

Football – Hearts win The Scottish Cup Final



by Barry Dickson

Salt 'n Sauce Final Turns Into Bitter Pill for Hibs, but Sweetest Thing for Hearts

Firstly I would like to say that I am a Hibs supporter. I have been for about 35 years, and I have seen highs and lows, I have seen managers and players come and go.

My grandparents, father and brother were all Hibs supporters, but they had never seen an all Edinburgh Scottish Cup Final, and to my great sadness they never did as they have all passed away.

I travelled through to Hampden today in hope, rather than expectation, but there were some signs there that it may be Hibs day:- things like it's my birthday, we have an Irish manager and have not had an Irish manager since we last won the Scottish Cup in 1902, and that 110 year itch that needed scratching.

On taking a walk around the outside of the stadium, and speaking to both sets of supporters, it seemed to me that Hearts fans were "supremely" confident, and Hibs fans were quietly hopeful. I met some great supporters from both teams who did their respective clubs proud. There was good banter, but no ill will towards each other.

So at 3pm referee Craig Thompson blew his whistle to begin the first all Edinburgh Final for 116 years.

The early exchanges were nervous. Neither team was too

committed for the first 13 minutes, however this soon changed when Darren Barr put Hearts in front with a goal, which can only be described as a gift, as the Hibs defence were all at sea and Barr put the ball into the net with some ease.

After the opening goal, Hearts started to play some good football, and totally belied the previous week's game against Celtic where they were beaten 5-0. Hibs, however, were woeful in defence, and just as bad in attack, as they could not connect with each other, and some very very poor decisions were made.

The second goal was no surprise when it came, and who else but Rudi Skachel scored in the 27th minute. It was well deserved as Hearts were firmly on top now, and were beginning to look as if they were going to rip Hibs apart with every move they made.

Hearts were well worthy of their lead and indeed should have increased the lead a few times over as time and again a combination of bad defending and bad decision making by Hibs led to Hearts attacks.

Then, very surprisingly, Hibs pulled one back in the 41st minute when James McPake put the ball in the Hearts net to make it 2-1, and suddenly there was a glimmer of light for the Hibs fans and players.

Half Time Hibs 1 Hearts 2

The second half had barely started when Hibs's Pa Kujabi's foul on Suso Santana led to a penalty and a 2nd yellow card for Kujabi, which on replays was a bit harsh, as the contact appeared to be outside the box. But Danny Grainger stepped up to convert the awarded penalty in the 48th minute. This led to some Hibs fans heading for the exit, and, in all honesty, I can't say I blame them as this was turning into an embarrassment. So with Hibs down to 10 men and Hearts 3-1 to the good it seemed damage limitation was the order of the day

for Hibs. However no-one had told the Hearts players that, and they played some good football for the rest of the second half while the Hibs players chased shadows.

The fourth goal was scored just two minutes after the penalty, and this time Ryan McGowan got his name on the scoresheet. Again, awful defending didn't help Hibs's cause, and indeed more empty spaces started to appear in the Hibs end.

The fifth goal at 75 minutes was scored by Man of the Match, Rudi Skachel, and topped off what was a really good performance in what may be his last game for the Tynecastle side. This started a mass exodus by Hibs fans eager to get out of the stadium before things got worse, as shouts of "we want 8" rang out from the Hearts stands.

So the final whistle sounded and the Hearts supporters, players and management celebrated wildly. To be honest they should have, as they had dominated the game and played Hibs off the park. In my view, Hibs were nothing short of woeful, and Pat Fenlon really has one massive task on his hands to rebuild Hibs into a credible team. Today's team is certainly not good enough for a club like Hibs. Ex-players like Rob Jones and Steven Fletcher were watching from the stands, who must wonder what has happened to the club they played for. Other former players and managers must shake their heads in disbelief at just how awful Hibs are at the moment, and Rod Petrie must look at loosening the purse strings, because certainly this Hibs team is not good enough.

The last words go to Hearts:- all credit to them, they played very very well, thoroughly deserved their win and can think themselves unlucky that they did not get into double figures today, because on another day that may certainly happen.