

Mixu Paatelainen appointed The Spartans new sporting director

Former Hibs legend Mixu Paatelainen is back in Scottish football.

The striker, who is fondly remembered for his hat trick in Hibs 6-2 victory over Hearts has been appointed as The Spartans new Sporting Director, supporting the Men's and Women's senior teams and the Men's Under 20 team.

70 times capped for his native Finland, Paatelainen will bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise courtesy of a playing career spanning two decades, followed up by eighteen years in managerial roles on both a domestic and national arena.

Speaking of his decision to join The Spartans, Paatelainen said, "I've been very impressed how people go about things, how organised they are, how good the people who are in charge are, and their ambition.

"Everybody knows that Spartans is a community club who do a lot for the kids – boys and girls – which is fabulous. The facilities are fantastic and what struck me straight away is that people are very ambitious, they don't want to be a League 2 club all the way, they want to go forward and do better, and it's a wonderful club, wonderful people, so I want to be part of that.

"I will step on nobody's toes, that's for sure I want to be a sounding board. I know some head coaches, when there's a sporting director coming to a club for the first time, they might be alarmed and worry that people think they are not

doing a good enough job.

“That is not the case here. Dougie has done a fantastic job, there’s no question, and this is just another piece in the jigsaw. It’s as simple as that. We want to try to make us stronger and hopefully improve us enough to take the next step.”

Chairman Craig Graham added, “Mixu’s appointment brings us so much expertise. He will support me, my fellow Directors and all our coaches as we continue to grow and develop our club. It’s a brilliant appointment for us.

“We are an ambitious club and the Mixu will help us drive forward all aspects of our strategic agenda. After a hugely successful playing and managerial career Mixu now has a senior role in the UEFA Technical team and with the SFA in coach education.

“He is so passionate about football and to helping others develop, it’s such an exciting move for us.”