

Premier Sports Cup Quarter-final Intelligence

Four ties, 11-13 September 2026. Ranked highest to lowest by the contextual leader Football Intelligence Score.

Executive ranking

Rank	Context leader	FIS	Fixture	Delta	Priority
1	Celtic	77.0	Rangers v Celtic	+19.0	14.2
2	Heart of Midlothian	76.5	Stenhousemuir v Heart of Midlothian	+13.7	10.3
3	Ross County	65.2	Ross County v Hibernian	+3.7	2.8
4	Aberdeen	57.8	Kilmarnock v Aberdeen	+2.6	1.9

Interpretation: Celtic and Hearts lead strongly. Ross County is a context-market conflict: Hibernian remain the clear market favourite. Kilmarnock-Aberdeen has little separation.

#1 Rangers v Celtic

Sun 13 Sep, 12:00 BST

CONTEXT LEADER	OPPONENT	DELTA / PRIORITY
Celtic 77.0	Rangers 58.0	+19.0 14.2

90-minute 1X2: 2.70 / 3.70 / 2.45 **De-margined:** 35.3% / 25.8% / 38.9%

Celtic have a perfect 6-0-0 league record and rotated heavily in Wednesday's 1-0 win at St Johnstone. Kasper Høgh and Kieran Tierney returned, improving availability. Rangers arrive with a growing injury list including Lawrence Shankland, Youssef Chermiti, Daisuke Yokota and Tuur Rommens.

Adversarial check: Ibrox and the absence of Celtic supporters strengthen Rangers' environment. Rangers have also won four league matches and the derby can compress normal quality gaps. Confirm Høgh/Tierney readiness and both starting XIs.

Interpretation: Market: Celtic narrow 90-minute favourite; contextual lean Celtic.

Status: Strong context - mandatory adversarial and lineup review.

FIS category	Celtic	Rangers
Stakes & incentives	+2	+2
Availability & lineup	+1	-2
Recovery, travel & rotation	+1	+1
Tactical & managerial fit	+1	+1
Club environment	+1	+0
Information integrity	+1	+1
Market intelligence	+0	+0
TOTAL FIS	77.0	58.0

#2 Stenhousemuir v Heart of Midlothian

Fri 11 Sep, 19:45 BST

CONTEXT LEADER	OPPONENT	DELTA / PRIORITY
Heart of Midlothian 76.5	Stenhousemuir 62.8	+13.7 10.3

90-minute 1X2: 9.50 / 6.00 / 1.31 **De-margined:** 10.2% / 16.1% / 73.7%

Hearts are third in the Premiership with 12 points from five and a +7 goal difference. The full-time market makes them an overwhelming favourite. Stenhousemuir deserve respect after eliminating Motherwell and receiving manager/player awards, so their positive environment is scored rather than ignored.

Adversarial check: A one-off away cup tie and possible Hearts rotation create upset pathways. Stenhousemuir have already demonstrated knockout resilience; confirm Hearts do not weaken key central and attacking roles.

Interpretation: Market and context align strongly with Hearts.

Status: Strong context - Hearts qualify lean, but price may already absorb it.

FIS category	Heart of Midlothian	Stenhousemuir
Stakes & incentives	+2	+2
Availability & lineup	+0	+0
Recovery, travel & rotation	+0	+0
Tactical & managerial fit	+2	+1
Club environment	+1	+1
Information integrity	+1	+1
Market intelligence	+2	-2
TOTAL FIS	76.5	62.8

#3 Ross County v Hibernian

Sat 12 Sep, 15:00 BST

CONTEXT LEADER	OPPONENT	DELTA / PRIORITY
Ross County 65.2	Hibernian 61.5	+3.7 2.8

90-minute 1X2: 6.00 / 4.60 / 1.47 **De-margined:** 15.7% / 20.4% / 63.9%

Ross County lead League One with 13 points from five and a +8 goal difference, and reached the quarter-final after an unbeaten group and a 2-1 win at Dunfermline. That positive context contrasts with pressure around eighth-placed Hibs, who have a -2 Premiership goal difference.

Adversarial check: Hibernian are the higher-division side and a strong market favourite. Ross County's FIS is contextual, not a claim that they are more likely to win. Treat this as an upset-research alert, not an automatic Ross County selection.

Interpretation: Context: Ross County. Baseline/market: Hibernian. Conflict means abstain or paper-test.

Status: Context-market conflict - no FIS-only action.

FIS category	Ross County	Hibernian
Stakes & incentives	+2	+2
Availability & lineup	+0	+0
Recovery, travel & rotation	+0	+0
Tactical & managerial fit	+1	+0
Club environment	+1	-1
Information integrity	+1	+1
Market intelligence	-1	+1
TOTAL FIS	65.2	61.5

#4 Kilmarnock v Aberdeen

Sat 12 Sep, 17:45 BST

CONTEXT LEADER	OPPONENT	DELTA / PRIORITY
Aberdeen 57.8	Kilmarnock 55.2	+2.6 1.9

90-minute 1X2: 2.75 / 3.50 / 2.46 **De-margined:** 34.4% / 27.1% / 38.5%

The sides drew 0-0 at Pittodrie on 5 September. Both have poor league starts, but the current cup market gives Aberdeen a narrow edge. There is little verified contextual separation, making this the weakest ranked leader.

Adversarial check: Kilmarnock have home advantage and the previous meeting was level. Small information changes can reverse this ranking; lineups and tactical intent are decisive.

Interpretation: Very narrow Aberdeen market lean; effectively a low-separation tie.

Status: Neutral/mixed - baseline only or abstain.

FIS category	Aberdeen	Kilmarnock
Stakes & incentives	+2	+2
Availability & lineup	+0	+0
Recovery, travel & rotation	+0	+0
Tactical & managerial fit	-1	-1
Club environment	-1	-1
Information integrity	+1	+1
Market intelligence	+1	+0
TOTAL FIS	57.8	55.2

Method, safeguards and sources

FIS measures current contextual position, not talent, win probability or expected return. Category weights are stakes 18%, availability 22%, recovery 15%, tactics 15%, club environment 10%, information integrity 10%, and market intelligence 10%.

Market snapshots are for 90 minutes. Qualification can continue through extra time and penalties. Confirm lineups and recheck prices near kickoff.

Sources

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