

Inverness and Nairn Enterprise news release INE/00003/04/JULCOR

For immediate use

STICKING TO THE POINT ON PREMIER LEAGUE STATUS FOR INVERNESS

Issued: Friday 11th June 2004

Inverness is a premier league city, whatever those in charge of Scottish football's top flight might decide.

That's the message in a sticker campaign, launched today, giving everyone in the area the chance to show pride in their city and support for Inverness Caledonian Thistle's battle for promotion to the Premier League.

Thousands of free car and widow stickers with the slogan Premier League Inverness were being distributed today by the City of Inverness Marketing Group (CIMG).

There has been widespread criticism after the Scottish Premier League (SPL) barred the First Division champions from promotion by rejecting their plan to ground-share with Aberdeen because their Caledonian Stadium home does not meet Premier League requirements. The decision is to be reconsidered later this month.

CIMG, which earlier this year launched the Inverness the City in the Highlands initiative, are backing Caley Thistle by including them in the branding campaign because they believe the club's achievements have provided a huge boost for the city's profile.

Group member Provost William Smith, chairman of the Inverness Area Committee of The Highland Council, said: "Inverness and the Highlands are hugely proud of Caley Thistle's achievement in winning the First Division. The unjust decision by the SPL has done nothing to tarnish that pride.

"I hope people, whatever their football loyalties, will demonstrate their support for Inverness and for Caley Thistle's continuing efforts to gain the place they won on merit in the Premier League by displaying these stickers."

Stuart Black, chief executive of Inverness and Nairn Enterprise, and chair of CIMG, said: "Caley Thistle, through famous victories over the years and winning the First Division have done a great deal to raise the profile of the city of Inverness.

"As sporting ambassadors for the city, it is only right that the club should have a prominent part to play in our branding initiative aimed at improving the image Inverness projects to the outside world. Likewise, it makes sense that as a group concerned with conveying a winning identity for the area, we should show our support for them in their efforts to claim their rightful place in the Premier League."

Caley Thistle welcomed the marketing group's backing.

The club's vice-chairman Graeme Bennett said: "We are delighted with the backing the group is giving us. These stickers are a great way for people not only to demonstrate their support for us, but also their pride in Inverness and the Highlands."

Nearly 10,000 stickers were being distributed with the Inverness Courier newspaper today. They will also be available free from Inverness Town House and newsagents throughout the city.

Ends

Notes to editors:

1. City of Inverness Marketing Group was formed in 2002 to develop brand positioning and a marketing strategy for the city. Its members are: The Highland Council; Inverness and Nairn Enterprise; HOST; Inverness City Centre Management & Events Management; Inverness Chamber of Commerce; Inverness Hotel Association; Inverness Bed & Breakfast Association, and Inverness Visitor Attractions.