

Hibs 0-2 Aberdeen: Late goals secure points for Dons



Two late goals gave Aberdeen all three points in a hard fought encounter at Easter Road yesterday. Scotland boss Gordon Strachan and former manager Craig Brown were in the Directors' box as the match kicked off in perfect conditions, and Hibs knew that a win would see them overtake the Dons and move into the top four.

Pat Fenlon made just one change to the side that drew with Celtic last week; skipper James McPake returned at centre half with Michael Nelson missing out through injury.

Aberdeen started strongly and Ben Williams was called into action early on to produce a fine save from a Mark Reynolds effort then the dangerous Niall McGinn skipped beat three Hibs defenders before shooting just over from the edge of the box.

Lewis Stevenson then did well to block a Peter Pawlett strike as the Dons dominated possession.

Hibs came back into the game and in the 33rd minute Liam Craig had a decent chance but his shot went just wide of Langfield's post.

Just before the break, Calvin Zola went close when his powerful strike hit the side netting, then Scott Robertson sent a sensational cross-field ball which found Paul Heffernan clear in the box, but his shot from a narrow angle was turned away for a corner

Aberdeen started the second half brightly and Joe Shaughnessy had a goal-bound shot blocked by Owain Tudur Jones then Aberdeen fans thought they had scored when Pawlett's effort

was saved by Williams but the ball fell to McGinn who had the simple task of sliding the ball into the net, but Hibs' skipper McPake appeared from nowhere to throw himself at the ball and made an incredible block to keep the scores level.

With the game looking like it had 0-0 written over it, Aberdeen grabbed an opener with ten minutes remaining when Wylde disposed Lewis Stevenson before finding team-mate Vernon who sent the ball into the top right hand corner of the net from 20 yards.

Hibs threw everything into attack and should have equalised with four minutes remaining when Langfield slipped whilst attempting to clear the ball and it fell perfectly to James Collins but his shot went agonisingly past the post to the despair of the Hibs' fans.

Collins had another chance to level the scores in the last minute, but his volley went over the bar.

In time added on Hibs were punished for pressing for an equaliser as Vernon released Wylde on the left and he hammered the ball low into the far corner of the net beyond Williams.

After the game Pat Fenlon said: "We got what we deserved, we didn't play well enough. Aberdeen were the better side and deserved to win the game. As a team and a unit we didn't get in about them enough. It was just a poor day from us. We're disappointed with that because we had a good result against Celtic and we wanted to try back that up with a decent win here. We're not looking for excuses; we didn't play well enough, simple as that. We were really competitive against Celtic, but we didn't get to that level today and that is probably more disappointing than anything."

Hibs: Williams, McGivern, Hanlon, McPake, Robertson, Craig, Stevenson, Tudur Jones (Collins 54'), Heffernan (Vine 61'), Zoubir (Handling 73'), Thomson. Substitutes not used: Murdoch, Taiwo, Forster, Cairney.

Aberdeen: Langfield, Shaughnessy, Anderson, Reynolds, Jack, Pawlett (Wylde 78'), Flood, Zola (Vernon 64'), McGinn, Robertson, Hayes (Robson 70'). Substitutes not used: Weaver, Hector, Smith, Considine.

Referee: Steve McLean.

Attendance: 12,810.