

Terry Butcher's midfield problems



After struggling through with a makeshift back four following injuries to Paul Hanlon and Ryan McGivern, Hibs' boss Terry Butcher now has to contend with a depleted midfield ahead of Saturday's clash with Ross County at Easter Road.

Four experienced midfielders are unavailable for the fixture with skipper Liam Craig suspended and Scott Robertson, Kevin Thomson and Owain Tudur Jones all injured.

Robertson sustained a leg knock during the midweek mini derby win over Hearts at the Energy Assets Arena whilst Thomson and Tudur Jones have been sidelined for several weeks.

On a positive note Sam Stanton has been in fine form and Tom Taiwo who looked to be on his way out of Easter Road is also available. Duncan Watmore is likely to start with Alex Harris or potentially Lewis Stevenson depending on McGivern's availability whilst Daniel Boateng can also play as a defensive midfielder.

Speaking to Hibernian TV, Butcher said: "It's a great game to look forward to. We're back at home and we certainly want to do a lot better in front of our home fans.

"I'm sure that our fans would like us to do a lot better too, so we know what's at stake and what we have to do.

"Unfortunately Liam Craig is suspended and Scott Robertson got injured in the under 20s match on Tuesday night.

"He's going to be out for a good few weeks, which is a blow. But we've got Ryan McGivern coming back from his injury too.

“So we’ve got two out, one in; I’ve got an idea about who will play and how we will play. We will certainly give it a good go and play with passion and commitment to get the three points.

“Kevin Thomson has only had two training sessions with the squad, so he’s a long way off.

“Owain Tudur Jones’ hamstring was scanned last week and we’re awaiting results on that, so he’s going to be out for a while.

“So we’ve currently got problems in that area – like the back-four which was heavily depleted for the visit of Celtic.

“But we’ve got good alternatives and we can come up with a midfield which is strong and athletic. We’ve got players, who are hungry to play, so unfortunately for Liam and Scott someone else will be given a chance.”

Photo by John Preece

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