

Michael Nelson wants to reward home fans with a victory



Last season Hibs were the one of the last teams to let go of their home form which saw them climb to the top of the league, however it's now the results away from Easter Road that keep the wolf from Pat Fenlon's door.

Worryingly for the fans, Hibs have won just one of their last 11 home games although six away wins during the same period has eased the pressure on the Irishman. Unfortunately that form deserted them at Tynecastle against a young Hearts side which led to some calls for the manager's head, particularly as that result came so soon after the 7-0 home defeat to Malmo.

Ironically, an injury to skipper James McPake against the Swedes meant an emergency call to Bradford and Michael Nelson agreed to return across the Border for a nominal fee. Since then the big Englishman has been an inspiration in the heart of the Hibs defence, and his form will give Pat Fenlon a selection headache when McPake returns to full fitness.

Nelson is enjoying his time at Easter Road and is confident that the fans will be celebrating some home victories although he doesn't mind where the points come from.

Speaking at the weekly press conference ahead of the St Mirren game, he said: "It's just one of those things, sometimes you win at home and sometimes you win away. Obviously, you want to win at home, because you want to give the majority of the fans something to cheer about. It's nice to win away as well for the people who get up early in the morning and travel a bit of

distance to those games, but if you get three points, it doesn't matter where you win. As long as we are picking up points, whether it be at home or on the road, we're not bothered.

"A good record is good to have, regardless of where it is, away from home or at home. The main reason we want to win at home is to give the fans who come in week in week out something to cheer about, but if you are going to have an unbeaten run, we'd rather win away and draw at home than win at home and lose away. You get four points for a win and a draw and you only get three for a win and a loss. As long as you are picking up points, it's not massively important where you get them."

"I can't really comment on the Malmo result, I wasn't here. But it's gone now and we're concentrating on the league and progressing. It's been a little bit of a slow start to the season but it's certainly picked up over the last few games. No-one has rolled us over since I've been at the club; no-one has absolutely battered us or had us chasing shadows.

"I feel like I have settled in quite well. I think the performances have improved as the games have gone on. Now we're sitting on the back of a four-game unbeaten run, with two really good results away from home, having gone a goal down in both games."

Nelson is confident that his former Kilmarnock team-mate Paul Heffernan and James Collins who both scored last week will form a partnership which will strike fear into the opposition and help the club climb the table.

"Even in training last week, when they were on the same side in seven a side games, you could see that, without having worked on anything, their partnership sort of evolved naturally," he said. "Hopefully, that will develop in the weeks and months ahead.

“Their movement is good and they are both strong boys and they’ll hold it in. It is not just all about the goals they will score; it is about the amount of work they get through for the team and trying to bring other players in, like Liam Craig and players who drive forward from midfield.

“They’ll ask questions of centre backs. They won’t just stand up against them and keep them static, they will move them around and put them into positions where they don’t feel comfortable.”

Hibs could do neighbour a favour today by beating St Mirren at Easter Road. The Saints are only nine points ahead of Hearts, and an Edinburgh double this weekend could see that figure reduce to six.

Pat Fenlon revealed that Lewis Stevenson who had to leave the field following a bad tackle from former team-mate Patrick Cregg last Saturday and Ryan McGivern are both in the squad.

New signing Abdellah Zoubir is also likely to feature at some stage.