

# LAVA CUP 2024



COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMME / FALKIRK STADIUM 25-05-2024



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## Welcome to Falkirk Stadium for Lava Cup 2024.

Falkirk's industrial past as a centre for heavy industry in the eighteenth century can be relived with visits to attractions such as The Falkirk Wheel, The Helix and The Kelpies. We hope that many of the players can pay a visit to the abovementioned attractions to learn more about the town's history and heritage.

Huge thanks to all our sponsors and partners who have made it possible to host this prestigious event, the initiative brings teams from all over Europe to Scotland to play grassroots senior football to raise money for local charities.

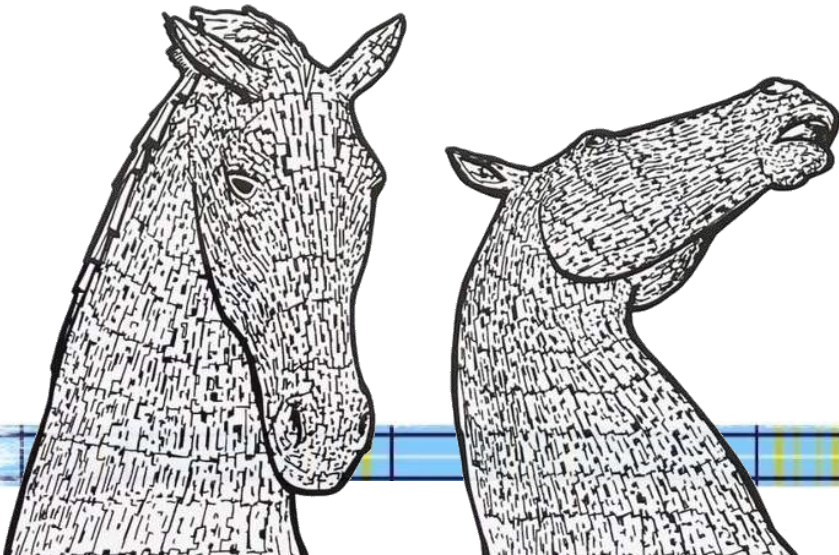
**PLAY THE GAME!**

## Velkomin á Falkirk leikvanginn á Lava Cup 2024.

Fortíð Falkirk sem miðstöð stóriðju á átjándu öld er hægt að upplifa með heimsóknum á áhugaverða staði eins og The Falkirk Wheel, The Helix og The Kelpies. Við vonum að þátttakendur geti heimsótt ofangreinda staði til að kynna sér sögu og arfleifð bæjarins.

Kærar þakkir til allra styrktaraðila okkar og samstarfsaðila sem hafa gert það mögulegt að halda þennan virta viðburð, framtakið færir lið frá allri Evrópu til Skotlands til að spila fótbolta og safna peningum fyrir góðgerðarsamtök á staðnum.

**SPILAÐU LEIKINN!**



# JAMIE SWINNEY

Chief Executive Officer - Falkirk Football Club



1876



Lava Cup 2024

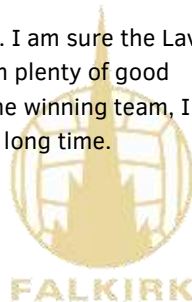
It gives me great pleasure to welcome everyone to The Falkirk Stadium for the 2024 Lava Cup. We are both grateful and honoured to host this year's tournament at the home of Falkirk Football Club. The Falkirk Stadium main stand was built in 2003-2004, officially opening in July 2004. The North Stand was developed in 2005 and the South Stand opened in 2009. The South Stand was renamed The Kevin McAllister Stand in 2022, after Falkirk's Player of the Millennium.

The Football Fans in Training programme is a really important initiative for both Falkirk FC and our partners the Falkirk Foundation. It forms a key part of the Foundation's delivery, with good numbers attending every week, providing a great platform to keep active and socialise.

I hope you enjoy playing on the main pitch, which was re-laid just last summer after 10 years of the previous carpet. The club once again, selected a premium artificial surface to provide the very best playing experience for everyone who uses the facility. We are very fortunate to have a strong community and a vibrant charity partner, which enables thousands of people the chance to play football on our main pitch every season.

For those visiting Falkirk for the first time I hope you enjoy your stay, it is fantastic to see people travelling from so many different places to participate in the event. I hope you do take the chance to see everything our town and community has to offer.

Finally, good luck to every team who is competing. I am sure the Lava Cup tournament will be extremely competitive with plenty of good football on show. Congratulations in advance to the winning team, I'm sure the memories created will stay with you for a long time.



**T**he Lava Cup International 7-a-side Grassroots Senior Tournament started out as a pilot event at Cormack Park, Aberdeen in 2022, but such was the success, the competition is now an annual invitational event, in conjunction with Throttur Reykjavik Old Boys, an Icelandic touring side who have been visiting Scotland since 2018. Football possesses an enduring power, as a force for social good. The game so often acts as a catalyst for improving people's lives – and this attribute has seen Throttur Reykjavik Old Boys earn itself the accolade of Best Grassroots Project 2022 from the Icelandic Football Association (KSI).

Throttur Old Boys, based in the sleepy suburbs of Laugardalur in the capital Reykjavik, plays a significant role in society in Iceland by helping to improve the mental and physical health of locals by giving them the opportunity to meet others, play football and, most importantly, have fun sharing the joy of the beautiful game!

Due to the fact that physical activity can play a vital part in making a difference to people's well-being, as shown by research, that football or any kind of exercise has a positive impact on people's mental health and emotional stability.

The 2023 Lava Cup feels like a distant memory, however, there were so many positive aspects that came from it. There was considerable media coverage surrounding the event as the British teams embraced their visitors from the north and extended the hand of friendship and created, for many on both sides of the Atlantic, cherished memories that will last a lifetime.

The preparations for such large-scale events are substantial, there is so much to take into consideration for the tournament to run as smoothly as possible. Another welcome aspect was the amount of generous sponsorship that was received, which helped to keep costs minimal. It showed that football clubs, communities and local businesses were willing to endorse and support senior international football events, which in turn, allows the players to raise even more money for local Scottish charities as there are no tournament costs to cover.

The Lava Cup has grown significantly in such a short period of time, we now have clubs from all over Europe and the UK coming together as one; at Falkirk Stadium in May, for a festival of football and fun.

The tournament is now playing a crucial role in players horizons and breaking any isolation people find themselves in. Playing international football is a once in a lifetime opportunity for many of us: players aged 40 to 75 are now doing this! The new friendships, bonding, and wellbeing it creates is providing a pathway to actively change the way people think and more importantly change lives.



# FALKIRK FOUNDATION FFIT



Falkirk FFIT are “graduates” of the Falkirk Community Foundation’s flagship programme (in conjunction with Scottish Football Trust), Football Fans in Training (FFIT).

**F**ootball Fans in Training is Europe’s leading healthy lifestyle programme and encourages both men and women to lose weight and become healthier and happier through football. Targeted at people over the age of 35, FFIT offers football fans the opportunity to train with Falkirk Foundation coaches for free and aims to increase participants knowledge of nutrition and healthy eating, improve their lifestyle choices, reduce their weight and waistline, and increase engagement in physical activity. The only requirement to join the programme is to be aged over 35 and have a waistline of at least 38 inches.





Back in 2015 some of the graduates of FFIT, guided by Dougie McCallum, felt there was an opportunity to continue the great work beyond the programme and took it upon themselves to create what we now know as Falkirk FFIT. This was a chance for future course graduates and others within the community to continue their journey to a happier, healthier lifestyle through the nation's favourite pastime. For many members, it allowed them to revisit their youth and experience playing football at a pace and ability level where everyone was treated equal regardless of your capability, size, weight and (most importantly in this country) what team you supported.

Throughout the years Falkirk FFIT has continued to grow with over 120 members currently registered and 50-60 people regularly turning up on a Monday and Tuesday night to play football. The nature of the Falkirk FFIT group has grown beyond the physical wellbeing of our members in recent years, providing an avenue for men to talk freely about their mental health in a setting they feel comfortable with, and without prejudice.

Over the last year or so our members have taken part in some special away days and tournaments. Most recently the Lava Cup in Bo'ness but also the Atlantic Cup in Reykjavik, Iceland. In 2022, Falkirk FFIT welcomed a group of FFIT-like gents and their families from Canada where they were treated to the sights and sounds Falkirk had to offer, followed by a meal in the stadium and 8-a-side matches in the evening. 2022 was a big year for Falkirk FFIT. Not only did we enjoy the visit of our Canadian friends, but a group also travelled to Lewis and Harris in the Outer Hebrides to take on the mighty Ness FC.

It was also the year Falkirk FFIT went a step further from 8-a-side and entered an 11-a-side squad into the inaugural Warriors Premier League finishing in a respectable 8th place. In recent months, more pressure is being placed on our members and communities in their everyday lives. Falkirk FFIT, feel we have an obligation to continue to grow and provide our members with a safe space to be open and stay active through playing football.

In this spirit, Falkirk FFIT has spread beyond our men's group and we're delighted that there is now a Falkirk FFIT ladies' group offering the same program as the men's group being led by Hannah Burns.

Everyone at Falkirk FFIT plays their own small part in ensuring the group continues to succeed and be a force for good in the local community when it comes to getting off the couch and bettering our mental health. And if there happens to be a game of football in between, then everyone's a winner!!!

# NEIL COX – FALKIRK FFIT

The 42 year old left back speaks candidly about mental health issues, the haggis supper club and a dry hotel in Reykjavik.



**Falkirk travelled to Iceland to play in the North Atlantic/Rey Cup and also competed in the 2023 Lava Cup, how did you enjoy the experience?** “Both were absolutely brilliant. I’d always wanted to visit Iceland and can now say I’ve been. Reykjavik is a fantastic place and getting to go there, play in the North Atlantic Cup and have no end of laughs and carry on with my Falkirk FFIT mates made it a weekend I’ll never forget. The Lava Cup being held in Bo’ness was special for me as I’m originally from Bo’ness and can still be found at Newtown Park with my Dad every other Saturday supporting Bo’ness United.”

**The FFIT programme brings players from different backgrounds together, how important is it to address mental wellbeing issues that players in the group may suffer from?** “I can’t stress the importance of mental well-being enough. 2019 was easily the worst year of my life for myself, my wife and daughter and I was in a very bad place mentally for the best part of two years. Joining Falkirk FFIT in early 2021 is quite possibly the best thing I’ve ever done. There’s a bit of focus on weight loss and physical wellbeing associated with FFIT, but for me, having never been overly heavy, it was never about weight loss and all about improving my mental health - It’s easy to see someone struggling with their weight, but it’s rarely as easy to see someone struggling in their head. Falkirk FFIT improves physical wellbeing through football and exercise, but the social aspect of it has done wonders for my mental health. We laugh, we joke, and we take the piss out each other on the pitch... but we also got each other’s backs, and look out for each other off the pitch.”

**Strangest thing that has happened during a match?** “Only thing I can think of is a few years back watching a game at Linlithgow Rose’s ground, a red parrot flew down and landed on the crossbar mid-match.”

**Who is the best player in the Falkirk squad?** “Two nominations for a couple of the “veterans” - On weeknights at the 8s games, Arthur King can read games like children’s books - although he probably struggles to actually read a child’s book. And from the weeknight 8s and Sunday 11s, the Rolls Royce, Drew Wylie. The man just makes football look easy.”

**I’ve heard some stories about the “Haggis Supper Club” can you tell me a bit more about it?** “Such is the number of guys in the pool for the three 8’s games on a Monday night, it’s first come first served, but a few guys still go up to have a blether and watch the guys playing if not picked for the Monday 8’s. With our Sunday 11’s team/league starting last year some folk were picking up injuries and niggles on the Sunday and having to drop out of the Monday night games.

Myself and Stevie Gibson were two such injury cases and were texting each other one Monday morning skiving at our jobs. Gibby asked if I was still going up to the stadium to watch the guys play 8’s. I replied saying yes, and that I might go to the chippy for a

haggis supper on the way up and sit up in the stand and munch it. As a mutual haggis lover Gibby thought this was a great idea so we arranged to meet at the chippy then went down to the stadium, sat up in the stand heckling and booing our mates playing the three 8-a-side games! Then it kind of snowballed from there for a couple of months, where there were maybe half a dozen folk sitting in the stand with a haggis supper having a blether, a laugh and giving our mates pelters on a Monday night and so the Haggis Supper Club was born. At one point I think a couple of folk might even have been feigning injuries just to get a chippy, sit in the stand having a chat, a laugh and slaughtering the boys on the pitch!

**What has been your most embarrassing moment on the pitch?** “Nothing too severe thankfully, so I’d probably have to say skying a penalty at the Lava Cup in Bo’ness. An opportunity to score on my hometown team’s park and I Harry Kane’d it way over the bar. The ball came back down with scorch marks on it I came that close to hitting the sun.”

**Funniest thing that has happened on tour?** “I’d probably have to say when some clown on our committee who shall remain nameless (but his name sounds like Ryan McWire) didn’t read the small print and inadvertently booked 15 Scotsmen into a “dry” hotel in Reykjavik when we were there for the North Atlantic Cup. Thankfully we’re a well behaved bunch and it was only on day two when roughly half a ton of aluminium tins were deposited in the hotel reception bin that the staff realised, and we were strongly advised that it was a dry hotel.”

**Favourite memory from your trip to Iceland?** “From the laughs and camaraderie with the Falkirk boys, the two epic nights playing “Killer Darts” in The Irishman pub, the whole trip was brilliant. However, the one stand out memory would probably be the young lads from the Icelandic mental health team who didn’t have kits at the North Atlantic Cup. Seeing the appreciation on their faces when we gave them our old home shirts at the end of the tournament was magic. Still can’t believe Allan Beveridge offered the wrong hand to shake the hand of the one boy with his hand in a plaster cast though.”

**The 2024 Lava Cup tournament is being held on home territory at Falkirk Stadium, what can the travelling teams that are coming to the event expect?** “A great facility, a brand new 4G pitch, a warm welcome, a fun day of football and who knows... the sun might shine again this year and we might even get a couple of new members for the Falkirk FFIT Haggis Supper Club.”

**Who drew the mystery willy in the Ice Cave at the Perlan Museum?** Mark Traynor!!!



# Proud Sponsor & Partners of Lava Cup 2024



**FALKIRK**

# THROTTUR OLD BOYS



**T**hrottur Reykjavik, founded on 5 August 1949, was formed in a Nissen hut on the West side of Reykjavik. The club drew support from the local area which, in the 1950's, was, in many ways, poverty stricken. The club struggled financially for the first tentative years. Throttur then moved to the East side of Reykjavik, in 1969, to a new district that was expanding due to population growth in the capital. Throttur moved its headquarters once again, in 1999, to the nearby area of Laugardalur where the club currently resides. Over the years there has been highs and lows, yet the club always shows a remarkable resilience even in the face of adversity. Throttur have based the club's foundations on being a family orientated company with strong links to the surrounding neighbourhood. Being one of the smaller provincial capital clubs, it's very difficult for Throttur to compete financially against the big mainstream Reykjavik clubs. However, there is something very special going on at Laugardalur – situated in a contiguous, urban area of Reykjavik – a real community spirit which tugs at the heartstrings.



Throttur Old Boys have been in existence for over 35 years; they entered their first competition in 1982. Things were slowly evolving, at the newly formed club, and it took a few years before the Old Boys tasted success, however, 1990 was the year written into the club's history books as they were crowned Icelandic Champions for the first time. There has been sporadic success, over the years, as the Old Boys game in Iceland, develops and gathers momentum; run under the auspice of the KSI, it is now split into 3 age groups: 30-40, 40-50 and 50+.

Throttur have the biggest membership of active players in the country and that is something the club is proud of; to have around 200 members doesn't just happen overnight – so much hard work has gone into improving the infrastructure. The committee, within the Old Boys, give up much of their free time to organise tournaments over the winter months and keep everything ticking-over at the club. They are at the forefront of revolutionising Old Boys football in Iceland, with the setting up of the 'Rey Seniors' tournament (which is still very much in its infancy). Throttur are looking to attract foreign opposition to Icelandic shores, to compete in their international tournament, three Scottish teams travelled to Iceland in 2023 for the first event which was a resounding success.

These days, football is a billion-pound industry and over the past decade money from the windfall has been handed out to FA's across the world to invest in grassroots football. As a 50-something, ex- footballer myself, there are pitfalls within our age groups that many people will encounter: mental health, marriage break-up, job loss,



to name a few - football is a pivotal key factor in eradicating any isolation that players may suffer from. The Icelandic Football Association (KSI) have now got onboard with the grassroots senior football initiative in Iceland and are keen to support and publicise events, they invited the Throttur committee to the national stadium in 2022, to hold a seminar and get the word out about the benefits of the older generation playing the game.

Football and the enjoyment of being part of a close-knit group has far reaching impacts in our daily life. I can honestly say that actively playing football in the twilight of our lives is just as important as an 8-9 year old attending grassroots football training for the first time. The strides taken at Throttur, to improve the club and boost the grassroots dynamics within the community, is second to none; walking football, online matches (live) at the Rey Youth Cup, and the formation of the Rey Cup Seniors are just some of the more recent initiatives being added to the club structure. Throttur have cemented strong ties and friendships in Scotland over the years, travelling around country playing friendly matches and tournaments which also heightens the camaraderie within the group. They have also played at the Stadium of Light in Sunderland on two occasions which has been a fantastic experience as the social aspect flourishes on and off the pitch.

## **“THROTTUR OLD BOYS HAVE CEMENTED STRONG TIES AND FRIENDSHIPS IN SCOTLAND OVER THE YEARS”**

The Original Old Boys Committee; Gudberg Konrad Jonsson, Indridi Waage, Kolbeinn Reginsson, Geir Leo Gudmundsson, and Otthar Edvardsson have raised the bar for the Old Boys scene in Iceland but have had to increase new members to the committee last year due to the heavy workload that the international tournaments have added. Other clubs in the country are envious of what Throttur Old Boys have built-up and achieved over the past decade, as Throttur go from strength-to-strength at home and abroad.

It's fair to say the club would not be able to function without the sustained help from the Old Boys members and a small army of volunteers who not only maintain training facilities and work around the stadium, but also on a match-day provide stewarding, security, issue tickets and sell food and many of the players will also referee the youth matches at the Rey Cup. The committee have made a commitment to up the ante with the addition of the Scotland tours, Lava Cup and Rey Cup Seniors which have proved that anything can be achieved if you put in the hard graft.



# KEMIA

 **Fislausnir**



Ready to hit the town - Most of the Icelanders have bought the traditional Scottish attire during their numerous visits.

# UNIAO DESPORTIVA DE FAFE A60



UDFA 60, who hail from Northern confines of Portugal are making the longest journey of all the clubs competing at Lava Cup 2024. The Portuguese outfit will be based in Glasgow for the duration of their stay in Scotland. The club are no strangers to playing against foreign opposition, in 2022 they travelled to the land of fire and ice to compete in the Wurth Tournament, which was held in Reykjavik, which gave the travelling squad more experience playing football abroad. In 2023 UDFA 60 travelled to Prague for their annual football tour which is growing in stature every year.



**C**hairman, Rogerio Ferreira, who has been involved with the club for 18 years, gives an insight into the club ethos and how they have grown since their formation in 2006.

União Desportiva de Fafe Anos 60 is an association created by a group of friends who used to play football at the weekends. However, as more and more people were joining, we needed to grow further, and consequently, it was necessary to legalize the club through the proper procedures. União Desportiva de Fafe Anos 60 was therefore officially formed on 22.09.2006 and is currently composed with 32 elements, as a result of successive renewals within the team, in order to become more competitive.

We only go training at the beginning of the season. On average we play about 30 games a season and we always organize at least one game or tournament abroad every year.

We also organize an annual tournament, which is also open to foreign teams, and we usually honour two deceased colleagues at that occasion. It is our own space (the players'), but we open it to our families two or more times a season in order to spend time together and create a closer bond within our group, the social events are namely at Christmas and at the end of the season.

**Our motto is: Sport does not give years of life, but it gives life to years.**



# NORTHERN IRELAND VETERANS



The Irish outfit make their second appearance at the Lava Cup, they secured the third place medal in the 2023 competition after a dramatic penalty shoot-out against Icelandic side FC Engjavegur at Bo'ness. The team are breaking down barriers across the religious divide, the squad is made up with players from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds who want to continue playing the beautiful game.

**“These competitions just go to prove that you’re sporting and physical activity doesn’t end because you turn fifty” - Gerry Goodall**



**N**orthern Ireland Veterans soccer initiative started in August 21 in the aftermath of the covid pandemic.

Founder members Sam Wright and Gerry Goodall, stalwarts of the Northern Ireland veterans soccer scene agreed that the over 50s plus were being ignored in their continued love of the game never mind their health & wellbeing.

“Having set up a meeting with local councillor, David Honeyford & Lisburn & Castlereagh Council, we secured pitch facilities for an initial trial period of 6 weeks.”

And so, it began.....

With an open invitation to all abilities, backgrounds, numbers grew & grew, perfect strangers assembled on Tuesdays & Thursdays to forget about their own and worldly woes. 11-a-side games soon followed with teams across the island with a benefit to local communities/charities. With the adage of have boots will travel. The veterans journeyed to Cork City, Sheffield FC, original home of the modern game, culminating in our participation in the Lava Cup in Bo'ness in May 2023.

"We've supported all kinds of charities from the children's heartbeat Trust, Macmillan cancer, pips suicide awareness charity, to individuals who may have fallen on hard times ...We are as much a charitable entity as a football team' enthused Gerry and Sam. We are a self-funding group and hope our Association IFA takes note. Hopefully we can encourage by our efforts more council areas & beyond to seize this initiative.

The benefits are endless, we have been invited to games in France, Spain, Portugal & Iceland but none more so than the Lava Cup 2024 in Falkirk. To that end we cannot thank Marc enough for inviting us back over to Scotland again to play in such a prestigious tournament, we hope we can do Northern Ireland Vets Soccer proud once again.”



The Falkirk Stadium is all-seater football stadium in Falkirk, central Scotland, which is the home ground of Scottish League one club Falkirk and Lowland Football League club East Stirlingshire since 2018. The stadium has a capacity of 7,937 and currently consists of three fully completed stands. The stadium was opened in 2004 when the main stand was completed. The north and south stands were built and opened in 2005 and 2009 respectively. Since 2012, Falkirk Stadium has been hosting summer concerts, achieving up to 21,000 attendees per event.





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**FALKIRK**

# VV BENNEKOM 35+



**Dutch touring side Voetbalvereniging Bennekom will send two sides over the North Sea for their first ever visit to Scotland. Rob Fransen gives the lowdown on the club who are based in the village of Bennekom, 80km Southeast of the capital, Amsterdam.**

Rob goes on to explain “Voetbalvereniging Bennekom established in 1954 has 1,300 members. 60 of them are on the veterans (35+) team established in 2010. Every year we visit an international tournament with a delegation of approximately 20 players. Cees Busser, one of our goalkeepers is 76 years old. The youngest player is Maarten Busser, his son who will turn 50 next year. Other players are Ab, Alex, Allert, Andre, Bart, Ed, Edwin, Eric, Gerard, Gerben, Henk, Henk, Huub, Jerome, John, Marcel, Mark, Patrick, Peter, Rein, Rogier, Stan, Harry and Robbie.”





**How important is football for your guys, does it help with the social aspect and wellbeing of players?** “For all our players, football is very important. It is our guys only sporting activity during the working week. Since the average age of our team is to the close to the wrong end of fifty, is it necessary to stay fit. Whilst going for a beer in the social club after a training session is also essential, we enjoy the social camaraderie within our close knit squad, fun and respect for each other is paramount.”

**Is this the clubs first visit to Scotland for a tour, and are the players looking forward to the Lava Cup?** “Every year we search for a special tournament which fits our needs. We are not interested in the commercial competitions and sometimes it can be very difficult to find the right tournament with dates that fit into the calendar. We go to tournaments at home and abroad together to experience great adventures. We have travelled to England (3x), Spain (3x), Italy (2x) Portugal, Belgium, and in November 2023 we visited Iceland for the first time. We are looking forward to participating in the Lava Cup this year in beautiful Scotland, we will definitely bring our kilts!!!

**Do Bennekom play many matches during the season?** “Friday evening, we gather at our home training pitch with approximately 36 players. We make four mixed teams of 7-9 players and play on a half pitch. We play three matches of 30 minutes and enjoy a beer afterwards. Sometimes we play against some local teams in a small-sided competitions but that is very rare these days. We love travelling abroad to play in tournaments, the memories are indescribable, you have to experience them.”



# LAVA CUP 2023

## NEWTOWN PARK, BO'NESS



The players line-up for the 2023 opening ceremony as the national anthems of Iceland and Scotland reverberate around Newtown Park.



**T**he Lava Cup Tournament is usually played at different venues around Scotland. Newtown Park in Bo'ness was the chosen venue for 2023. After months of articulate planning with Bob Snedden (Chairman) at the Newtown Park Association, the event took place. There was an air of excitement as the teams congregated on the pitch for the opening ceremony which was soundtracked by a traditional lone piper as the national anthems of Iceland and Scotland rang out on a warm, clear May afternoon. Added to the sense of occasion were pupils of Kinneil Primary School, who were mascots for the day, the kids also made flags of the countries that were represented at the tournament. Backed by support from the Icelandic FA, the competition originally began as a way to support men dealing with a wide range of physical and mental-health related issues.

The competition was played in competitive but correct manner, the atmosphere and sportsmanship was excellent throughout the event. The tournament also has a serious side to it, as it combines as a charity event. The charity in question for 2023, was the Scotland Cerebral Palsy National Team, players dug deep into their pockets and raised a whopping £1,100 which went directly to help the Cerebral Palsy Team who were travelling to Sardinia to play in the European Championships. The day ended as it started, in chorus, as the 40 strong travelling contingent of Icelanders belted out a rousing rendition of Eg er kominn heim to signify the end of the tournament as players moved over to the social club for presentations, speeches and create new friendships between players and clubs.





Making connections between the Isle of Lewis and Iceland.

The sun is shining overhead as Lava Cup 2023 is in full swing.





Orkney on the attack against Falkirk.

Northern Ireland win the 3rd place penalty shoot-out.





Geir Leo congratulates Otthar Edvardsson's superb opener in the 2023 final.

Ref, David Somers and Ness captain, Martin MacLeod enjoying the occasion.



# ORKNEY SFC



**The team based in the Orkney archipelago is a select of ex-amateur players from Stromness AFC, Dounby AFC, Firth FC, Burray FC, St Andrews FC and Holm FC who still love to kick a ball in the twilight of their footballing careers.**

**I**f I were to start with 'planes, trains and automobiles' it might set the tone for how you try and assemble a senior football team from the Orkney Islands, just off the north coast of Scotland.... except we don't have trains, and the planes are pretty unreliable – but we do have boats, and lots of them!

When Marc asked us if we'd be interested in putting a team together for the Lava Cup, we were all over it like a Burton's suit ...it was a no-brainer to have the chance to play with like-minded guys from across the country and beyond. Some of us managed to make a wee holiday out of it, some managed to fit it in with work trips, but all managed to make it into exactly what it should be – an opportunity to get together and once again experience the atmosphere of the changing room, pulling on the boots and slapping on the Deep Heat just for the chance to run out on that pitch again.

I'm 60 now and was lucky to keep playing amateur football in Orkney well into my 40's but know fine well that as much as you try and stay part of a club, nothing prepares you for no longer having that camaraderie of your teammates on and off the pitch, the mickey taking, the support, the laughs and the tears – it's something unique which without events like the Lava Cup, most of us would probably never experience again. So, in May '23 we all assembled at Newtown Park, a cracking little



stadium in Bo'ness where the sun was shining, the music was playing, the teams were gathering and the colourful turnout of local school kids and their flags were assembled, along with a Royal piper to complete the wonderful setting all arranged by Marc.

Our football on the day was not too bad for a bunch of guys who hadn't played together before – perhaps not helped by an enforced goalie swap early on, although Donald and his peg-leg was a sound replacement between the sticks, with goalie Liam playing the Holyrood hero outfield. In the end we gave a decent account of ourselves with a couple of good results along the way, yet maybe just the hint of a quiet relief that we didn't need to play beyond the group stages this time around!

What followed was everything you'd expect from a great football gathering – game talk, trash talk and lots of laughs, friendships formed, and assurances given that we'd happily do it all over again, if and when the opportunity arose.

So well done Marc for the herculean effort in pulling it all together, well done Bo'ness for giving us a brilliant venue, and well done to all the other teams for turning up to make it an excellent adventure for us Orkney lads – we can't wait to see you all again at Falkirk Stadium... but with maybe one or two less pints the night before the next tournament!

Davie Harrold

Orkney FC



# CELTIC LEGENDS FFIT



**“Seeing guys from all walks of life with different struggles coming together for the goal of losing weight and becoming part of a squad again is a priority” - John Murphy**

Celtic Legends FFIT with their friends at FC Tubby in Whitehaven.



Celtic FFIT have started travelling further afield for matches as the squad continues to expand. They travelled down to Whitehaven, in England for their first competitive match outside Scotland, they invited their English counterparts up to Glasgow for a return match the following month as friendships blossomed between both clubs. Celtic FFIT Legends are now looking to embark on more away days around the UK and beyond.

### **How long have you been in charge of Celtic FFIT and what are the toughest challenges you face?**

“I took over the running of Celtic FFIT over 10 months ago and when I took over, we rebranded as Celtic Legends FFIT. This was partly due to a split within the Celtic squad. We were basically starting from scratch and to try and encourage new players to come and join such a great team. It took a few attempts to get guys interested and now we have over 50 guys interested in playing either 11-a-side football or 8-a-side football.”

### **How many matches do Celtic FFIT usually play a season?**

“Celtic Legends look to play 11-a-sides at least twice a month sometimes we play 3 games. We are trying to get more regular 8-a-side games for the guys who are only interested in small, sided games.”

### **Does playing football regularly have a positive impact on players fitness and mental wellbeing?**

“Seeing guys from all walks of life with different struggles coming together for the goal of losing weight and becoming part of a squad again is a priority. We encourage guys to attend training, but it is also important to socialise as well. The lads always know if they are struggling with anything that any member of our squad is available to have a chat.”

### **Are the players looking forward to playing in the Lava Cup tournament at Falkirk?**

“All of the players can’t wait to play in the Lava Cup 2024. Many of the squad thought their playing days were over but now they are playing against other teams from across Europe. As a club we can’t wait for it to come around.”

# SWINDON TOWN FFIT



Swindon Town FC were the first club in England to hold the FFIT Courses in 2015, but as we are aware it all began in Scotland years earlier in 2010. Jon Holloway and Shane Hewlett saw a documentary on the FFIT programme and were inspired to get it up and running in England with help of Public Health England and the rest as they say is now history.

**T**he original group 1 Swindon FFIT finished the programme in April 2016 and were then invited to play in a FFIT tournament up in Scotland, taking up 2 teams to Hibernian Training Centre and winning the whole tournament! The following year they took a team to Stirling University in Scotland again however, were less successful on this occasion. We are originally Group 16 from STFC FFIT and we embarked on our weight loss journey in January 2022 which we completed the 12 week programme in April 2022 and lost a combined weight of 214kgs (33stone 9lbs), and even lost 133 inches (346cm) from around our waistlines which was an amazing start to our adventure. The course ended but we were determined to keep up the hard work so set up a continuous football pitch booking for



every Thursday evening so we could keep the group together but most importantly active. It started out as walking football with different ages and abilities, but weekly progression soon meant the lads were running around playing normal rules football as fitness levels improved so much. We have always been an inclusive group so some weeks when numbers dropped through work commitments/holidays etc, we then began to invite our kids along to speed us up further to be able to try and keep up with them!!!

It soon became clear that past groups of Swindon FFIT were not as socially active as us so we extended our weekly invite out to past groups so they could come and join in with us as well in the hope to inspire and motivate them to continue on this journey with us. We are now a combined Swindon Town FFIT team with members from various groups now playing together under the same banner.

As a group we are far more than just a group of lads playing footy or losing weight, we are a band of brothers who look out for each other both socially and mentally through our regular meet ups and group WhatsApp chats. When the course ended, we entered our first FFIT tournament at Swindon Town FC's home pitch The County Ground in May 2022, with one team and finished 3rd in the group.

The following year the group was devastated with the loss of one of our group members Nik Bull who sadly lost his battle with cancer leaving behind his wife and 2 young children. In May 2023 we entered the Swindon Town FC FFIT Tournament again, this time with 2 teams and one named Nik Bull Utd in dedication to our fallen friend and only went and won the whole tournament in his honour!!! On the day we even had the privilege of lifting the trophy with Nik's wife and children in front of a crowd which was truly a humbling experience for our group.

This brings us to most recently, where we entered a team into The Ava Bolton Cup in Ayr, Scotland in August 2023. A local 4 year old girl named Ava Bolton is fighting for her life, battling against cancer, so as a group we decided to enter this charity tournament to help with this fantastic cause to help get her the lifesaving treatment she so desperately needs over in America. Making the 590 mile round trip to Scotland and back by car, we managed to raise a staggering £2000 through just giving donations and also reached the final losing 2-1 to the local Scottish champions Ayr Eagles, so another fantastic achievement for our group! Even now we continue to look for opportunities to play against other FFIT Teams across the country to try and spread our positivity wherever we can.

The group continues to go from strength to strength and we try to not only give to each other, but those around us who want to be part of what we have set out to do as a team. An amazing bunch of individuals, who collectively make a formidable band of brothers!

# EINTRACHT FRANKFURT FFT



## INSTITUTE FOR THERAPY AND HEALTH RESEARCH (IFT-NORD)

Within the framework of the project, IFT-Nord is responsible for the content management and supervision as well as the scientific support. After a visit to the University of Glasgow, the idea was born. And brought the extraordinarily successful project "Football Fans in Training" into the German Bundesliga. The non-profit Institute for Therapy and Health Research (IFT-Nord) was founded in 1990. Since then, they have been pursuing the goal of preventing health risks and promoting healthy lifestyles.



**E**xperts estimate that 40 percent of all cancers are due to lifestyle factors. This include smoking, an unbalanced diet, too little exercise, excessive alcohol consumption and too much UV radiation. Being overweight is also a risk factor - for colon cancer! "Football Fans in Training" is an innovative approach that gets many people looking after their own health. "More fitness, less kilos, more Health" is the motto! With the support of German Cancer Aid, the



primary aim is to get as many people possible to play for clubs in Germany and to take numerous fans onto the FFIT affiliated courses. A three-year evaluation study and the structures created, are to be used to achieve the long-term implementation of the program within the Bundesliga clubs and the basic idea can also be transferred into other sports.

**Steffi Michalzik, an official at the Eintracht Frankfurt FFIT program, looks forward to taking the famous German giants to foreign shores for the first time.**

**Do Eintracht Frankfurt FFIT compete in any tournaments in Germany over a season?**

“Yes, we have one tournament in cooperation with Deutsche Krebshilfe (German CancerHelp), where a lot of FFIT teams come together for a day, compete against each other and have fun at a post tournament party, we eat, drink and socialise together.”

**Is this the first time Eintracht have travelled abroad for a tournament?** “For the FFIT team initiative, this will be our first tournament abroad. So far, we have only played in Germany, our players are really looking forward to competing in Scotland.”

**What is the feeling amongst the players that are travelling to Falkirk Stadium for Lava Cup 2024?** “The squad are super excited and cannot wait to play at such a prestigious international event and represent club and country with the famous eagle on our chest.”

**How many active members do Eintracht have in their FFIT program?** “That is really hard to say. There are groups from different courses that meet every week to have a kickabout. Every now and then, other participants also join in an irregular basis.”

**Eintracht Frankfurt kämpfen und siegen!**

**Eintracht Frankfurt fight and win!**



# NESS FC OVER 40'S



**N**ess FC over 40s are a team based in the North end of the Isle of Lewis. Ness FC play their games in the village of Ness and have been a very successful amateur team for many a year, having teams from Under 9's to senior level. The formation of the Ness over 40 team has now given the chance to players who have retired from the amateur game to carry on playing the game they love. The team is open to anyone over 40, anyone looking to get into shape or anyone having mental health struggles. The team is managed by ex-Ness FC player Martin Macleod. Ness FC now have football available for people of any age and ability.

The over 40's have always played 5-a-side on a Tuesday night but it was only after a chance visit from a Falkirk FFIT player that the Ness over 40s were established. Ness were asked if they would want to play a friendly against Falkirk in the summer of 2022 and that was the moment, we realised how much we missed outdoor, slightly competitive, football. After this game interest in over 40's football grew on the island and has led to a number of teams being established.

Things were going well but it was the invite to the Lava Cup in 2023 that proved to be a real game changer. This led to record numbers attending over 40's football, friendly offers from all over the island as well as other island teams and most importantly has led to the formation of an Under 21 team for players who didn't have any football after the Under 18 group. We train together with the U21 and regularly play friendlies against them.

Interest in over 40s, FFIT and the Lava Cup is at an all-time high and Ness FC look forward to the Lava Cup 2024. We will be forever grateful to Marc Boal and Falkirk FFIT for giving us the opportunities they did, and we hope they realise how big an impact they have made to football and people's lives on the islands.



THERE IS SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL  
HAPPENING ON THE REMOTE WINDSWEPT  
OUTPOST IN THE OUTER HEBRIDES: A  
SENIOR FOOTBALL BOOM IS TAKING PLACE.

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THE NESS FC OFFICIALS ARE WORKING  
TIRELESSLY AND DILIGENTLY BEHIND THE  
SCENES TO IMPROVE THE CLUB'S  
INFRASTRUCTURE WITH THEIR PRAGMATIC  
APPROACH.



# SCOTTISH BORDERS SENIORS



**W**e are the SBS (Scottish Borders Seniors). A group of predominately men of over 35 year old, but we've been blessed over our short existence to have attracted a couple of very good women players to the group too. We were never out to find the best players at our age group in the area, but to only offer a service to those that couldn't commit to playing regularly again, or perhaps hadn't ever been able to commit to playing club football. We've also seen guys who were ready for the drop in pace get in touch about joining in, recovering from injuries that had left them thinking they would never kick a ball again.

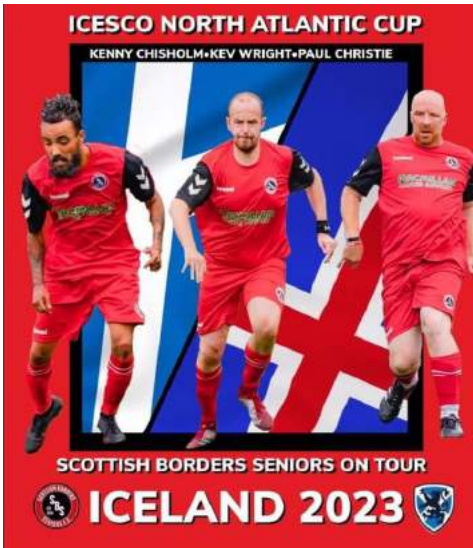
To be involved in the group has also been proving to help with peoples mental welfare and health. Added with exercise it's been a pleasure to witness a change in so many peoples physical and mental appearance, whilst on the weight loss journeys and the health recoveries.

When it was decided we would form the football group, Kev Wright, Ian Watson and Cam Waterhouse took on the early development, Kev and Ian great organisers and well known around the Scottish Borders - would put the word out and start to arrange a kick-about. Cam was becoming a whizz on the social media so branding and building the profile became his job, we wanted to shout out loud about what we was starting, and Cam has captured that in words and graphic form so well throughout.

Kev and Ian continued to grow the group and we had our first game penned in; it was against Livingston FFIT Like, who would become a regular fixture in our yearly planner.

Wins, losses and draws did they really matter? It's all about getting the boots back on and enjoying football again, (said nobody ever who played the game). We play to win every time but most importantly we want to leave the pitch on good terms, making friends along the way. As well running the Sunday set-up, we started to dip our toes into an inclusion group. Younger members who again weren't deemed good

enough, personally not confident enough or able in any way to join local football clubs came along to our kick-about sessions. The number of the young men and women who attended grew week to week and in the end, we had 30, playing 15-a-



side training matches, these games would be the highlight of peoples week. It would also become a success story with many growing in confidence and ability and going on to play men's and women's football locally, which unfortunately led to a fall in numbers, and we had to let it go for now. We are lucky enough to have been supported well by many local businesses around Berwick upon Tweed and the Borders, we have become in our own words "Kit Whores" unashamedly we want to look good on and off the pitch and promote our Brand and our Sponsors.

Lastly, we can't wait to be part of this year's Lava Cup, after three of our lads made the trip to Iceland in 2023 setting a great example, we were honoured to be asked to bring a side to the Falkirk stadium. And in true SBS style we will aim to firstly win the cup, leave the pitch on good terms, and look good while doing all the above.



# SASSCO.CO.UK



**Sassco.co.uk started in Sunderland, way back in 1999 by forming a 6-a-side league, which rapidly developed into an 11-a-side team alongside the regular small-sided tournaments.**

The creator, Davinder Sangha, is a UK born Indian, so it was unusual at the time as Sunderland didn't have a large ethnic community, so having an Asian organising teams in entirely white areas, with white personnel wasn't the norm. The team were also regional pioneers in becoming the first adult team to be awarded FA Charter Standard, as part of their 11-a-side team. The same team, in 2008 and 2009, toured overseas in Malta and Portugal.



Sassco are unique in that it was the first grassroots team which heavily relied on the internet. The name was deliberate in that being a URL web name (Sassco.co.uk FC) so that people reading results in the press automatically visited the site. Games were recorded in full and in widescreen, long before YouTube allowed footage to be posted online – games are still recorded to this day, including the overseas games. They were also innovative in that football shirts were custom designed from overseas, as well as retro patch footballs, used in the league and tournaments. The organiser, Davinder Sangha, semi-retired from all competitive



league and 11-a-side teams back in 2010, but a year later revived the 11-a-side as a touring team, as well as converting the 6-a-side league to one-off tournaments played a few times a year (still using the same retro style footballs of course). The tours are the highlights of the team's season. After the first two, the team went small sided and continues annually to this day. Tours continued from 2010 to Spain, Italy, Germany, France, Denmark, United States, Switzerland, Iceland, Israel, Cyprus in 2019, then a hiatus due to the pandemic, before heading to Netherlands in 2023, with Sweden planned for 2024.

One of the overseas tours was to Iceland in 2017, where the relationship between Sassco and Throttur Old Boys commenced. This persuaded Throttur to do their own overseas tours and they took part in a game at the Stadium of light against

Sassco.co.uk and regularly tour in Scotland as part of the Lava Family. Despite the professional outlook, Sassco have always been about reliability and enjoyment. All the key players are now in their 40s and 50s, so the Lava Cup team will be comprised of these veteran players.

The website is [www.sassco.co.uk](http://www.sassco.co.uk) where you can find the links to the YouTube TV Channel, which has archive footage from many years ago, as well as all the footage from overseas tours.

Aberdeen FFIT Legends - Lava Cup Winners, 2023



Skautafelag Reykjavíkur - Lava Cup Winners, 2022



**All teams playing at Lava Cup 2024 are supporting  
Strathcarron Hospice & Falkirk Mental Health Association**



**FDAMH**

LIGHT IN A DARK PLACE

FALKIRK'S MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



Lava Cup 2024





Lava Cup 2024

# THE ICELANDIC CONNECTION



**A**lthough the Icelandic league competition didn't start until 1912, the origins of football can be traced back to 1895 when the owner of the Isafold Printing company (in Reykjavik) wrote to the Scottish Typographical Association asking for a qualified printer and demanded that the chosen candidate 'must be a strict temperance man'. The person chosen for the post was Mr James B Ferguson: a skilled printer and keen athlete from Glasgow. On arriving in Reykjavik, James soon became involved in sports, and acquainted local enthusiasts to gymnastics and football. He founded the Reykjavik Gymnastic Club and introduced Icelanders to football activities; he would take youngsters for football practice during his free time from work.

Unfortunately, James left Icelandic shores only a year later, in 1896, but left a legacy and lasting impression on the locals. Especially, Bjorn Pálsson Kalman who was particularly passionate about football and made sure that players made great strides to develop, as the embers of football ignited in Iceland. He bought a copy of the English FA rulebook, translated it into Icelandic and read it out to players during the exercises so players were well up to date with the rules of football to ensure they



James Ferguson's Reykjavik Elite 1895.



James McCrae (Back row, far right. 1946)

could play legally. The first football club was founded in 1899, Fotboltafelag Reykjavíkur - now KR. The founding group included quite a few of the boys that Ferguson had coached a few years earlier.

Over the years there has been a strong Scottish influence on Icelandic football. James McCrae, ex- Clyde, West Ham and Bury player, had a successful spell managing Fram from 1946-1948; he led the Reykjavik club to 2 consecutive titles. The Icelandic national team have had four Scottish managers at the helm. In 1946,

Murdo McDougall was jointly in charge with Englishman Freddie Steele for Iceland's first ever international match. Glasgow born; Rev. Robert Jack spent most of his life in Iceland; Valur won 2 titles during his tenure at the club before he moved to the East of Iceland where he helped the local club, based at Stodvarfjörður, become regional champions. Legendary Rangers and Aberdeen player Alex Willoughby took charge of the KA Akureyri hotseat between 1980-82, during his first season in charge of the Northern club he won them promotion to the top tier. The late Ian Ross, who made 175 appearances for Aston Villa, steered Valur to title glory in 1985 and 1987 before embarking on spells with KR and Keflavík. Ex-St Mirren defender David Winnie became the first foreigner to win the coveted Icelandic Player of the Year award with KR in 1998. Many more Scotsmen have managed or played with Icelandic clubs over the years including David Moyes who played for IBV.

# REY CUP SENIORS

The inaugural Rey Cup Seniors Tournament will get under way in 2024. The new platform will combine the Atlantic Rey Cup and Wurth Cup - being rebranded and run under the guise with Throttur Reykjavik Old Boys; it will become the largest international event in the country for senior footballers. In March 2023, three Scottish teams (Falkirk Foundation FFIT, Raith Seniors and a Scotland Select Side) travelled to Reykjavik for the Atlantic Rey Cup, the competition proved to be a huge success on and off the pitch. The idea was to have a competition in Scotland in Spring, and a return event (Autumn/Winter) in Iceland, with the objective that players maintain fitness all year round.

The feedback from the Scottish players after their visit to Iceland was remarkable, as it provided a major boost to the morale and general wellbeing to a large contingent of players, who were part of a close knit group, representing their club and country.

Again, sponsorship played a pivotal role in everything falling into place, and we thank all the business's and partners in Iceland for their continued support. It was great to have the KSI onboard to endorse this groundbreaking initiative, they held a reception in the National Stadium after the tournament and gave Scottish players a tour of the ground. It was fantastic to have "Guest Team" FC Saeko along to the event, Saeko are a mental health team based in Reykjavik, a touching gesture took place after Falkirk's final match, as the players handed over Falkirk shirts to all of the FC Saeko squad. Lifelong memories were made over the weekend, there is already a number of clubs in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland who will travel to Iceland for the Rey Cup Seniors 2024, which will be held at the Egilsholl Indoor Arena.





Above: The Falkirk players were invited as guests to the Throttur Reykjavik-Stokkseyri Icelandic Cup tie. Left: Raith Seniors pitch side at the National Stadium. Below: Scotland Select and Grotta players together before their match.



# IAIN MITCHELL



## THE 58 YEAR OLD FALKIRK FORWARD REMINISCES ABOUT THE LEGENDARY TRIP TO REYKJAVIK IN 2023, WHICH WENT DOWN IN LOCAL FOLKLORE.

**Falkirk travelled to Iceland to play in the North Atlantic/Rey Cup and also competed in the 2023 Lava Cup, how did you enjoy the experience?** Both experiences were brilliant for different reasons. Travelling to Iceland to take part in the North Atlantic/Rey Cup was something I never dreamed I would do. Reykjavik is a fabulous city and somewhere I've always wanted to visit. To do this with a fantastic bunch of guys and play some football was special. The laughs and camaraderie made it a weekend I won't forget. It was an honour being invited to compete in the Lava Cup in Bo'ness last year. It was a great day (and the weather was kind to us), it was good catching up with old friends and new. Football being played in the right spirit.

**The FFIT programme brings players from different backgrounds together, how important is it to address mental wellbeing issues that players in the group may suffer from?** "Falkirk FFIT group has grown beyond the physical wellbeing of our members in recent years, providing a haven for men to talk freely about their mental wellbeing in a setting that they feel comfortable

with, without prejudice. The 15/20 minutes before and after the games is as important as the time spent on the pitch. This time allows us all to laugh, talk and share experiences and generally clear our heads. For me personally, since I suffered a devastating loss in December 2022, the support from these guys has been a god send and they will never know how much it has helped me through it."

**Who is the best player in the Falkirk squad?** "Without question our elder statesman, Drew Wylie. Plays the game effortlessly and makes it look so easy."

**I've heard some stories about the "Haggis Supper Club" can you tell me a bit more about it?** "The "Haggis Supper Club" was initiated from a conversation between Messrs Cox and Gibson on Monday morning in 2022. Both carrying injuries decided that they didn't want to miss out on the Monday night football experience so decided that they would come down and watch and shout some words of encouragement from the stands. A throwaway comment from Neil that he might stop off at the chippy for a haggis supper on the way to stadium, Stevie agreed, and so it was born. Now players carrying injuries or just taking sometime out still gather at the stadium for a catch up, blether, laugh and heckle the guys playing with or without the aforesaid haggis supper."

**It can be difficult running and organising a team, how many people are involved in the Falkirk FFIT committee?** "Currently Falkirk FFIT has a committee of 6 who organise Monday/Tuesday T8's, Sunday 11's, HeavyW8's, Tours, Day Trips, Social events and social media presence. The committee is made up off Dougie McCallum, Iain Mitchell, Brian McGuire, Alistair Wilson, Mark Traynor and Norman Robb. All of who (especially Dougie) give up a lot of free time to ensure the continuing success of Falkirk FFIT."

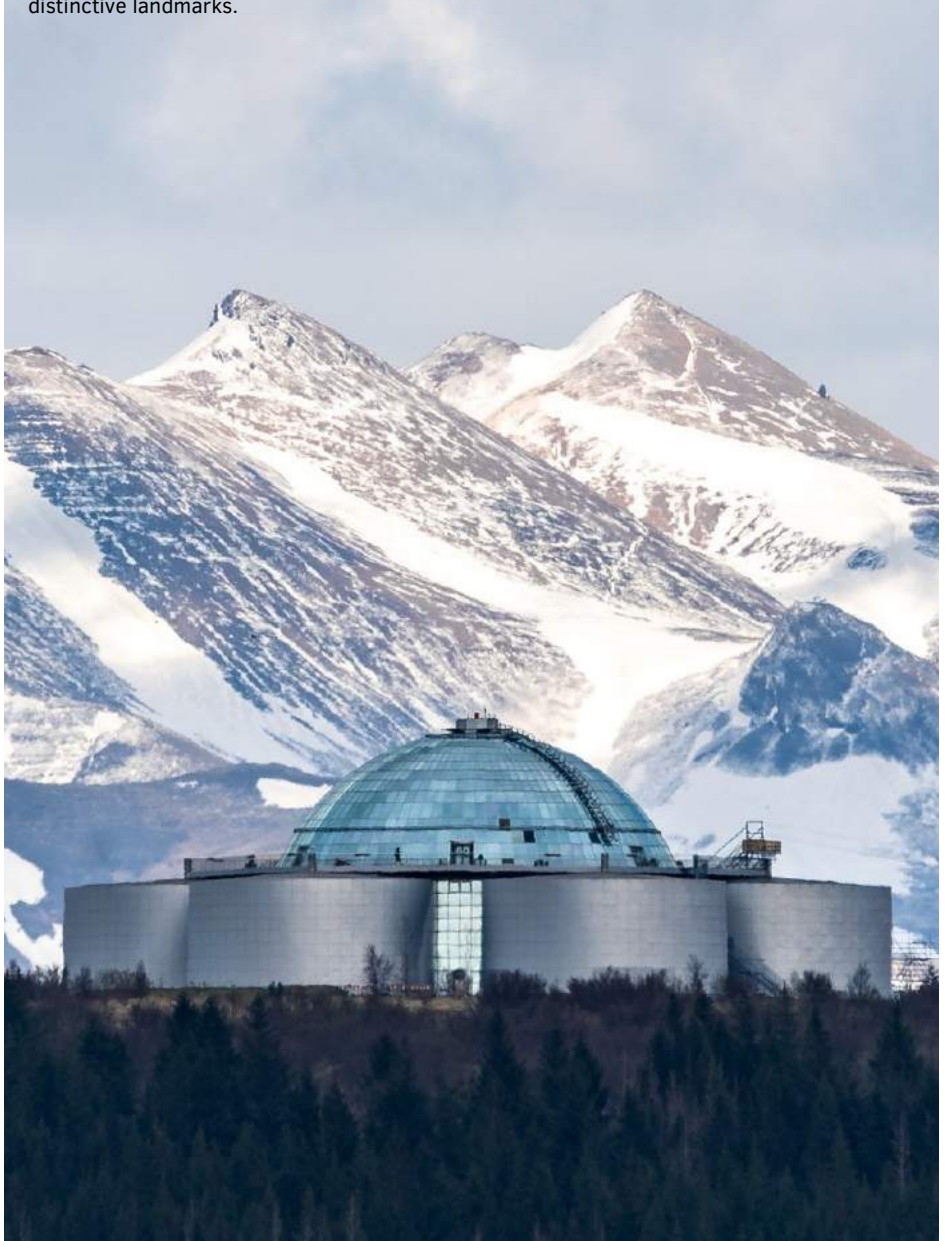
**What has been your most embarrassing moment on the pitch?** "Got to go back to my primary school days (1970's) when I forgot my football boots and ended up playing (in goals) wearing my shoes. Surprisingly we actually won."

**Funniest thing that has happened on tour?** "There have been a few over the years, Arthur's motivational speech on the bus back from our Forfar trip, Grant "I am Spartacus" Logan's shouts in Stornoway, but the one that tops them all was our committee (travel coordinator) member BMcG booking a party of 15 Scotsmen on tour in Reykjavik for the North Atlantic/Rey cup into a dry hotel. This only became apparent after 2 days when we were looking to dispose of a "small amount" of empties with the hotel staff only to be advised that the hotel was dry."

**Favourite memory from your trip to Iceland?** "Again, there were so many from start to finish with an abundance of laughter, a symphony of snoring (According to John Duncan – personally I never heard a thing) but the standout moment was when the Falkirk FFIT team gave the Icelandic mental health team our old home kit at the end of the tournament. Their appreciation made the whole trip worthwhile."

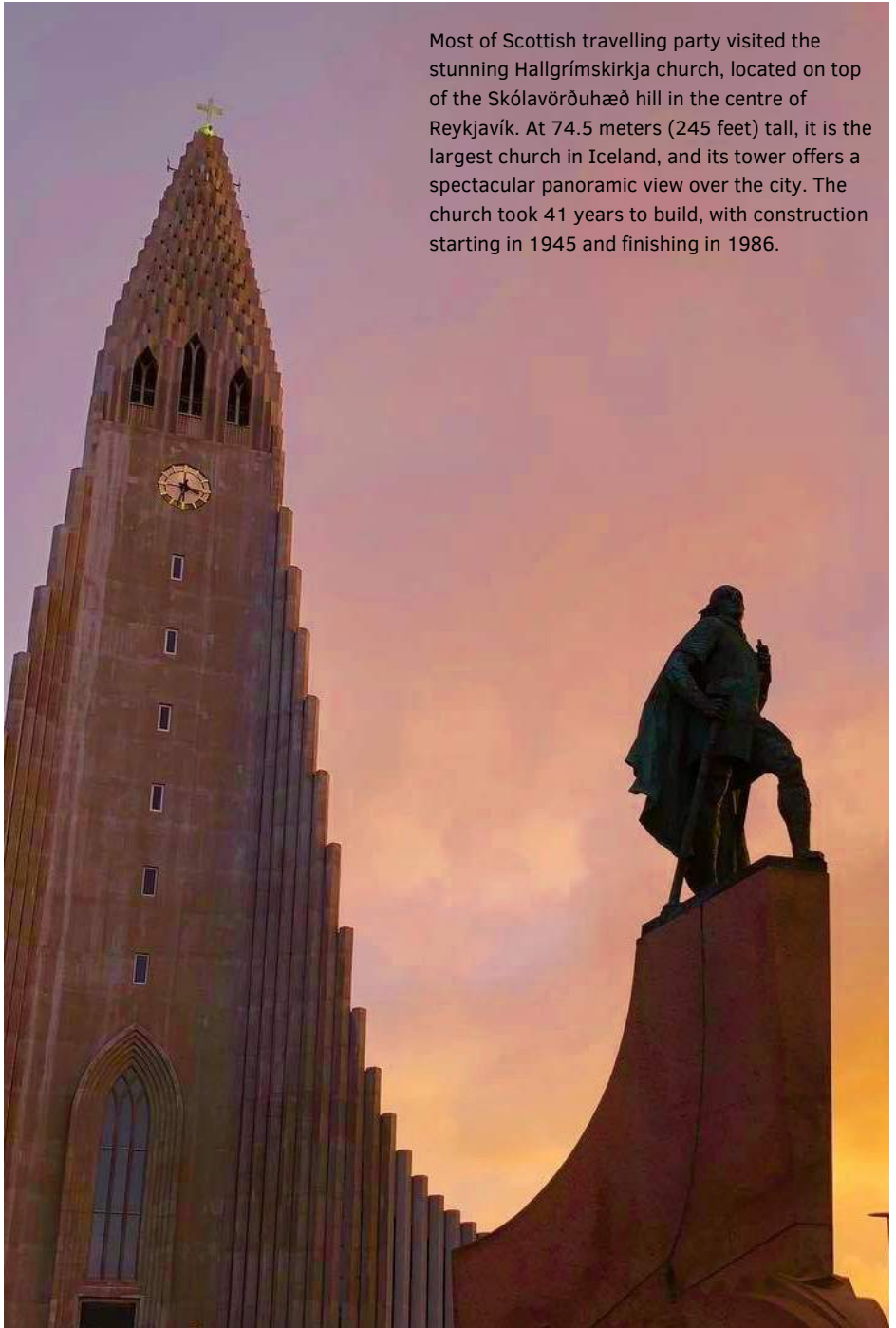
**The 2024 Lava Cup tournament is being held on home territory at Falkirk Stadium, what can the travelling teams that are coming to the event expect?** "Fantastic facilities, a brand new 4G playing surface and a warm welcome from Falkirk FC, Falkirk Community Foundation and Falkirk FFIT. A fantastic day of football with plenty of laughs along the way. I believe Neil Cox will be holding a recruitment drive for the "haggis supper club."

Perlan ('The Pearl') is a museum and rotating glass dome that stands on top of Öskjuhlíð Hill in Reykjavík; surrounded by a forest, it is one of the capital's most distinctive landmarks.





Most of Scottish travelling party visited the stunning Hallgrímskirkja church, located on top of the Skólavörðuhæð hill in the centre of Reykjavík. At 74.5 meters (245 feet) tall, it is the largest church in Iceland, and its tower offers a spectacular panoramic view over the city. The church took 41 years to build, with construction starting in 1945 and finishing in 1986.







The Scottish players took in the spectacular tourist landmarks during their time away from the pitch when visiting Iceland. The splendour and mystique of the Gullfoss waterfall and geysers were the main attractions. The geothermal swimming pools, hot pots and the man-made ice caves at Perlan were also a hit with the travelling Scots.

# DEREK ALLISON

Chief Executive Officer - Falkirk Foundation



The Football Fans in Training (FFIT) programme is a healthy living and weight loss programme that was carefully designed to originally appeal to men, which has been developed and successfully evaluated in a major research project led by the University of Glasgow. Funded by the Scottish Government and administered by the Scottish Professional League Trust (SPFLT) It was developed to include the latest scientific approaches to weight loss, physical activity, and diet.

Now open to both men and women, FFIT provides football fans with an opportunity to become fitter, healthier, and happier at the same time in this completely free to attend programme. Over the last ten years, thousands of football fans have benefitted from Europe's leading healthy lifestyle programme, powered by football clubs in several different countries.

FFIT is delivered by community coaches at Scotland's and now around the world, professional football clubs to groups aged 35-65 who are at high risk of becoming obese due to their lifestyle choices. They attend 12 weekly sessions at their local club to learn useful skills and techniques to help them improve their levels of physical activity and diet. Each meeting involves time in the classroom and a training session with the coaches. The idea behind FFIT was to tap into the potential that professional football clubs have, to engage with those whose lifestyles put their health at risk due to them being overweight and OR other health factors. It has been shown that using the draw of the professional football clubs as a setting the men's and woman's loyalty to their football team would encourage them to sign up.

The truly amazing thing about FFIT is the impact that it has on those that attends lives. Originally based around reducing obesity it has gone on to be so much more and constantly achieves life changing results for the participants of it. It is now proven to improve both physical health and mental wellbeing with further innovations and progress being made to tackle diabetes and certain types of cancer.

During my time at the SPFL Trust we were able to showcase the programme to other interested parties. This resulted in the English Football League, clubs in Europe and further afield, take up a programme that has had an impact on the life's of many more "football fans" who are all benefitting from a programme born out of Scotland.

Such is the impact that the programme has on those that attend that we find most want to stay on well after the 12 weeks have been completed. As a result, we quickly realised that there was a need for providing further activity and provide the opportunity for people to stay part of their club. Many form friendships and have built up a relationship with each other on their journey to a healthier happier lifestyle.

The FFIT teams that have been set up are a direct result of this desire to stay together and continue to support each other. We at the Falkirk Foundation are extremely proud that we have been able to provide the opportunities that have made such a positive impact on the individual lives and couldn't be happier to continue to support them on their journeys.

The power of football is so much more than the scoring of a goal, it is a force for good and reaches everyone in our community and the Foundation are happy to be able to be there for our community in delivering life changing programmes.

**“During my time at the SPFL Trust we were able to showcase the programme to other interested parties. This resulted in the English Football League, clubs in Europe and further afield, take up the programme”**

The Lava Cup is an excellent example of this power, and a huge amount of credit goes to everyone involved with Falkirk Foundation FFIT for the way they have taken the whole concept of football being a force for good and realising the huge amount of benefit it has. The Power of Football should not be underestimated in its ability to make a difference to peoples physical and mental well-being as well as the social impact it has. I look forward to watching the matches which I know will be competitive but played in a friendly and respectful manner.





**Fraser Electrical**  
(Orkney) Ltd



Stoltir styrktaraðilar Lava  
Cup 2024, úr hjarta  
Reykjavíkur í hjarta Skotlands



Northern Ireland Veterans Over  
50's Proud to sponsor Lava Cup  
2024 and beyond.

Promoting Health & Wellbeing

**“It’s Good to Talk”**

# Sóley Guðmundsdóttir

Grassroots Manager - Icelandic FA



Lava Cup 2024



**T**hrottur Old Boys is a fantastic social, mental and physical initiative. The work of this admirable club reflects the widely held belief that physical activity can play a vital part in making a difference to people's well-being. They have around 170 participants at the age 27-73. It is a very accessible group in a way - that they have nine training sessions per week so everyone should find a suitable time to get down to the stadium to keep fit.

This initiative is for both men and women. Men's football at senior level is the majority in Iceland. However, at the KSÍ (Icelandic Football Association), we are taking a proactive approach to find ways to get more women involved; to continue playing the game and keeping fit - this is paramount!

There is no doubt how important football is for all participants, to be a part of such a close-knit group is priceless and it helps your mental health as well as other wide ranging social aspects. To get in the exercise when sedentary behaviour is becoming more of a threat is invaluable.

**“There is no doubt how important football is for all participants, to be a part of such a close-knit group is priceless”**

The participants are not the only ones that benefit from it, the club and the wider community are the ones that benefit maybe the most. Football for older practitioners or "old boys" and "old girls" football is a smart option for people who want to move in circles with a good group of friends. Several tournaments are offered to older participants in the country, many players have now become regulars at the various tournaments. In the summer months, senior tournaments are organised under the auspice of the KSÍ membership association.

Throttur Old boys are pivotal helping within club and community, they do volunteer work for the club when needed. They also provide refereeing at the International Rey Cup Tournament, and they raise funds to make or buy equipment for the youth teams within the club structure.

Old Boys football is a remarkable project for the Icelandic football movement, it shows us that you can play football for as long as you want, you just have to find what suits you and your ability. We want to keep players in the game for as long as we can, and looking at Throttur Old Boys we see that grassroots senior football is playing a key role in shaping player's health. The KSÍ wishes good luck to all the teams taking part in Lava Cup 2024 at Falkirk Stadium.

# LIAM McARTHUR

MSP – Deputy Presiding Officer Holyrood Parliament



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Lava Cup 2024

**T**he loss of pace that comes with age is easier to deal with if you never had much pace to begin with. It is easier still if you are intensely relaxed about what position you play. So it is that my own footballing career has seen me start off up front as a 'bustling centre forward' before steadily retreating back down the pitch over the years until I reached the relative safety of goals, where I have been happy to allow my saves to do the talking.

In all seriousness, though, the significance for me of being able to continue playing a game that has formed such an important part of my life over the last 50 years or so is difficult to overstate. It has undoubtedly helped keep me much fitter physically than I would otherwise be. As importantly, however, it has enabled me to remain in a familiar environment from which I have taken so much enjoyment, made so many friends and accessed such a wide variety of unforgettable experiences.

That combination of keeping physically active and involved in a team sport that allows for great camaraderie is an ideal recipe for maintaining good mental health, reducing the risks of isolation and opening up the opportunity for creating new memories. In many respects, this is what the Lava Cup seems to epitomise.

**“Wherever we hail from; whatever our stories; whichever language we speak, we share a common bond in our love of football”**

As someone who has been fortunate to travel as well as live and work in different parts over the world at various points in my life, the international dimension to the Lava Cup is an added bonus. It's even allowed me to say now that I have competed against a player who has played in the Champions League! Yet the friendly 'domestic' rivalries with teams from other parts of Scotland, including fellow islanders, is just as important.

Wherever we hail from; whatever our stories; whichever language we speak, we share a common bond in our love of football. It sustains us; nurtures us and makes us who we are, whether a bustling centre forward or mouthy goal stopper. Long may that continue!





The Lava Cup Organisers would like to thank piper, Gary Nimmo, who will lead the tournament mascots & teams onto the pitch to perform the Scottish National Anthem. Falkirk Foundation Boys (2014) will assist as flag bearers at the opening ceremony then take on ballboy duties for the remainder of the tournament. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our sponsors, partners, Falkirk TV and everyone who has assisted behind the scenes to make this tournament possible. Sincere thanks to Iain Mitchell and Dougie McCallum for their endless work behind the scenes.





The Lava for the 2024 trophy was collected from one of Iceland's newest volcanic eruptions that began on the afternoon of 10th July 2023 and ended on August 5th in the Fagradalsfjall volcanic system in the Reykjanes region, as a 900-metre-long fissure opened up. The third eruption in three years, the new fissure followed thousands of earthquakes over a period of several days. Magma broke through the surface, shooting fountains of lava metres into the air. The eruption site has been named Litli-Hrútur (Little Ram).

The inspiration for the Ice Plate comes from Jokulsarlon, Iceland's natural azure blue iceberg lagoon, and the nearby black beach has coined the name Diamond Beach, as the ice chunks lying on it resemble diamonds glistening in the sun. The lagoon formed naturally from melted glacial water and continues to grow as ice blocks crumble from the ever-shrinking glacier. The Ice Plate is a new addition to the tournament, it will be contested by teams finishing in third and fourth place in their respective groups.





**KSÍ - Knattspyrnusamband Íslands**



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FALKIRK STADIUM

