

# Police warn fans to behave ahead of Edinburgh Derby



Police in Edinburgh are urging supporters of Hibernian FC and Heart of Midlothian FC to ensure the New Year derby match is enjoyed in a safe and responsible manner.

The clubs meet at Easter Road Stadium on Thursday 2nd January at 7.45pm.

A policing operation will be in place before, during and after the match to deter criminal activity and maintain public safety.

Officers will be carrying out searches outside the stadium with the support of a specialist search dog, capable of detecting flares and fireworks.

Police are warning that robust action will be taken against anyone trying to take these items into the ground following recent incidents at matches between the clubs where flares or fireworks were used.

Superintendent Lesley Clark, who is in charge of the policing operation on Thursday, said: "There will be search cordons in place around the stadium and searches will be undertaken as a condition of entry to the ground.

"A specialist search dog will be used to detect anyone in possession of fireworks or flares.

"We recognise that the majority of supporters are well behaved, however there are a small minority who in the past have put themselves and others in danger by throwing fireworks or flares.

“If this behaviour continues then it will only be a matter of time before someone suffers a serious injury, and we are working with clubs and stewards to do all we can to prevent such dangerous behaviour.

“Anyone who is caught with a flare or firework can expect to be arrested, either at the time, or as a result of a post-match investigation.

“As well as receiving a criminal conviction, they may very well find themselves being banned from attending future matches throughout the country.

“We urge supporters to act responsibly, enjoy the match and have a Happy New Year.”