

Gordon looking for the trophy for Hearts

On 19 May 2012, Craig Gordon watched on from inside Hampden, as Hearts thumped their rivals 5-1 in one of the biggest Edinburgh derbies of all time.

The current Hearts skipper had just left Sunderland and was about to begin a two-year spell without a club as he continued to struggle with a knee injury.

Gordon admitted that as he watched the late Marius Zaliukas walk up the Hampden steps to lift the Scottish Cup that afternoon, he himself was thinking he would never be able to play football again.

Fast forward ten years and the remarkable recovery for Gordon is just about complete. The only thing missing from his incredible list of achievements, is to lead Hearts to lifting the oldest trophy in the game.

“Yeah, I was there.” Gordon smiled, when asked about the 2012 final.

“I was there watching it as a fan. I had just left Sunderland and had come back up and I was in the stand that day watching the game.

“It was a very emotional one for every Hearts fan. To win the cup against Hibs and not only that, to win it in the fashion they did was a fantastic achievement and that whole team will be inducted into the Hall of Fame on May 8 and quite rightly

so for what they did for the club at that moment in time.

“It was a huge result and one that everybody will remember forever.

“That was so long ago and with the injury troubles I had at that time, I probably thought the chances were I wouldn’t get back on a football pitch let alone get back to playing in the Premier League or play international football, to get back to any level.

I have said that in numerous interviews over the years, but I got there, and it is done now.

“To win any trophy for Hearts would be incredible and that’s what we are striving to do. We have got the club back into a good position and we have worked really hard to get here and we want to continue improving. To do that we have to be consistently getting to semi-finals and finals and trying to win them.”

After featuring in the side that defeated Gretna to lift the trophy in 2006, (which Gordon says has similarities to the current group of players at the club) he was also part of the side which lost to Celtic on penalties at an empty Hampden in December 2020.

Paul Hartley stole the show in 2006 with a hat-trick in a 4-1 semi-final victory over Hibs, Gordon recalls the incredible atmosphere the Hearts supporters generated that day and is expecting the same on Saturday.

“Back in 2006, when the fans were in, it was a great day and a great scoreline. The fans were very happy with that. I remember going there, getting to the stadium, how great the fans were that day, how loud they were, the atmosphere they created. The fans always turn up for these games.

On Paul Hartley, Gordon added: “His three goals that day were

brilliant. That's what won us the game.

"That team had a great team spirit, a great togetherness. You can see that in this team, really coming together and fighting for each other.

"That's probably a big part of why we have got to where we are this season. We have put ourselves in a good position but there is still more to be done. We are still driving each other on to achieve, train better and make sure we are ready for this one."