

Ivan Sproule announces his retirement from football



Former Hibs fans' favourite Ivan Sproule has announced his retirement from football and will play his last game today for Ballinamallard United against Carrick Rangers.

Tony Mowbray signed Sproule for Hibs from Institute for a bargain £5,000 in 2005 and he will be forever remembered for scoring a sensational hat trick in a 3-0 win over Rangers at Ibrox (See below) and also his part in the CIS Cup win over Kilmarnock.

In the summer of 2007, Sproule joined Bristol City for an undisclosed fee believed to be in the region of £500,000.

In April 2011 he returned to Easter Road for a short spell before moving to Ross County.

Linfield published the following statement on their website yesterday: "Best wishes are extended to Ivan Sproule from all of his many friends at Windsor Park.

"35 year old Ivan has announced his intention to retire from the game after tomorrow's crucially important game for Ballinamallard away to Carrick Rangers.

"Ivan signed for Linfield on December 16, 2013 until the end of the 2014/15 season.

"He made his Linfield debut as a half-time sub in a dramatic, late comeback 3-2 away win against Warrenpoint on Saturday, January 4, 2014.

"He scored his first Linfield goal in a 6-0 home win against

Ballinamallard United on February 15, 2014 – the day the then Linfield manager David Jeffrey announced his intention to step down from his post at the end of that season.

“He won a County Antrim Shield winners medal in March 2014.

“Ivan signed a one year contract extension with Linfield on June 18, 2015 but signed on loan for Ballinamallard United on January 5, 2016 until the end of the current season.

““He will perhaps be best remembered for his late winner in the Boxing Day ‘Big Two’ Derby game in 2014 when he received a second yellow card for his goal celebration at the Kop end of Windsor Park.

His final Linfield goal was the winner in a 1-0 win at Dungannon on October 31, 2015 and his final Linfield appearance was as a sub in a 2-0 defeat away to Portadown on November 28, 2015.”