West Brom before returning across the border to manage Celtic.

He was sacked after a short stint at Parkhead and later managed Middlesbrough before being relieved of his duties

midway through the season.

Paattelainen managed Hibs to a top six finish but his style of play did not endear him to the fans. After leaving Easter Road however he took over Kilmarnock who played an attractive style which saw him move to take over as the manager of Finland.

One possible name who is not listed in the betting is former midfielder and current Northern Ireland manager Michael O'Neil who still lives in the city.

Whoever gets the job will face an uphill struggle to win promotion given the strength of the other teams in the division.