

Hibs' under-20s face Spartans at Ainslie Park tonight



Hibs' under-20s kick off the pre-season programme with a trip across the city to face Lowland League club Spartans at Ainslie Park tonight (kick off 7.30pm).

Head of Academy Coaching James McDonough (Pictured) says his squad are raring to go, but believes this evening's friendly will be an incredibly difficult test.

McDonough told Hibernian TV: "The players have worked hard for three weeks and are desperate to be back playing football.

"We couldn't have picked a harder start really – Spartans have played at least three games already and have a strong side while this will be our first under-20s game.

"There is going to be a huge focus this season on player development and individual performances and that's what I will be looking at closely tonight."

Goalkeeper Kleton Perntreou and striker Lewis Allan will not be selected for tonight's fixture after featuring in the first team's friendly at Dunfermline Athletic last night.

McDonough has drafted in Academy players Adam Watson (16), Dave McKay (16), Ben Stirling (15), Kevin Waugh (15) and Callum Donaldson (14) into tonight's match squad.

Hibernian under-20s: Sean Brennan, Aaron Dunsmore, Neil Martyniuk, Jordan McGregor, Tom Gardiner, Max Todd, Jordan Sinclair, Callum Crane, Scott Martin, Taylor Hendry, Gareth McCaffrey, Conner Duthie, Adam Watson, Dave McKay, Ben Stirling, Kevin Waugh and Callum Donaldson.

*Cody Mulhall is still recovering from a long-term knee injury.

Last month Hibernian and Spartans announced a unique collaboration with the launch of a jointly-run Transition Academy; providing a development pathway for talented young players

Photo by John Preece

<http://www.photoboxgallery.com/jlp-photography>