

# Eventful return for James McPake



James McPake made an eventful return to action last night scoring at both ends at Hibs' Under 20s drew 3-3 with Dunfermline at East End Park.

Lewis Allan opened the scoring early on before a McPake own goal levelled the score. Tom Gardiner restored Hibs lead but after the break goals from Ryan Williamson and Shaun Byrne put the Fife club ahead, before McPake equalised with nine minutes remaining.

Danny Handling and Euan Smith both went close in the last few minutes.

After the game Head of Academy Coaching James McDonough told Hibernian TV: "First and foremost you have got to give the boys credit for the effort that they put into the game, it was a first-class effort, I think there was a lot of energy and they gave it everything.

"I think we're now seeing the effects of a long and hard season, it is easy to say that we're disappointed because we wanted to win the league, but really I am pleased with them to be honest."

"We're at the stage where it has been a long, hard season and we've squeezed every drop of effort, energy and commitment out of the players and that bit extra.

"I think if you had spoken to me at the start of the season I would have never have thought we would have come this far, I think the players have exceeded my expectations and I have to give them enormous credit for that.

“In football you do what is instinctively natural to you and Danny (Handling) takes a shot first-time on his left foot on the swivel and hits it over the bar, when in hindsight he might have taken a touch.

“Euan (Smith) attacks the box and heads it wide; again in hindsight a thicker contact on the ball and he might have scored. It’s easy to criticise the misses, but there has been a lot of good points in the game from every player and a lot of effort across the season.

“We’re maybe getting to the stage of the season where we are running out of legs a little bit – but we’ll try to keep going.”

Hibernian under-20s: Paul Grant, Andrew Black, Ryan Baptie (Jordan Sinclair, 57), Euan Smith, Tom Gardiner, James McPake, Paul Cairney, Callum Crane, Lewis Allan, Danny Handling (Gareth McCaffrey, 86), Abdellah Zoubir (Max Todd, 63). Unused substitutes: Kleton Perntreou, Aaron Dunsmore, Bob Wilson, Neil Martyniuk.

Photo by J.C Mackintosh