

Scotland players 'hungry to become legends' says John McGinn

John McGinn believes that the current group of Scotland players are 'hungry to become legends' after becoming the first team to qualify for a major tournament since 1998 and insists that this is the most confident he has been in any international squad since his debut.

Scotland kick-off their EURO 2020 campaign against the Czech Republic at Hampden Park on Monday afternoon knowing that a victory could help them become the first Scottish team in history to progress through the group stages.



sfa

After that it's a trip to Wembley to face the 'auld enemy' England on Friday night before finishing off with another home game against Croatia.

Speaking at the squad's training centre near Darlington, McGinn said: "I've been involved in a lot of Scotland squads and camps and this is the most confident I've been in a group. I don't know if that's because we've qualified, but everyone just gets on so well. I know we go on about it but it's important. I think there's been less blame. It's easy when you're losing games, not qualifying for things. It's easy to start pointing the finger.

"I'm not saying there was a lot of it, but there was a wee bit

of it at times over the years. On nights like Serbia when you need to go into the trenches and rely on 14, 15 guys you know you can. You look to your left, look to your right and trust everyone out there.

“Scotland’s a mental wee country. Everyone is divided in so many ways but that night [against Serbia] was the first night where I felt like everyone was together and pulling in one direction.

“We’re proud people, but it was a wee bit emotional that night, not only the sense of achievement, but also that we’d managed to represent our country well.

“We’re proud to be seen as a little bit more popular now, but it’s up to us to go carry that on. We’re hungry to go and become legends.”

Given the lack of supporters at games last season, the former Hibs’ star knows that it will be an emotional 90-minutes in front of a limited crowd on Monday which will include his parents who played an important role in all three brothers’ football careers.

He continued: “You forget the kind of buzz you feel turning up waving to your mum and dad and everyone who’s dedicated so much of their life to see you get to the top of your profession. Mum and Dad were teachers. They used to drive us three or four nights a week, all of us at certain times. People don’t realise the effort.

“It’s getting me a wee bit emotional talking about it because they’ve given up so much. Hopefully I can do them proud. I think the feeling will just be immense pride, and like my mum says, if I don’t belt out the national anthem, she’ll maybe turn away and go home.”