

Coach backs Paul Hanlon's Euro 2020 bid

Hibs' Head Coach Jack Ross has backed Paul Hanlon's claim for a place in Scotland's Euro 2020 squad following his consistency of performances for the club this season.

The 31-year-old defender won his one and only cap against the Czech Republic back in October, although he was an unused substitute for a friendly against the Netherlands under interim manager Malky Mackay in 2017.



Scottish Premiership – Hibernian v Kilmarnock. Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK. 16/01/2021 Hibs play host to Kilmarnock in the Scottish Premier League at Easter road, Edinburgh. Pic shows: Hibs defender, Paul Hanlon, clears the danger. Credit: Ian Jacobs

He was overlooked by the national team boss as the Scots kicked off their World Cup qualifiers last month but he has been a rock in the heart of the Hibs' defence, helping the club to third place in the table and he is hoping to end the season with another Scottish Cup medal to add to the one he picked up five-years ago which would help to bring him to the attention of Scotland boss Steve Clarke.

Ross said: "Paul earning his cap this season and being involved in the Scotland squad was a well-deserved reward for his performances, not just this season but throughout his time at Hibs. He's a player that I only really appreciated how good

an all-round footballer he is when I get to work with him every day.

“His temperament, attitude and professionalism are outstanding bit just his qualities as a player. He is a really good player and I think his consistency of performance this season on the back of being involved in the national team squad has meant that should any opportunities that arise that he is still very much in the manager’s thought. I think he understands that there are players who are maybe ahead of him at the moment within the squad but maintaining that performance level gives him the best possible chance should it arise.”

Hanlon has put such thought to the back of his mind however and is just determined to end the season in style.

He said: “It’s always been an ambition of mine to play for my country and luckily enough with the form I’ve had this season, it’s brought me that this year. I’m delighted to get that cap and to know that you are in or around the manager’s thoughts. Every player says the same but it is really all about performing well for Hibs and Hibs being successful. That’s a big part of it as well.

“Being part of a successful Hibs team will undoubtedly help my chances so that’s my main focus, to try and finish the season strongly, cement third place and see how far we can go in the cup and if that leads to anything else in terms of international recognition that I’d be absolutely over the moon, but I know first and foremost that I need to be doing it for Hibs.”

Scotland start of the tournament on Monday 14 June against the Czech Republic at Hampden then four days later travel to Wembley to face England. On Tuesday 22 June 2021 they return to Hampden to face Croatia.

The top-two from each group qualify along with the four best third-placed teams.