The Firhill Flyer

Bidh cuimhne mheasail aig cuid den luchd-taic againn air *Thistle Pin* na mìos seo. Air a' mhìos seo, tha sinn a' toirt urram do **Iain Èàirdsidh MacCoinnich** a rugadh air aon de na h-Eileanan an Iar, eilean ìosal, uaine Thiriodh. Chanadh mòran den luchd-taic gur e an cluicheadair a b' fheàrr a bh' againn a-riamh aig Firhill, cluicheadair aig an robh sgilean gun tomhais agus luaths nas luaithe na na gèiltean geamhraidh air eilean àraich.

Supporters of a certain vintage will need no introduction to this month's Thistle Pin. This month we pay honor to ***Johnny Mackenzie*** hailing from the wind-swept isle of Tiree within the Inner Hebrides. He was to many fans the greatest player to grace the turf at Firhill, a player that oozed skill with a pace that was faster than the gales on his home isle.

Shoidhnig Iain Eàirdsidh dha na Jags ann an 1944 agus chuir e seachad 16 bliadhna a' toileachadh an luchd-amhairc. Chluinnte iad an-còmhnaidh ag èigheach "Open the gates" nuair a bhiodh e a' ruith na dheann suas cliathach dheais an sgioba 's a choltas air nach biodh e air chomas stad mus bualadh e geataichean Firhill.

Johnny signed for the Jags in 1944, spending 16 years at the club dazzling the crowds. A cry of "Open the gates" would regularly go up from the terraces when Johnny took flight down the right wing, as at times it looked his pace would take him out of the ground.

Chan e a-mhàin gun do choisinn a luaths agus a chleasan meas an luchd-taic ach thug iad cuideachd Thistle gu 3 cuairtean deireannach de Chupa na Lìg. Chluich Iain Eàirdsidh 259 tursan dhan chlub, a' sgòradh 34 tadhail, ach a' cumail an luchd-taic air an dòigh seachdain an dèidh seachdain.

His lightening speed and trickery not only made him a fans favourite but also helped to take Thistle to 3 league cup finals. Johnny made 259 appearances for the club, scoring on 34 occasions but entertaining weekly.

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Chluich Iain Eàirdsidh cuideachd 9 tursan do dh'Alba agus, nam measg, bha an turas a' ruith e sgioba na h-Ungair far an casan. Aig an àm sin, bha sgioba an Ungair air a mheas mar an sgioba a b' fheàrr san t-saoghal agus mhol an cluicheadair ainmeil Ference Puskas mar a chluich Iain Eàirdsidh an latha sin, ag ràdh *"the most-magnificent display of wing play I have ever seen."* Bha Iain-Eàirdsidh cuideachd san Eilbheis ann an 1954, mar phàirt de na chiad sgiobaidhean a-riamh a thug Alba gu Cupa na Cruinne.

Johnny was also capped for Scotland on 9 occasions including running riot against Hungary, who were arguably the best team in the world at that time. The legendary Ferenc Puskas praised Johnny's performance that day, saying *"the most-magnificent display of wing play I have ever seen"*. Johnny was also part of Scotland's first World Cup squad to travel to Switzerland in 1954.

Chun an latha an-diugh, is e Iain Eàirdsidh an aon duine le Gàidhlig bho ghlùin a mhàthar a tha air cluich airson Alba aig làn ìre eadar-nàiseanta. Bha e na ghaisgeach a thaobh dìon agus brosnachadh na Gàidhlig, an dà chuid ann an Glaschu agus air a thilleadh dhachaigh a Thiriodh, far an do chaochail e ann an 2017 aig aois 91.

To this day, he remains the only native Gaelic speaker to have represented Scotland at full international level. Johnny was a stalwart for the promotion and protection of his native tongue, both whilst in Glasgow, and on his return to Tiree, where he sadly passed, in 2017, aged 91.

Mar luaidh air, tha sinn moiteil am prìne seo a chur a-mach ann a' Gàidhlig.

As tribute to him, we are proud to launch this pin in Gaelic.

Iain Eàirdsidh MacCoinnich
"The Firhill Flyer"

John-Archie Mackenzie
"The Firhill Flyer"