

Hibernian 0-1 Dundee United



Hibs' fans had their first chance to watch Alan Stubbs' new look formation at Easter Road yesterday and despite a narrow defeat to Dundee United, the majority left satisfied with the team's passing game which was in stark contrast to the long ball style favoured by Terry Butcher last season.

Another pleasing aspect was the return to form of teenage winger Alex Harris whose confidence appeared to have deserted him in the latter stage of the campaign.

Head Coach Alan Stubbs handed home debuts to new signings David Gray and Farid el Alagui, with Hull City goalkeeper Mark Oxley starting as a trialist.

Scott Allan took a seat on the substitutes' bench alongside another trialist in Newcastle midfielder Michael Richardson.

Hibs started brightly with Alex Harris in fine form and he quickly had the fans on their feet by 'nutmegging' Ryan Dow and almost beating Radoslaw Czerniak with cheeky lob but the big keeper just managed to get back in time to prevent the goal.

Sam Stanton then did well by evading three challenges to set up Liam Craig but his strike flew just past the post.

Czerniak did well to save a Stanton header from a Lewis Stevenson cross then Harris was just off target after yet another surging run.

Harris continued his impressive form into the second half and almost scored with a strong curling shot which appeared to be heading for the top corner before the United keeper managed to turn over with his fingertips.

Hibs thought that they had taken the lead in the 55st minute when Stanton's deep cross was headed back across goal by Craig for el Alagui to head into the net, but the celebrations were cut short by the offside flag.

With 20 minutes remaining, Stubbs made six substitutions including Allan and Richardson, but the former United midfielder's wayward pass was intercepted before Erskine cut inside and curled the ball into the Hibs net.

Allan made amends a few minutes later when he managed a last ditch tackle to prevent Aidan Connolly doubling United's advantage.

Jackie McNamara's men were able to hold on for the victory but the Hibs' fans applauded the players off the field in appreciation for their new style of football.

Hibs are in action again this midweek when they travel across the Forth to face East Fife at New Bayview.

Hibernian: Oxley, Gray, Stevenson (Booth 73'), Hanlon, Handling (Nelson 73'), Forster, Harris (S. Allan 73'), Robertson (Richardson 73'), el Alagui, Craig (Tudur Jones 73'), Stanton (L. Allan 73'). Substitutes not used: Perntreou, Gardiner, Duthie.

Dundee United: Czerniak, Dillon, Fojut (Fraser 89'), Paton (Erskine 67'), Ciftci (Mackay-Steven 62'), Rankin (Smith 78'), Armstrong (Telfer 67'), Morris, Dow (Connolly 73'), Bilate (Graham 62'), Spittal (Petrie 67'). Substitutes not used: McCallum.

Referee: William Collum.