

Neil Lennon insists Hibs will be ready for European campaign



Neil Lennon is looking forward to the club's Europa League campaign and he revealed that the club's pre-season schedule is aimed at being ready for these games.

Hibs will play NSÍ Runavík of the Faroe Islands in the First Qualifying Round, with the winner facing home and away ties against Greek side Asteras Tripolis in the next round.

Before that however, Hibs face Linlithgow Rose and Berwick Rangers in friendlies and Blackburn Rovers in Paul Hanlon's testimonial match.

Whilst Hibs fans seem to be eyeing up a trip to Greece, Lennon is taking nothing for granted given that the Faroe Islands team is half way through their league season.

He also appealed for the fans to turn out in numbers for the

fixtures.

Lennon told Hibernian Media: "It's exciting for the players and the supporters – the draw makes it feel a bit more real and something to aim towards.

"When we knew we'd qualified the pre-season schedule was confirmed with a view to us being ready for the 12th, and that's what we need to be.

"Against Brondby a few years ago it was my first game in charge and we hadn't had much time to prepare, where as with these matches the squad is more settled and we have the experience of those ties to call upon.

"We'll be up against a side midway through their league season so they'll obviously be well prepared, so it's important we get our work in over the coming weeks to get the fitness levels up and try to get a bit of sharpness for the game.

"The pre-season matches with Linlithgow, Berwick and Blackburn have been designed to give everyone minutes and get us up to speed, so hopefully they'll help us.

"We can't afford to be complacent.

"There are always surprises at this time of the season in Europe – lack of sharpness or focus, playing in tough conditions, or a lack of knowledge on the opposition.

"We need to concentrate on the first set of fixtures and get the job done before any thoughts of what comes after.

"The first leg is at home and hopefully we'll see another good turnout at Easter Road – our attendances last season were excellent and we need more of the same for the game against Runavík."