

Fenlon praises character of his players



Hibs boss Pat Fenlon has praised the character of his players after coming back from a poor start to the season to go four games unbeaten; a run he hopes will continue against bottom club St Mirren at Easter Road on Saturday. He also gave his backing to under-fire Saints boss Danny Lennon and hopes that the Paisley outfit can start to pick up points; but not this weekend.

Speaking at the weekly press conference ahead of the game, Fenlon said: "I do feel this is the best squad of players I've had since I came to Hibs. There are a lot of good characters in that dressing room and we now have good competition for every position.

"The season didn't start well for us but we just continued to work tremendously hard to get it right. We're not saying we're brilliant or anything like that yet, but we're getting better.

"I'm hoping St Mirren go on a decent run because Danny is one of the good guys around the game here, I'm just hoping that run doesn't start this weekend.

"St Mirren have some good players. I looked at their team from last week and I see the names of some good players there. You are always wary about facing a team that is on a poor run."

The Irishman knows only too well the problems involved in football management these days as he found himself under pressure from the supporters after losing the Edinburgh derby to a young Hearts side, but he insists that sticking to your principles is the key. He continued: "You have to believe in what you're doing as a manager. Once you start to have any

doubts, then it becomes a problem for you. You have to have a belief that what you're doing is right and then you keep working on it.

"You have a belief in what you want to do and you have to stick to that. If you start chopping and changing things for the sake of it, it can cause more problems.

"You change little things along the way but you have to have a basic belief in what you're doing. It's worked for Danny in the past; he's won a major trophy and has a decent record so far as St Mirren manager.

"You can't look too much further down the road as a manager, you have to make sure the concentration is right and look at the next couple of fixtures. We all say it's back to basics when you hit a rough patch. It is a tough part of management but it comes to us all at some stage and you have to be big and bold to take it and move on.

"You empathise with all managers, it's a difficult job. Some people think it's a handy job and an easy job but it's a very difficult job. We're only a few games into the season and people are speaking about Danny the same way they spoke about me a few weeks ago.

"But that's the way football is now and you have to be big enough to try to take that, whether you use that as a motivational tool or you blank it or whatever. It's just part and parcel of the game. Once you step into that job of being a manager, it's coming for you no matter who you are.

"It's amazing that Danny is facing this kind of speculation just a few months after winning a trophy. It shows you what the game is. You think back to the League Cup final at Hampden, a fantastic St Mirren support there and great celebrations. Then, a few months later, people are talking about him losing his job which is crazy. We're five or six games into the season and it's ludicrous to be honest.

“From going in after games and speaking to managers, Danny is fairly honest in his assessment of games; he seems to be a good guy. I don’t know him that well but, when we speak about the games, he’s clued in and he’s honest. That’s key when you are a manager, you have to be honest whether you have done well or not.”