

Hope is a good thing in football

The Scottish

Cup can be likened to Christmas as it's the time of the year when even fans of lower league teams can get carried away, their usually realistic approach to their team's position in the league suddenly being engulfed by a wave of optimism, a feeling of 'anything can happen in the cup'.

Edinburgh

City are jostling with Cove Rangers at the top of Ladbrokes League Two and there will be those who say that getting promotion to League One is the club's priority this season. For other clubs, however, the William Hill Scottish Cup is a means of escape from a mundane season of mediocrity. An abject performance against Brechin City or a dire showing against Stirling Albion can be forgotten if your team manages a great win in the cup.



The Lord Provost Donald Wilson with Alan Stubbs, *Sir Tom Farmer* and Rod Petrie at the civic reception for Hibs in 2016

Hope enables fans to dare to dream. Clubs much bigger than Edinburgh City have endured more than a century of Scottish Cup failure. Supporters of Hibernian never stopped dreaming of seeing their team lift the famous old trophy even if, up until 2016, they hadn't won it since 1902. Their win over Rangers three and a half years ago finally saw their dreams come true and, while I say this through gritted Jambo teeth, I was genuinely happy for some of my Hibeepals of decades acquaintance who had nearly given up on seeing their team win the cup (it would be churlish of me to point out that while Hibs have won the Scottish Cup once in the last 100 years, Hearts legend Rudi Skacel won it twice in

the pace of six years...)

Who's to say Edinburgh City can't pull off a cup shock by knocking Hamilton Accies out of the cup? After all, in that season when Hibs won the trophy Accies were trounced 4-1 at Annan Athletic. Who knows what will happen on 18th January?

To quote Andy Dufresne, the lead character in that brilliant film *The Shawshank Redemption* – “hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things and no good thing ever dies.” So long as the City players don't dwell on another quote from the film – “There's not a day goes by I don't feel regret.”