

# **A Hearts legend returns to Tynecastle**

**Hearts today announced the return to Tynecastle of a club legend – former player and manager Jim Jefferies who has agreed to return to Gorgie as an Advisor to the club's Board of Directors for an initial period of six months.**

In a statement on the club's official website, Hearts said that given the time pressures and escalating costs of the ongoing challenge to their relegation, coupled with the re-opening of various parts of Tynecastle and Oriam, they have decided to put their recruitment for a Sporting Director on hold. However, Hearts saw the need to support returning manager Robbie Neilson ahead of the start of season 2020/21 in October. Which they have done by securing the services of a man who remains an icon among the Maroon Army.

Jefferies, who has left his position as Sporting Director at Edinburgh City, made 310 appearances as a Hearts player during a difficult decade for the club between 1972 and 1981. These were dark times for the Maroons, but it is as a manager that Jefferies will forever be remembered. 'JJ' left Falkirk to take charge of Hearts in 1995 and within seven months had taken the relegation threatened team to a Scottish Cup final where they lost to Rangers. He rebuilt the team and was rewarded when he guided Hearts to the Scottish Cup two years later, exacting revenge on Rangers in the 1998 final.

Jefferies would leave for a spell at English side Bradford City, returning to Scotland to take charge at Kilmarnock and Dunfermline Athletic before returning to Hearts for a second stint as manager in 2010.

The man who is simply adored by the Hearts support told the official Hearts website:

“Somebody said to me ‘It’s your club, you can’t turn it down’. There was never any chance of that.

“Ann timed it well because I was already talking to another club who were terrific. The Chairman came across great and I thoroughly enjoyed chatting to him. He gave me a few days to think it over but in those few days Hearts came calling and I had a chat with Ann. She put across exactly what it was she was looking for me to do, which suited me.

“I wasn’t looking for anything full on as Sporting Director or anything like that. The situation is great, and she’s given me a specific task to do which is to help her because she’s got a lot on her plate with other things, as you could imagine.

“Robbie knows the club as well as me and if he needs any support there will be no interference, it’ll be a case of if they need anything or any advice then I’m there.

“It’s a difficult time. We’ve just got to plan for what we know. Robbie’s got to have the final say on players. Robbie will want to bring in his own people and we’ve got to support him to do that and find how best we can do that.

“My role is to help Ann and the Board and advise them on things that have maybe just been lacking attention and some things that have not been working. It’s as simple as that.

“Hopefully, we can address these things and get Hearts back to where they should be, challenging at the right end of the table.

“I’m looking forward to it enormously. When it’s your own club that you have such a relationship with and the supporters, it’s exciting. It’s hard to say that when you’re getting on in years! But it is exciting. I’m looking forward to it.”