

Hibs' historic link with the colour purple

Hibs new purple and green striped third kit has already proved popular with the supporters and hundreds of replica shirts can be seen on match days at Easter Road.

The strip which was inspired by the popular 1994 design made its debut in the Women's victory over Partick Thistle on 11 August then the men wore it against Celtic in the league cup tie at Parkhead a week later.







No-one knows for certain the link between Hibs and the colour but the players first wore a purple shirt in a European Cup Winners Cup tie against Sporting Club de Portugal, better known as Sporting Lisbon on 13 September 1972.

The first leg was played at the José Alvalade Stadium in

Lisbon the jersey worn for the game was an exact replica of the home shirt except instead of green, the top was coloured purple with white sleeves, much to the surprise of the small band of travelling supporters in the huge 100,000 crowd.

The reason for choosing purple was never explained although the rumour at the time was that it was Chairman Tom Hart's wife Sheila's favourite colour.

The Portuguese side scored twice but a wonderful goal from Arthur Duncan gave Eddie Turnbull confidence for the return leg.

That confidence was more than justified because two weeks later in front of 26,000 fans at Easter Road, and playing in an all green top for the occasion, Hibs ran riot and defeated Sporting 6-1 with a Jimmy O'Rourke hat trick, a double from Alan Gordon and an own goal.

Five years later in 1977 Hibs became the first Scottish club to sign a shirt sponsorship deal.

Sportswear company "Bukta's" name was displayed on the jerseys, but TV companies refused to show games where these tops were worn as it was considered to be free advertising.

In response the club produced a purple away shirt with white sleeves with green and yellow trimmings on them.

These shirts were worn in a 3-1 defeat to Celtic at Parkhead and a 1-0 victory over Ayr United at Easter Road but when a game against Rangers was due to be filmed, a potential colour clash meant that we changed to a yellow top and white shorts.

In January 1978 Hibs were drawn to play East Fife in the Scottish Cup at home. The game that was due to have been broadcast was postponed so the cameras turned up at Easter

Road at the last minute.

Despite a frantic search, the purple strips could not be found but the kit man was able to produce a pre-Bukta set of green and white tops.

So with permission of the long-suffering company Hibs ran out 4-0 winners against a team which ironically wore strips with 'Cannon Valves' on the front under a less publicised agreement.

Since then many of Hibs "away" strips have included the colour purple with a variety of sponsors including McBean Protective Clothing, Calor Gas, Carlsberg, Crabbies, Marathonbet, Hibernian Community Foundation, Thank You NHS and Bevvv.