

Reaction to pulsating Edinburgh derby



Hibs grabbed the bragging rights after dominating last night's Edinburgh derby in front of a full house at Easter Road with 23 shots on goal compared to Hearts' five, but Terry Butcher's men left it late to secure the win which takes them into the top six.

After the game a happy and relieved Terry Butcher said: "I was delighted with many aspects. We conceded a goal, which isn't like us, but I was delighted with the reaction when we did concede. There have been times in the past, looking from afar, when the boys would have let it affect them. In the past Hearts would maybe have taken a point or even gone on to win the game. But our boys steeled themselves, came back into it and thoroughly deserved to win.

"We don't get penalties. We've had one league penalty all season and it came tonight. Lewis has been challenged; Bobby Madden was very close and gave it. I'm delighted he made the decision. I think it was the right decision. There was no reason to make the challenge on Lewis, and Lewis has been wiped out.

"There was enormous pressure on Liam when he stepped up to take it, because of all the hoo-ha surrounding the decision. He stuck it away really well. We're six points behind Inverness Caledonian Thistle and five behind Dundee United, who we play on Sunday.

"I'd like to say that I loved every minute of it, but there were parts of the second half I didn't enjoy that much but a

win is a win and I said to the players before that it doesn't matter how you win just get the three points.

"I thought we deserved the win, I thought we battered them at times but just couldn't get that second goal when we were one nil up then they equalised and it knocked us back a little bit and gave Hearts a bit of life but we still looked as though we were going to get a second goal and a winner and it's a lovely feeling and it's great to see a full house here and a sell out for the first time for a long long while and most of them went home happy.

"It was a big test for the players when they conceded a goal and it was a sloppy one to concede. We had good possession around their penalty area and then we've lost it and they've gone up the other end and scored so it was a big test of character as we were one nil up and dominating the game then to be hit with a sucker punch and it's how you react after that and I thought we were good. We had a four or five minute spell when we sat back on our heels then we got going again and I thought that it was just a matter of time before we could get a second goal and if we got a second goal I thought that we would win.

"It came in controversial circumstances but Lewis Stevenson has been outstanding for us and I said that if we get the ball in the box to feet then we stand a good chance of a penalty so we are absolutely delighted."

Skipper Liam Craig said: "I was calm, I've taken many penalties before and I always thought I'd score obviously. I thought that there was great character from the boys because we were well on top of the game and I don't think Hearts deserved a goal to be honest and a couple of months ago it may not have happened but this is a different team now and we have shown that in recent weeks.

“That goal is up there with the biggest of my career so far. I’ve scored ones in the past that have helped clubs get into Europe or the top six, but to score a winner in the derby – it doesn’t get much better than that.

“We’ve been unfortunate to lose the last two games against Hearts. To be fair to them, they’ve got a goal, sat in and weathered whatever we’ve thrown at them.

“As players, we look at the bigger picture, kicking on up the league. We’re in the top six now and it’s about pushing on, but, as a fan, you want to win the derby games. We’ve not won a lot lately so they’ll be delighted.

“They’ll have the bragging rights for the next few days.

“After the game a dejected Gary Locke insisted that the penalty decision was wrong: “We got ourselves back in the game at 1-1 and it looked like it would have finished that way, then you get a referee decision that has cost us a couple of points when there was nothing in the game.”

“I had hoped that 2014 we might get a wee bit of the rub of the green from officials and it’s certainly not started too great for us”

“They put us under pressure like I knew they would at set-pieces where they have a physical presence but I thought we coped with that well.”

“From where I was there didn’t look a lot in it and I’ve seen it again, the ball’s out the pitch and Jordan steps across him. That type of thing happens every week and you never see a decision given for it yet Bobby decides to give a penalty tonight.

“There’s not a lot we can do about it, I had hoped that 2014 we might get a wee bit of the rub of the green from officials and it’s certainly not started too great for us.”

Despite his manager's comments Ryan Stevenson admitted it was a penalty but failed to criticise his young team mate "If it was us I'd be saying it was a penalty. It's just inexperience from Jordan. You need to keep in mind the situation we're in, Jordan has just turned 17. He is a boy with a massive future in the game. Everyone makes mistakes. He was sitting in the dressing room absolutely devastated."

Photo by John Preece

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