

# Reaction to Hibs' mini derby victory



Hibs' Head of Academy Coaching James McDonough was delighted with his team's resilliance during time added on at the end of the mini derby victory last night.

With Hibs leading 3-2, Hearts desperately tried to gran an equaliser however some stout defending ensured that the points remained with the home team.

Both management teams watched the game which was played in blizzard conditions at times and no quarter was given by either set of players.

Hearts took an early lead through Billy King, but Hibs fought back to score three times with a Danny Handling double and a Euan Smith strike looked to have the game sewn up before a late Kevin McHattie free-kick made for an exciting last few minutes.



After the game McDonough told Hibernian TV: "It was desperate at the end from Hearts, and we would have been the same to be honest.

"I don't know where the five or six minutes of stoppage time came from, but when you have young boys they need to learn to see out the game and manage the game; they did that.

"When we got to the latter stage of the game we wanted to add to our tally, certainly at 3-1 we had chances to make it four or five, Ridgers made a couple of good saves to prevent that.

"I'm pleased with the boys – we've won the game and are

keeping up the challenge at the top of the league.

“It was one of the most exciting derby matches of recent times. We’ve lost one or two derbies at this level by the odd goal, so it was about time that we won one.

“At the end of the day your objective, especially going into a derby game, is about winning it and we did that – I’m really pleased we achieved that.”

Danny Handling who celebrated his 20th birthday last week, said he was pleased to play his part in such an important victory.

He said: “I’m obviously delighted with my goals, but overall I’m more pleased about the win tonight. We didn’t play well in the first half and they took the lead with their first attack and it was uphill from there.

“I was in the right place at the right time from Heff’s shot and to get the second goal was pleasing.

“We were discussing the conditions with the players on the pitch, we couldn’t see the ball when it was getting kicked long.

“You could only see it when it was reaching your face and you had to guess where it was going to land.

“I’m trying to prove myself to the gaffer and to Maurice that I’m worthy of a start and I’m hoping to have done enough against Hearts to have caught their eye.”

Photos by John Preece

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