

SPORTSLINE

Inverurie sign off with win

INVERURIE Locos completed their pre-season campaign with a 2-0 win over Junior side FC Stoneywood.

Scots rankings

SCOTLAND will be in pot four for the FIFA World Cup 2014 qualifying draw in Rio de Janeiro on Saturday, along with Northern Ireland.

Greek target

GREEK outfit FC Kavala are set to sign former Aberdeen defender Maurice Ross and ex-Celtic midfielder Mark Fotheringham.

Numan for Villa

ARTHUR Numan has been handed a scouting role at Aston Villa.

SPORTS EXTRA

Coe's pride in Games progress

Rae eyes move

GAVIN Rae admitted today he is aiming to find a club in America or Australia.

Agüero to sign

SERGIO Agüero was in Manchester today to seal his £40 million move from Atletico Madrid to Manchester City.

Batista sacked

ARGENTINA have sacked Sergio Batista as manager after the hosts flopped at Copa America.

Hogg trial

FORMER Hibs skipper Chris Hogg has gone on trial at Crewe Alexandra.

TV SPORT

Live football

Asia Trophy Sky Sports 2, 8pm

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'Dons should swoop for more ICEMEN to melt fans' hearts'

Says former Red Winnie

By Charlie Allan

MORE of Iceland's top footballers could be finding their way to Pittodrie in the near future.

Kari Arnason is already earning rave reviews after making a good impression when he made his Dons debut as a substitute in the 0-0 SPL draw with St Johnstone.



AGENT: Ex-Don David Winnie.

"Talented players"

and an agent with London-based firm Thomas Cooper, said: "There's an abundance of talented Icelandic players out there."

"I would love it if some of the best ones ended up at Pittodrie. "My time as a Dons player didn't go as well as I hoped."

"But I've retained an affection for them because they gave me the chance to play for one of the biggest clubs in Scotland."

"I would love to repay them finding players who might help them become a big force in the Scottish game again."

Winnie, a Scottish Cup winner

with St Mirren before playing for the Dons from 1991-94, knows the Icelandic market well.

After leaving the Dons he played for Hearts, Dundee, St Mirren and Ayr United and also spent a period in Australia.

Winnie then accepted what he described as a "surprise" offer to join Icelandic side KR Reykjavik in 2000.

Winnie played for and managed KR, won the league title and national cup and was named as Iceland's player of the year.

"The time I spent there means I have a good idea of the standards of players and whether they could do a job in Scotland," he said.

"Icelandic players have been going abroad for many years and have done well in countries like France, Belgium and Greece."

ICEMEN

BEST YET TO COME: Aberdeen's Kari Arnason applauds the Red Army after the 0-0 draw against St Johnstone at Pittodrie.

"Scotland has been a bit slow to tap their market but I'm confident that will change now."

"There is no doubt the best players could hold their own in the SPL. They are physically and mentally strong - and certainly used to playing in bad weather."

"A lot of them would be well within the range of Aberdeen as far as wages go."

"The negotiations I had with them on behalf of Kari gave me a clear picture of what types of players they want and how much they can afford."

"There would be no point in me going back to Craig Brown and suggesting players outwith their wage bracket. But I will contact him if I feel there is a player who might meet his needs and is affordable to Aberdeen."

Arnason is the former, but wasn't the latter. Winnie confirmed the former Plymouth Argyle player had more lucrative offers on the table south of the border, but opted for Pittodrie instead.

"It was definitely a footballing decision as far as Kari is concerned," said Winnie, who had a brief spell as manager of Dumbarton before choosing to train as a lawyer and gain the qualifications needed to act as a football agent.

"He sees the move to Aberdeen as a chance to get back playing at a high level again after all the problems he experienced at

"Well received so far"

Plymouth. I'm delighted because he's the first player I've recommended to Aberdeen."

"There's pressure on me as well because of that."

"If Kari doesn't do well it would reflect badly on me and maybe make Aberdeen wary of dealing with me again."

"I'm obviously delighted Kari seems to have been well received so far."

"There is no doubt in my mind that he will prove to be a real asset to Aberdeen, but then I would say that - I'm his agent!"

"Only time will tell, but he's a great lad."



Ingolfsson failed to make grade



STRUGGLED: Haraldur Ingolfsson was at Dons.

ABERDEEN haven't enjoyed the best of luck so far when it comes to dealing with Icelandic players.

Then Dons boss Roy Aitken brought midfielder HARALDUR INGOLFSSON to Pittodrie in 1996.

Ingolfsson was hailed as one of the brightest prospects to come out of Iceland. But he struggled to shine in Scotland and was released within a year after making only eight appearances for the Dons.

Ingolfsson later played in Sweden for IF Elfsborg and in Norway for Raufoss IL.

Aitken also had the chance to sign defender HERMAN HREIDARSSON, pictured.

Then virtually unknown outwith his own country, Hreidarsson scored twice while playing in a trial match at Pittodrie.

Hreidarsson, who went on to captain Iceland and cost £5.65 million in transfer fees between various clubs in England, turned down Aberdeen's contract offer.

He said at the time: "Aberdeen offered me a pathetic deal."

"Even though I was very young there was absolutely no way I was going to accept their offer."

When the Dons decided not to follow up their interest, Crystal Palace swooped instead. They sold him to Brentford for £750,000 in 1998 but Hreidarsson's career has blossomed since then.

Ipswich bought him for £4m in 2000 then sold him to Charlton for £900,000 in July 2003. He now plays for Portsmouth.

Aitken also admitted he was keen on striker TRYGGVI GUDMUNDSSON, but didn't follow it up.



STEPPING UP: Yoann Folly.

McArdle is set to play in Paisley

From Back Page

build-up, so should have no problems as far as fitness goes.

McArdle, however, hasn't played since suffering a dislocated shoulder during Aberdeen's 3-2 defeat at Paisley in April.

He had surgery in the summer to repair the damage.

But Brown is confident the 24-year-old would cope if he is asked to make his comeback.

"Rory has been straining at the leash for weeks because he's so desperate to get back playing," said Brown.

"We were told to hold him back because he couldn't risk any contact with other players until

told he could go full steam ahead into training.

"It's a timely boost for us because Ryan Jack is suspended for the next two games."

"The return of Chris and Rory means we have plenty of options when it comes to choosing who plays at right-back."

Brown also confirmed midfielder Yoann Folly, who missed the second half of last season because of a broken ankle, has stepped up his level of training.

"It looks as if we could have Yoann back training with the rest of the group within two to three weeks, which is fantastic news," said Brown.

"We've all admired how hard he has been working over the last few months to recover from such a bad injury."

Left-back Clark Robertson, who suffered a knock in their final pre-season match against Villarreal, is also expected to be fit by the weekend.

Brown will not be pursuing his interest in trialists Mikael Nicoise and Michael Woods, who played in the 2-2 friendly draw at Peterhead.

"Straining at the leash"

it was certain that his injured shoulder was fully healed.

"Mr MacKay had a look at him and is satisfied Rory can now get his career going again."

Brown plans to give McArdle a run-out in a friendly for Aberdeen's Under-19s against Culter, which kicks-off at 7.30pm at Crombie Park tonight.

Clark's knee injury had been causing concern because he was suffering a lot of pain when he kicked a ball.

The Dons sent him to see MacKay to seek reassurances that no serious damage had been done to Clark.

Brown said: "Chris was delighted when he was

ARE YOU A DONS SHIRT WINNER?

WE HAVE been swamped with entries to our competition to win a new Dons kit and the chance to be in the biggest ever team picture taken at Pittodrie.

The names of the five lucky winners will be published in tomorrow's Evening Express.

Our great competition, in conjunction with the Dons and kit suppliers adidas, also gives the lucky five the opportunity to be pictured with the first team and manager Craig Brown. The Dons hope to stage the biggest ever team photo at Pittodrie tomorrow night. We will reveal the names of our five lucky winners in tomorrow's newspaper.

They will then get the chance to join fans who have purchased the new red home kit in the club's official team picture.

Fans hoping to be in the picture should note the Richard Donald Stand turnstiles will open from 4pm tomorrow and the picture will be taken at 6pm.

Those who attend will also witness the unveiling of Aberdeen's new away kit.

Evening Express readers will get the chance to be among the first to own one of the new kits in another great competition in tomorrow's Evening Express. Don't miss out!

Evening Express



Chance to take part in biggest team photo ever!

We want your views

OUR reporters, Sports Editor Charlie Allan, Ross McTavish, Anthony Joseph and Sean Wallace will be posting their views on the new season on Twitter and Facebook.

We also want to know what YOU think of Aberdeen's performances this season. We will publish the best comments in the Evening Express.

Facebook - Visit our Facebook page www.facebook.com/EveningExpressAberdeen and post your comments on our wall

Twitter - Tweet @EECharlieAllan @EERossMcTavish @EEAnthonyJoseph @EESeanWallace

