

# Hibs' Under 20s victory dedicated to David Paul



Hibs' Under 20s returned to action last night with a 2-1 win over St Mirren which Head of Academy Coaching James McDonaugh dedicated to teenager David Paul who sadly passed away in December.

The number four jersey normally worn by David has been 'retired' for the remainder of the season as a mark of respect, and Tom Taiwo lined up wearing number 14 in his place.

Taiwo and Rowan Vine who have both been told that they are free to leave the club were in the starting line alongside Danny Handling who was side-lined with a foot injury last weekend.

After dominating the early part of the game, Hibs took the lead in the 24-minutes when Handling scored with a header from a Gareth McCaffrey cross.

McCaffrey then went close with powerful drive from 30 yards before Ryan Baptie also tested the Saints' keeper with a free kick from 20 yards.

Hibs added a second six minutes before the break as Gardiner connected with a header from a Baptie corner.

Scullion pulled one back for St Mirren near the end, but the Hibs' youngsters held on for the victory which sends them back to the top of the league on goal difference and sets up a thrilling match against Rangers at the Energy Assets Arena, Livingston next Tuesday (28 January, kick off 6pm).

After the game, Head of Academy coaching James McDonaugh

dedicated the win to David Paul whose funeral took place this morning.

McDonaugh told Hibernian TV: "You can't underestimate or put into words how hard a time the boys have had over the last month. The loss of David Paul has been massive.

"I wasn't sure that we would win another game between now and the end of the season. I just didn't know how it was going to go. So to just win that one and with David's funeral tomorrow we can dedicate the win to him. I know it doesn't mean much, but we can do that."

"We've removed the number four strip until the end of the season as a mark of respect to David and his family; we're not planning on wearing that again between now and the end of the season.

"We'll wear 14, 12 or 20 or whatever comes to hand and that is why Tom (Taiwo) was wearing the number 14 shirt tonight."

"It was a game of two halves, on reflection we were the better side in the first-half, although St Mirren had a spell and in the second half St Mirren were the better side and we had a spell.

"Overall we certainly didn't get to the levels and the standards that we've set, but we did do well to get the three points and win the football match – those are the positives that we can take out of it."

Hibernian under-20s: Sean Murdoch, Andrew Black, Ryan Baptie, Tom Taiwo, Bob Wilson (Neil Martyniuk, 81), Tom Gardiner, Gareth McCaffrey, Dean Horribine, Rowan Vine, Danny Handling (Taylor Hendry, 61), Max Todd (Jamie Beaton, 66). Unused substitutes: Dougie Horne, Aaron Dunsmore, Scott Martin, Jay Doyle.

Photo of Danny Handling by John Preece

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