

Revival Part 2

By : chr82

With the appointing of an unknown manager, Kelvingrove, once giants of Scottish football, are forced to start life in the Third Division. With the eyes of the nations media on them, and cliq's forming in the dressing room. Can this inexperienced manager and his team achieve promotion and begin the long road back to former glories?

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/chr82

Copyright © chr82, 2015

Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Revival Part 2

Revival - Part 2

It had been a long six weeks for Adam Marshall, it had seemed almost like an eternity since he had been offered the Kelvingrove job. Edward O'Hara, the owner of the club had informed what was left of the squad about the new manager, and about how they would meet him when they returned for pre season training.

Adam was well aware of the situation they were in, not to mention the lack of players at his disposal. He did not know a thing about the transfer market, or even how he would go about contacting clubs regarding signing one of their players. Adam was hoping that the meeting he was about to have with Edward would clear a few things up.

Neil Walker, a lifelong Kelvingrove fan, was like many of the clubs fans, he was unhappy at the way the club had been left in a mess by the previous regime. This new man Edward O'Hara seemed genuine enough when he spoke at press conferences, and to supporters clubs. However, he was not at all happy with the appointment of this Adam Marshall fella. Who the hell was he? What has he actually achieved? He had vented his concern on various fan forums online, as well as social media. Neil deemed sites such as Facebook as the perfect tool to vent his feelings far and wide. His first status was much like many of the other fans, it simply read: 'Who the hell Adam Marshall???' This had got seven 'likes' and had started a bit of a debate with his friends about the state of the club and their new manager. Neil was not the same as a vast majority of modern football fans, they were the journalists puppets. Neil always got frustrated When fans read a column and let the journalist distort their own opinion. It was like the column had brainwashed the reader without them being aware of it. Neil, unlike most people, had decided to give this guy Adam Marshall a chance. This was after all a new beginning for his beloved Kelvingrove.

"Good morning Adam how are you today?" said Edward cheerily.

"Very well thanks Mr O'Hare"

"Please, call me Eddie. So, I brought you here today to discuss the budget for the first team squad this season. I want to give you enough money to build a good squad, but not so much that the club ends up back in financial turmoil."

"Seems fair. What kind of budget are we talking about?"

"I was thinking £500,000"

"Okay" Adam thought about the money this club had spent in recent seasons and was somewhere beyond shocked at just how far this club had really fallen. He had expected a far higher budget.

"I know that seems very little, but we must balance the books, especially in these early days, we do not want a repeat of last season's fiasco do we?"

Revival Part 2

"Absolutely not" a realisation suddenly struck Adam. He thought back to last season, and to Vale Park's success, perhaps he never needed a big transfer budget after all. "I think I know where I can find quality players, whilst staying within the budget" he smiled.

"Good. Glad to hear it, One other thing Adam before you go, I would like you to consider appointing an experienced coach to work alongside you, this will help both yourself, and the players. What do you think?"

"Sounds like a plan"

Before Adam could say anything else Eddie butted in "Good I have just the man. His name is Graham Pascoe. He spent last season in the English First Division. He is an experienced coach."

"Yeah, I've heard of him, he has been coaching for about thirty years. I look forward to working with him."

"You'll meet him next month when pre season starts. Keep me updated with any potential signings. See you again soon"

"See you Eddie" Adam made his way home. Thinking about Vale Park, the success, the happy times, and the players, the players he wanted to help him bring success to Kelvindale.

Simon was on his lunch break when his phone rang. Simon worked in a call centre for a car insurance company, he hated every minute of it, he knew it would be stressful but never imagined how bad it actually be, he had felt himself sinking into a pit of despair.

"Hey boss, how's tricks?"

Adam afforded himself a smile at the fact that one of his former players still called him 'boss'. "Hi Simon how's it going?"

"Crap, congratulations on your new job by the way"!

"Thanks, it was a helluva shock to get offered it"

"I'll bet it was, won't be long until pre season starts now, can't wait for the new season to start"

"Glad to hear that as I have something to ask you".

"Sounds ominous"

"Not at all, I would like to bring you to Kelvindale for pre season, if you impress I will reward you with a contract. You interested?"

Simon felt his throat closing, he felt like he had been turned to stone, his surroundings soon brought him round though, rows and rows of people staring at their screen talking into their headsets, each looking as fed up as the rest. Not much of a choice really.

"Hell yeah I'd be interested. Where and when?"

"Kelvindale Park. Monday 9th July"

Revival Part 2

"I'll be there. I won't let you down"

"Good man. I know you won't"

Joe Kennedy had left school with no qualifications, he had hated school and couldn't have left quick enough, however, he now found himself almost completely clueless as to what to do next. After nagging from his parents he had went to a college to do a sports coaching course. Although he was there in person, his mind was elsewhere, drifting back to last season's success, the goals that he scored had helped win them the title. He felt happiest and most confident on the pitch. When the season ended he knew that he was too old to play for Vale Park anymore.

It was on his way home that he checked his phone. Two missed calls, both from Adam Marshall. What did he want. Curious, he returned the call, it looked as though it was going to ring out, until Adam finally answered.

"Hi Joe thanks for returning my call"

"No worries, I heard your good news, well done on getting the job"

"Thanks, as you know, Kelvindale have a skeleton squad, only a handful of first team players opted to stay."

"I know, that's crazy, why would you want to leave a big club like that, I'd have stayed"

"So you'd play in the Third Division and help them gain promotion?"

"Absolutely"

"I'm glad you said that as that is exactly what I want you to do for me and for the club. Starting on July 9th at Kelvindale Park. You in?"

"Are you taking the mickey?"

"Nope. Yes or no Joe"

"Yes, easiest question ever asked, see you then"

Adam made four more calls to four more familiar names, David Griffin, Andy Blake, Alan Hewitt and James Fotheringham. All of whom unsurprisingly said yes.

So he now had the makings of a squad. Fourteen first team players, backed up by the clubs youth team. A lot of the youth team had viewed this as their big chance to get some games for the first team, and Adam had every intention of giving them game time as and when necessary.

News of the clubs new signings was released a couple of days later, needless to say they never quite caught the imaginations of their supporters. Even sections of the media were critical. Radio phone-ins and social media were bombarded by angry and confused supporters bemused by these players they had never heard of.

Revival Part 2

Perhaps none were more confused than Neil Walker, he had known there were not going to be big signings at the club, but for a bunch of inexperienced kids to be signed was crazy.

'what are Kelvindale playing at signing a bunch of kids. Not amused' was how he enlightened the world of Facebook to his views on the matter. His status got mixed responses, whilst some agreed with his comment wholeheartedly, adding their own opinions, there were others who disagreed, this caused a debate, which like most debates in this day and age took place via the medium of Social Networking. In the end it was his best friend Russell Collins who silenced the ongoing debate.

'Who were you expecting them to sign?'

'I dunno, I thought a couple of Premier league players would be willing to drop down and play for us, we are a big club after all'

'Yeah, a big club with no money and a sketchy past, besides why would they risk their international, or potential international careers to play in the Third Division? Even if they did, How would we afford them?'

To this there was no response, other than 3 people liking the comment.

Neil had to concede than Russell was spot on in what he said.

Adam had organized a squad meeting, including the youth squad at the clubs ground. This would be the first time he would meet his players. He had thought what he wanted to say, not just about tactics and strategies, but about his plans for the club.

Adam walked into the spacious, and well decorated room that would be their unofficial meeting room to find three separate groups sitting spaced out, the groups consisted of the Kelvingrove players from last season, the new signings, and the youth squad. What a start, factions in the dressing room already.

"Good morning gentlemen, I trust you all had a good summer. I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you all to the club, whether you are one of the new boys or a returning player. I know this has been a hard summer for you boys" he addressed the group consisting of the players from last season. "We appreciate your patience, not to mention your loyalty. I realise I am not the manager you all wanted or expected, however, I am fully dedicated to getting this club back to where it belongs, obviously this will take time, but with your help and effort we can achieve this. Our aim for this season is quite simply. Promotion". Adam looked around at his new squad, observing their reactions.

"Today will just be some light training to get everybody loosened up again, after that it will get more intense, we have quite a bust pre season. The chairman has organized us a trip to Italy where we will play two low league sides, followed by a game against one of the biggest teams in Italy, A.S Rome." This news had perked the room up a bit,

"Sweet" said David Griffin

"not a bad way to start, trip to Italy to face the champs!" added James

"So what do you think of the new gaffer then Steven?" asked Michael Buchanan the clubs 'keeper

Revival Part 2

"Hmm not really sure yet"

"He certainly talks a good game I'll give him that" Ricky Porter chimed in

"It's still early days, no point trying to judge him or figure him out yet"

"Ah Amdy always the voice of reason" said Jamie half jokingly "I was expecting somebody more experienced, somebody who has a track record, somebody who could attract a better quality of player too."

"You do not even know the new players, you have not even seen them play yet" Amdy and Jamie were almost exact opposites on and off the pitch. Where Amdy was calm, Jamie would lose it and go off on a rant, or worse a temper tantrum. Amdy also gave people a chance to prove themselves.

"Neither have you, they may be utter crap"

"Yeah they may well be, but until we see them train and play we won't know will we?"

"Suppose, still unconvinced they'll be any good though"

As the week went on the training got more intense, they had begun playing 5-a-side games to work on their passing and movement, Adam and Graham made sure to mix the teams up every time so as not to encourage an 'us against them' mentality in the squad. By the end of the week he had noticed most of the players had started trusting each other a bit more on the pitch, he just had to hope it continued.

The following week however had seen a public bust up between two of his players. It happened when both Joe Kennedy and Ricky Porter went for a loose ball, whilst both were entitled to go for the ball, each player claimed the other went in too hard, Ricky had a reputation for being a tough tackler, sadly he also frequently got into trouble during games for arguing with referees, verbally abusing other players, and getting involved in scraps, usually with the opposing wingers. Neither player had been hurt in the challenge, but play had to be stopped as the situation threatened to boil over. Adam had thought it would be good to set up an 'old' versus 'new' players game in training, the game had only been going for about four minutes when this happened. There were arguments going on all around him

"You're not good enough to be here" yelled Ricky at Joe, the two were eyeball to eyeball. "none of you are" Ricky pointed to the other Vale Park boys.

"Says who, eh?, some little thug who disguises the fact he is shit at football by hacking anybody around him."

"Exactly, if you are so good why are you in Division Three?" asked David

"It's called loyalty you idiot" retorted Jamie

"Loyalty my arse, it's because you are too gutless to leave and try and make it elsewhere" said Alan who had used all his six foot three frame to barge his way through the rest of the players to pull Joe away from Ricky.

"You're just a bunch of wee boys who are only here because you are the managers wee pets."

"ENOUGH" yelled Adam, so loud the place went deadly silent, everybody turned to look at him. "Dressing room now, all of you"

Revival Part 2

Having seen the look in the managers eyes nobody challenged this, instead they all trooped off to the dressing room.

"I am sick of all this childish behaviour, I will not have any cliq's in this dressing room, you are all part of this club, like it or not, you all have the same desire to win and be successful, we all have to work together. To the guys who were already at the club I thank you for your loyalty, I know you have been through a lot here, and I know you don't know me, or how I do things, but you will find out as time goes on, Nobody here has a divine right to play every game, every single one of you will have to prove you are worthy to play for the first team, regardless of who you are. As for the guys I have brought in, I have worked with them for two years, I know and trust each one of them, and have no doubt they can help us achieve what we want. I will defend my decision to bring them here to anybody, anytime". He deliberately left a pause to let what he had said sink in. "We leave for Italy on Friday, Three days to get organized and get in the right frame of mind guys. First game is Saturday so tomorrow is the last training session, make it count. Same teams, any more behaviour like today and you will not be going to Italy. Understood? Good, see you all tomorrow then"

Adam had named the team for the first game. It read:

Buchanan

Porter

Obodo

Hewitt

Blake

Oster

Delgado

Connelly

Griffin

Kennedy

Fotheringham

Subs: Gardner, Slater, Costas

On the bench were the clubs newest signings.

Alan Gardner was signed from fellow Third Division side Shawbank. He is a young central midfielder, with good pace and ball control. He had been recommended by one of the clubs scouts, Alan had been in the Third

Revival Part 2

Divisions team of the year after an excellent first full season.

Tony Slater is a versatile English defender, signed from the lower leagues after recommendations from another of the clubs scouts and from Graham Pascoe who had seen the boy play several times. Tony could play anywhere across the back four, he was comfortable using either his right or left foot as well.

The most recent signing Manuel Costas had only just been brought to the club upon arriving in Italy, the club had flown him straight over after finalizing a deal for him. Manuel was a youth player who had started out playing as a youth player for one of the big Portuguese teams. He was also a youth international too, sadly for him, he had suffered a broken leg, and although he had long since recovered from it, he had lost his way somewhat and had been playing in the fourth tier of Portuguese football. Manuel is a striker who likes to drift off his strike partner and link up play from midfield, he has also been used as a winger.

The game started at a slow pace, neither team seeming to want to take the game to their opponents. It was sloppy play from Kelvingrove that led to the first chance for the home side, a local University team, Simon Connolly surrendered possession in midfield, allowing an opponent to nick the ball off him and run at the defenders, as the defence backed off, he played the ball in between Amdy and Alan right into the path of their centre forward who snatched at the shot and put it wide. Rather than use this as a wake-up call, Kelvingrove grew more nervous, the opposition sensed blood and became more attacking, twice 'Keeper Michael Buchanan had to make saves to keep the score at 0-0.

"C'mon guys this is shocking, sort it out" yelled Michael, furious at the lack of cover in front of him.

"What's going on out there, you all look clueless and scared, get on the ball and take control of the game" encourage Adam at half time.

Despite a decent start to the second half in which both Jamie Oster and Joe Kennedy had chances to put the visitors in front, Jamie had cut in from the wing and hit a wayward shot with his weak foot. This was followed by good play from Ricky Porter down the left whipping an inviting cross into the box only for Joe to glance a header just wide of target.

Kelvingrove faded after that and neither team looked likely to win the game after that. The game ended a boring 0-0 draw, the Kelvingrove players trudged off the pitch looking dejected.

"Unlucky guys" sympathized Adam "it is only the first game, we will get better, we have another game in two days, keep the heads up."

The next game was a minor disaster for the club, surrendering a one goal lead to a Third Division club, courtesy of a Steven Delgado penalty, and ending up on the wrong end of a 3-1 defeat.

It didn't get any better for them on their last game of the Tour, a 1-1 draw with a non league side summing up just how poor they had been.

"Very disappointing, I honestly thought you guys would have been able to play as a team, clearly we need to spend more time together off the pitch, that is why when we get back to Glasgow I have organized a night out

Revival Part 2

for us. The Chairman has booked out a local bowling alley for us, followed by a meal and a few drinks. Before anybody asks, yes you all have to come"

Nobody objected.

"STRIKE" yelled a jubilant Alan as he easily knocked all ten pins down for his third strike of the evening. "That'll be a hat-trick I believe"

"Shame you will never be able to do that on the pitch big guy" joked club captain Steven Delgado

"Hey, I stop goals, it's these guys here that will get the goals for us" he indicated to Joe and James

"Don't worry we will score, provided the midfield get the ball to us, ain't that right Joe"

"Damn right we will, we have a good midfield, and by the looks of it two full backs who aren't shy about getting forward and supporting the attack"

"No fear, neither myself nor my esteemed colleague Mr Porter will be found wanting when it comes to attacking will we?"

"I certainly won't be, I'll set up more goals than you kid"

"Sounds like a challenge old yin, the gauntlet has been laid down, I accept"

"As long as you don't neglect your defensive duties lads" came the reasoned response from Adam, who had been quietly watching his players slowly start to get on better.

"Yeah Yeah do not fret boss, we won't let anybody pass us will we Ricky??"

"Not a chance, and if any should find a way passed they will receive a firm kick up the arse for their trouble". This raised a laugh from all the players.

"Well I have to say as much as the games so far have been disappointing You young guns are far better than I thought you would be, especially you Simon, I watched you throughout the games, you are hard working have tremendous vision and are clearly a leader on the park. Well done."

"Aw thanks man, I'm blushing replied Simon, you're not too bad either"

"Best keeper in Scotland"

"You're too modest!"

"Well if we are picking a best player of the tour I would have to pick my playing partner here David, for a winger you are a hard worker, you were up and down the wing, supporting the attack and also helping out in defence giving good cover to Andy. You should be taking notes Jamie, he is the laziest player I have ever seen" said Amdy with big grin on his face.

"Just you stick to your defensive duties big man, and be thankful we are on the same team, I could get the ball passed you for the full ninety minutes if we were on opposing teams!" retorted Jamie.

Revival Part 2

"Right, guys move it or we will be late for dinner"

"Last one there has to wear a Justin Bieber t-shirt to training on Monday" said Andy

To his surprise everybody, Adam and Graham took him seriously and made a sprint for the restaurant. "Oi wait up!!"

The big day arrived, the first game of the season, there was plenty of chatting in the dressing room when Adam walked in. "This is it, what we have all been working towards, this is where it begins, a brand new chapter in this clubs history, not to mention your own careers. Remember what we have talked about and worked on in training, pass and move, always look to find space to give each other options. Go out there and enjoy it."

"C'mon lads, get stuck right in" yelled Graham

The changing room was now full of keyed up players yelling their encouragement to one another.

The match started at a frantic pace, Kelvindale trying to push for an early advantage, their opponents well organized though, and took a surprise lead on the stroke of half time, a long range effort struck Alan's arm and the referee awarded the penalty amidst all the arguing from his team mates. The penalty was a good one, sending the experienced Michael Buchanan the wrong way.

"Chin up, you are playing well, just need to be a bit more ruthless" was what Adam had told his players before sending them back out for the second half. Despite plenty of possession there was not enough of an end product to get the goals they needed, the match ended 1-0.

"Today was a learning curve for us, teams are not scared of us, we are a massive scalp to them, we have to be professional in every game" Adam hoped these words would stick with his players, as they had a whole season of these kinds of games.

'woeful start to the season. Marshall out' was the Facebook status Neil Walker put on his Profile. He was livid at how badly things had began for his team, this Marshall guy is hopeless he thought. He and his friends had been discussing it last night in the pub, all were agreed that the manager wasn't experienced enough, but should be given more time.

"I have tickets for the home game on Saturday against Larbeight in the cup, fancy it Neil? Asked Andy, Neil's oldest friend.

"Sure why not, they can't get any worse surely"

Adam had told his players to go out and keep doing what they had been working on in training and the last couple of games, and they did not disappoint.

Kelvingrove were 3-0 inside twenty minutes. James Fotheringham had put them in front after four minutes, good work by Jamie on the right before sending a low cross perfectly into the path of 'Fozzy' to guide the ball

Revival Part 2

into the far corner.

The lead was doubled six minutes later when again a cross from Jamie was met by James' head and out of the reach of the 'keeper. It was three on the twenty minute mark, a curling free kick from David Griffin went in off a post.

"Wonderful guys, you are all playing so well, keep it up" Adam said proud of his players.

"A few more of those brilliant crosses would be great Jamie, I'm on a hat-trick" joked James

"Coming up Fozzy" replied Jamie

The fans were made to wait fifteen minutes for the next goal. Kelvingrove had started the second half slowly, relying on a goal line clearance from Amdy to keep their three goal lead intact, the goal came in tremendous style, good build up play from the back seen Ricky charge forward down the right, his cross was cleared right into Simon's path, he drove the ball threw a crowd of players and beyond the 'keeper with an unstoppable shot.

The home side had plenty of chances however, they had to settle for just one more goal in the dying stages of the game from Joe, this time it was David on the left who played a clever disguised ball behind the defence into Steven's path, he pulled it back across goal for Joe to score a typical poachers goal.

"You thoroughly deserved that win today guys, completely dominant performance, I am proud of all of you. Keep it up."

"We need to start doing this in the league as well now, we are playing catch up already" said Graham

"Today was a big confidence boost I reckon" said Jamie

"True, I felt good out there, compared to pre season"

"It helps that we now know each other" said club captain Steven Delgado.

There was agreement all round as the players realised just how good this team could become.

The big question for Adam was would the cup win against Larbeight prove to be a turning point for his new team. He got his question answer emphatically the following Saturday away to Shielview. It started with the simplest of goals for Joe. A deflected shot from Simon fell nicely into his path and he made no mistake in slotting it under the 'keeper. It was two moments later when Simon robbed a dithering opponent of the ball before playing a defence splitting ball through to Joe who double his, and his teams advantage. Kelvingrove wee rampant. Mot to be outdone, Joe's strike partner James grabbed himself a goal, rising well to head home an inviting cross from Ricky. The wingers David and Jamie were causing all sorts of problems with their teamwork, movement and frequent switching wings. It was from an in-swinging corner from Jamie that Alan Hewitt scored his first ever senior goal. James made it five on the stroke of half time.

The second half started slowly, the game was well won and Kelvingrove had taken their foot off the gas. Adam felt it was time for some changes, he decided to bring on all three of his newest signings. John Gardner, a young centre midfielder who had had a great debut season in the Third Division last season replaced Simon. Tony Slater, a versatile defender had signed from a non league English club replaced goal scorer Alan. Manuel Costas, a young Spanish striker signed from a football academy in Spain came on to replace Joe, who despite being on a hat-trick had picked up a knock on his ankle and had been hobbling about for the last few minutes.

Revival Part 2

The pace picked up again with the new players keen to make an impression. It should have been six when Steven sent a through ball to Manuel who tried to take on one too many defenders before being tackled.

"Unlucky Manu" called James who had come over to pat him on the back.

Manuel got another chance to score, it started with fellow new boy John playing the ball wide to Jamie who cut inside before playing a pass to Manuel just inside the box, Manu did well to turn his man before shooting for goal, it was going in until the last moment when the 'keeper made a terrific save to deny him. It was Tony's turn to show his worth next after Kelvingrove caught on the counter attack, Tony used his pace to catch up with the opponent and then his timing to put in a superb goal saving challenge that earned a standing ovation from the away support. The match ended 5-0. The players could scarcely conceal their delight.

"What a performance" cried Alan

"That was a footballing masterclass" said Jamie

"if we keep on like this we are going to be impossible to stop this season" said Andy jubilantly

"Wonderful performance guys, the first half was a joy to watch" said Adam "Every one of you deserves credit. However, we have to keep this up, we are at home next week, we need to show our fans we are the real deal, that we are worthy of their support and hard earned money.

Disappointingly the stadium was barely a quarter full, evidently some fans had lost faith with the club during the hardships, or perhaps with the manager they have never heard of. Whatever the reason they stay away fans missed another exhibition of football from the Kelvingrove. A 7-0 win. The most pleasing thing for Adam was the fact that it was seven different scorers. Joe, Amdy, Simon, Jamie, James, Manuel and David. Their football had been slick and incisive, seldom a wasted pass, the work rate was superb, every player working hard for one another. Perhaps this would help entice fans back.

Attendances did indeed increase over the months as fans became more and more convinced of the team and manager. A string of fine results in league and cup had forced many supporters and journalists alike to change their opinions of the team, and the manager.

Kelvingrove were sitting five points ahead at the top of the league, that lead only looked like increasing. The incredible undefeated streak last until the week before Christmas when the side were beaten 2-0 away to Glenbank.

The new year however started badly. A string of injuries to first team players had threatened to put a halt to their title charge. Joe, Alan, Jamie, Steven and Ricky had all picked up injuries, the latter two would miss most, if not all, of the remainder of the season. Adam had been forced to call up several of the under 19 squad to make up the numbers. All three new signings: John, Tony and Manuel would also be given the chance in the first team. A three match winless run, including two draws and a defeat had cut their lead at the top from five down to one. To make matters worse Amdy had been sent off, and promptly handed a two match ban. Adam had no choice now but to bring a youth player into defence for the next match.

Anybody looking at the team sheet for the next match would have been forgiven for not recognizing a lot of the names on the bench. Seven subs, Six of who were eighteen or under.

Revival Part 2

Adam had to shuffle his defence about. Tony Slater, who had been covering for the injured Ricky Porter had been moved to centre half to partner Danny O'Neill, an eighteen year old debutant, called up from the under nineteen's. Danny had been enjoying a good season in the youth league, but had not expected a call up this soon. Another youth player making their debut was Lewis Braxton, the seventeen year old right back had come into to take Amdy's place in the side.

Kelvingrove struggled to find their usual rhythm, passes were going astray, the strikers had barely touched the ball yet. It was the away side that threatened first, Lewis was beaten easily by his opponent who whipped a cross into the box, Danny could only half clear the ball, into the path of an oncoming midfielder who struck for goal, but for a superb save from Michael, who tipped the drive over the bar. This was a wake-up call for the home team, who started to take the game by the scruff of the neck, John Gardner was determined to make the most of his chance in the first team, and when he received the ball in space he run with it, beating the first man easily before sliding a pass through to Manuel who passed it first time straight into the path of James Fotheringham who fired it into the back of the net. The goal had relaxed the home side somewhat, and they now started to find a bid fluidity in their play. John, in particular had been tremendous, dictating play from the centre of the park. The inexperienced defence had stood firm too, marshalled well by Tony, who had been organizing his defence, keeping the younger players from losing concentration.

At half time Adam expressed how pleased he was at how well they had been playing under the circumstances, he encouraged them to keep going and try to build on their lead.

However, it was the away team that scored the next goal, a long ball caught both centre backs out allowing the striker to nip in between them and lob it over the Michael.

"C'mon guys that was a poor goal to lose" yelled an annoyed Adam

"Next goal has to be ours lads" encouraged Simon.

Both teams had chances, but neither could find the winner and the match ended 1-1.

"Unlucky, it was a good effort. You played well, we just need to be more decisive in front of goal."

"It doesn't help that we have half a team out" moaned Andy

"No it doesn't, but that's no excuse, we missed chances, and gave them a goal, the game was there to be won. We can learn from this. These things happen in football."

"I suppose, even still though, it's frustrating we were cruising at the top, now we are second"

Graham had brought the news that Alderton had won, moving them two points clear at the top.

Kelvingrove's resolve was being tested, they were grinding out results, two points behind turned into four by the time January ended, hopes of promotion were fading. February was not much better, it started with a win, but a run of three draws and a defeat and dropped them further behind the leaders.

February drew to a close with some bad news and some good news.

Revival Part 2

The bad news was that the club were now five points behind the leaders.

The good news was that Joe, Steven and Alan were all back in training after injuries.

This news had been a huge boost to everybody at the club. Adam was delighted to have three of his best players back, as were the rest of the squad. Adam knew however that it may take a few games for them to properly settle back into the side.

It wasn't just Adam and his players who were glad they were back. Neil Walker and the rest of his fellow Kelvingrove supporters were relieved too.

Neil had been in his local pub with one of his friends discussing the clubs form. He had been annoyed at the teams performances, not to mention results and had vented his frustrations to his friend. Bemoaning the manager, the players, the lack of experience. Neil, like a lot of football fans was very fickle, quick to turn on his team when they hit a bit of bad form. His friend Connor was the complete opposite, he realised that, firstly they were lucky the team still existed, and that they had a small squad so when half the team were out injured it was going to be tough to replace them. The young players had did their best under the circumstances, and had in fact acquitted themselves very well.

As was frequently the case Connor had silenced Neil's ranting, and given him much to ponder on.

Both Neil and Connor were amongst the twenty-six thousand fans who turned up to the home match against Muirfield. Joe, Steven and Alan were all on the bench and ready to play if needed. Adam wanted to stick by the team who had been working so hard to grind out results. The home team were scarcely troubled in a first half they dominated. A solitary goal from a Simon penalty had been enough to put them one up at half time. Adam had decided to put Joe, Steven and Alan on in place of Danny O'Neill, John Gardner and Manuel Costas. The second half started with young Lewis Braxton acrobatically clearing a shot off the line. That only served to fire the home side up, before long Simon and Steven took control of the midfield, dictating the tempo of the game, With Simon already on the score sheet Seven was determined to join him, he manoeuvred into a shooting position from about thirty yards and let fly with a vicious strike, the ball cannoned back off the post and landed at the usually reliable Joe Kennedy, however after spending nearly three months on the sidelines his lack of games caught up with him, getting the ball stuck under his feet, before he could get the ball under control it had been cleared up the park. Joe's strike partner James had better luck scoring twice in the last four minutes. The first came from a cross from Lewis Braxton, James rose well to head the ball out of the 'keepers reach. The second came from a defence splitting pass from Steven, James took the ball round the 'keeper and passed it into the empty net. 3-0 was the full time score, and although the club remained five behind the leaders, it had seen a good performance and three first team players back in action.

By the end of March Kelvingrove had their full team back in action, and had steadily got their form back, a run of three wins, one draw and a solitary defeat had seen them end the month just three points off the lead.

"Ok guys, we are getting into the business end of the season now, we have to keep on winning, I don't much care how. We are three points behind the leaders, who are looking strong. It is imperative we all stick together and make the last run of games count."

Revival Part 2

"We have still to play Alderton have we not?" enquired Ricky

"Yes. Twice more as it happens. Home and away."

"If we beat them twice we are three points top, sweet!" said Andy

The first match against Alderton was away from home, the small ground was a sell out, full of supporters with mixed emotions, Alderton fans knowing a win would put them six ahead and well on course for the title and promotion, but also knowing that defeat would shift the momentum to Kelvingrove.

Despite a good start by the home side, it was the visitors who bossed much of this match. Jamie Oster in particular was having a fine game, using his pace and trickery on the ball to cause problems. However it was his fellow winger who opened the scoring. David received a pass from Steven out wide, he cut inside passed it to Joe whose back heel was inch perfect to send David clean through on goal before chipping the ball expertly over the goalkeeper to make it 0-1.

The game became a lot easier early in the second half, when one of Alderton's centre back was sent off for deliberate handball. It was left to captain Steven Delgado to convert the penalty. Kelvingrove wasted no time in making their numerical advantage count, putting together some wonderful passing moves. Jamie got a well deserved goal, what looked like a miss-hit cross ending up sailing over the 'keeper into the top corner. It was left to Andy Obodo to wrap up the scoring late on with a powerful header from a corner kick.

"Terrific result guys, that's puts us top on goal difference with four games to play. We just have to keep on going, keep on winning."

"We will, we have a strong squad now" chimed in Steven

"We also have the momentum, not to mention the fact a lot of us have lost time to make up for" Said Joe who had missed several months through injury.

"Our next two matches are at home, there should be big crowds at both, let's not let them down" said Adam, making a point of looking around the changing room at his squad.

Adam's words clearly had the desired effect, a thumping 5-0 win over Viewbank sent the supporters home happy. They witnessed goals from James, Joe and a twelve minute hat trick from substitute Manuel Costas.

The fact that Alderton had only drawn their match made them even more happy.

Despite being a goal behind for a large part of the match, Kelvingrove eventually managed to see off bottom team North Kilbride 2-1.

The penultimate game of the season witnessed both Alderton and Kelvingrove gain comfortable victories. This set up a winner takes all match on the final day of the season.

Revival Part 2

"You couldn't have set this up any better, could you?" asked Alan watching Jamie and Joe shooting a bunch of zombies on Jamie's PS3.

"You certainly could not, this is the perfect way to end the season" said Simon, sitting with his feet up reading the paper.

Jamie had invited a few of the boys over after training to relax and have a few drinks with.

"It feels like it's been a long season, especially given what happened in pre season" said David.

There was a what seemed like hours of silence as the teammates thought back to the dark days at the beginning of the season when they did not get on so well, when there were cliq's in the dressing room.

"You know, when you think about it Adam has done so much for us, individually and collectively." Mused Michael

"Not just for us, but the whole club too" added Ricky

"Yeah, he really deserves this, can't believe it has taken us so long to realise how significant his influence has been." Said Ricky

"Well I reckon we should dedicate winning the title to the gaffer eh?" said Andy

"Agreed wee man" said David

"Let's just focus on winning it first, Alderton are no mugs" Steven reminded everybody.

The big match came around, and brought a lovely early summer's day with it. Kelvingrove's stadium was a sell out in anticipation for winning the league.

"This is it guys, time to get the job done, you have worked so hard this season, you deserve it. Keep it tight at the back, they have two very lively strikers. Go out there and make everybody proud, especially yourselves."

The match started at breakneck speed, both teams keen to establish control early on. Adam's warning about their strikers was proving spot on, both were finding time and space on the ball, despite Adam's shouts from the touchline.

Joe and James were also making a nuisance of themselves in the home sides attack, Manuel's form had forced them into redoubling their efforts in training in a bid to keep their place.

With half time approaching, an uncharacteristic mistake by Alan let an opposing striker through on goal, who made no mistake in making it 0-1 at half time.

"Come on guys we are far better than this, exert your control on this match. Go out there and show everybody what we are all about."

Revival Part 2

Everything changed in the second half, the pace and the intensity was increased, Kelvingrove took total control, barely three minutes into the second half and the home side equalized. Good play on the wing by David before exchanging passes with Simon left David with time to pick out Joe at the front post who made no mistake in getting his 21st of the season.

The home side never took their foot off the gas, it was two just before the hour mark, Steven had a shot deflected back to him, this time he passed it right inbetween the two centre halves leaving James with only the 'keeper to beat, which he did by superbly chipping the ball over him into the far corner of the net. The fans had barely stopped celebrating when it was three, again it was Steven feeding the ball to James, this time he beat his marker and fired a shot into the roof of the net. The match was all but over, the visitors had nothing left to give, it was becoming damage limitation. Alan made amends for his earlier mistake by heading in the fourth from a corner kick. David made it five with a stunning volley from out wide. Andy got his first of the season, curling in a lovely free kick to make it six. The final goal went to substitute Manuel Costas, a simple tap in after the goalkeeper had failed to save a shot from Simon properly.

The moment had arrived, the full time whistle. Jubilation on and off the pitch, The players had rushed to Adam and hoisted him off his feet in celebration, much to the supporters delight, who were singing "There's only one Adam Marshall".

Each and every player had got a huge cheer when they collected their winner's medal, and also took their turn to lift the trophy.

Adam was on the pitch watching his players celebrate, witnessing the sheer joy on their faces at this incredible achievement. He was delighted for them and for the fans. They had been promoted and were one step closer to where they wanted to be. There was, however, another thought going around Adam's head, one that he may have to address in the coming weeks and months. That thought was: How do I keep this team together?

Kelvingrove had been in the spotlight all season, the eyes of the media had been on them, waiting to see if they slipped up, , wanting to know if this unknown manager could take them back to where they were. All Adam knew was that the team had achieved what he had wanted and expected of them. He was proud of them, how they had developed as players and as people.

Adam finished off his press conference by saying to all in attendance, "We have achieved what we wanted, we will enjoy our promotion over the summer, then we can start working towards next season. This club is still being rebuilt, but with the players we have and the positive attitude we all possess I see no reason why we cannot push for another promotion next season."

Revival Part 2

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-26 18:45:15