

Partick Thistle U20s 0-2 Hibernian U20s



Hibs under-20s returned to the top of the SPFL U20s League yesterday after beating Partick Thistle under-20s 2-0 at the Excelsior Stadium, Airdrie thanks to goals from Euan Smith and Jason Cummings.

Smith opened the scoring in the 27th minute then Jason Cummings (pictured) secured the points three minutes after the break.

Once again, Head of Academy Coaching James McDonough fielded a strong side which included Owain Tudur Jones who completed the full 90 minutes as he continued his comeback from a lengthy lay-off due to a hamstring injury, Alex Harris, Daniel Boateng and Abdellah Zoubir.

After the game McDonough told Hibernian TV: "I think you've got to be happy when you've come to play Partick, who have already beaten us this season, and win and keep the clean sheet. I thought we started the game quite well and played the game first-half of the game in their half.

"We were on the front foot, crossing the ball into the box and creating chances and deserved to be in front at half-time.

"We then scored a goal out of nothing at the start of the second half, and I didn't think we played as well as we could have in the second half, and that was a wee bit disappointing.

"I think when it was 2-0 the players took their foot off the gas a wee bit, and we need to get at them to keep the standards high all the time."

McDonough believes that Academy players have benefited and

learned from playing alongside senior professionals such as Tudur Jones, Kevin Thomson, Michael Nelson and Paul Cairney in competitive fixtures as they return from fitness.

He continued: "I think the players that play in the games are reaping the benefits of playing with senior pros, they are learning off them and having to raise their standards to play with them.

"It is just unfortunate that maybe for one or two of them that they are not getting a game because of them playing, so they've got to fight hard to try and get back into the team.

"It is seven days until our next game, away to Kilmarnock followed by another big game away to Celtic.

"Both of these games will have a big factor in where we finish in the league, but I still maintain that it is about the development of the players.

"I'm not now going to turn round and say that the aim is to win the league. There were some good bits in the game today, and some bits that we need to fix and need to make better."

Hibernian under-20s: Paul Grant, Andrew Black, Daniel Boateng, Tom Gardiner, Ryan Baptie, Alex Harris, Owain Tudur Jones, Euan Smith, Abdellah Zoubir, Max Todd, Jason Cummings.

Subs: Kleton Perntreou, Aaron Dunsmore, Bob Wilson, Callum Crane, Taylor Hendry, Scott Martin, Jamie Beaton.

Photo by John Preece

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