

# The 'Phantom' comes through Under 20 game unscathed



Hibs defender Michael Nelson came through the full 90 minutes of Hibs' under-20s 4-0 win at Hamilton last night with no ill effects, and is ready to play against Ross County on Saturday if selected.

The 33 year old former Kilmarnock player has been nicknamed 'Phantom' due to the face mask he is required to wear following a serious injury sustained against Celtic at Easter Road is determined to win his place back in Terry Butcher's side and despite a feeling of numbness, he has declared himself fit and raring to go.

Nelson said: "It's fine now. I've had no complications since the operation. It's just a case of wearing the mask and getting on with things."

"There is still numbness in the top set of teeth on the left-hand side, just my cheek and my top lip. It seems to have subsided a little but I don't know if it's just me getting used to it or it's actually going, it's fine. They took a cast off my face a week after the operation so it fits quite snug. I thought it might be quite uncomfortable, especially when I'm heading the ball, but it's been fine. No complaints and I'm fit and ready for selection again."

"It's up to me to do well in training and try and prove myself to the manager. I wished I could have got the operation on the Monday after it happened and then I would have been back in time for last week's game. But I've just got to try and force my way into his plans.

"He's obviously played at the highest level and with him being

a centre-half there is a lot he can pass on to me and the younger boys. It's good, but when a new manager comes in it's always a case of just trying to see what they want you to do as an individual, and as a team, and get everyone to buy into what they want."

Hibs embark on yet another Scottish Cup run against Ross County in Dingwall this weekend hoping to reach their third final in a row.

A large Hibs' support is expected to travel north to the game.