

Paul Hanlon thanks family, team mates, staff and fans for their support



Hibs' popular defender Paul Hanlon is looking forward to his testimonial match on Sunday against Tony Mowbray's Blackburn Rovers at Easter Road.

Like his friend and team mate Lewis Stevenson, Hanlon will be donating a proportion of the gate receipts to the charity Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) in memory of former academy player, David Paul and various other local children's charities.

Hopefully the supporters will turn out in numbers to pay tribute to Hanlon's ten-year service to the club that he

supported as a youngster.

Hanlon yesterday took time out from pre-season training to thank his family, the Hibs' players and staff and the club's fans for their continued support throughout his career.

He told the Hibs' website: "From standing in the tunnel as a young 17 year old Hibs fan ready to make my debut to walking out at my testimonial 10 years later, it has been a childhood dream come true.

"I'll never forget the first time I walked in the dressing room and saw my name and number on the back of my strip. It has been a rollercoaster of ups and downs throughout my time in the first team but the obvious highs (21.05.16) make it all worth while and I believe the club as a whole is going from strength to strength.

"To get to this stage of my career, I have a lot of people to thank who have helped me along the way. First of all and most importantly I want to thank my very supportive family. From the age of 6, my parents have followed me up and down the country dragging my sister along with us. There is no doubt I would not have got to where I am today without their time and commitment.

"Also thank you to my wife, Danielle. She has supported me through the good and the bad and is always there to pick me up when I need it. On Sunday I'll also have my number 1 supporter here, My Nana. She has had a tough time recently but her determination is inspiring and I am so pleased that she will get to watch this game.

"A massive thank you must go to all the staff and players I have seen come and go throughout the years, all of whom have played their part in my career. From Mixu Paatelainen handing me my debut through to our current manager, Neil Lennon, as well as all the players I have been lucky enough to share a dressing room with.

"I really believe our current squad is as strong as it has ever been during my time at Hibs. To everyone behind the scenes from the physio's and sport science department to Tam and Joyce the kit team and all the rest of the staff, thank you!

"The most important part of any football club are the fans. Together we have enjoyed plenty memorable matches over the years. One of the highlights of playing for Hibs for me, is standing on the pitch at full time listening to you all sing 'Sunshine on Leith'. No matter how many times I hear it, nothing makes me prouder to represent this special club. For your continued support, thank you!

"Finally, I would like to say a special thank you to Graeme Cadger and all my testimonial committee for dedicating their time and effort in to making all this possible. It is greatly appreciated that you have come together to mark this milestone in my career.

"This has also led to me having the opportunity to donate to Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) in memory of former academy player, David Paul and various other local children's charities."