

# Rangers 2-1 Hibernian AET



Hibs lost 2-1 to Rangers after extra time at Ibrox in the Petrofac Training Cup last night after dominating the game throughout and despite the result the players were cheered off the park by the large travelling support.

Alan Stubbs retained the same starting XI who lost narrowly to Dundee United at Easter Road last weekend with no place in the team for new signing Scott Allan. Strikers Heffernan and Cummings who have both been side-lined with injuries also started on the bench.

Rangers boss Ally McCoist started with former Hearts' players Marius Zaliukas, Lee Wallace and Ian Black with former Hibs star Kenny Miller up front alongside Kris Boyd.

Both teams lined up to form a guard of honour of Commonwealth Games Silver medallist Lindsay Sharp.

Wallace spurned an early chance before Hibs started to dominate possession and Alex Harris, David Gray and Lewis Stevenson all sent dangerous balls into the Rangers box.

The Ibrox side took the lead against the run of play in the 14<sup>th</sup> minute when a Wallace cross from the left evaded Hibs' defenders and landed at the feet of the unmarked Lewis Macleod who had plenty time to pick his spot before rifling a powerful drive past Mark Oxley into the net.

Harris fired wide for Hibs before Boyd had the ball in the net but his effort was ruled out for offside. Danny Handling's long range effort was deflected away for a corner but once again the Rangers defence cleared easily.

In the 27<sup>th</sup> minute Oxley did well to stop a long range strike

from Miller before Harris sent a teasing ball into the box which McGregor managed to head over for a corner with el Alagui lurking at the back post.

A few minutes later Liam Craig sent an inch perfect through ball to Harris but the young winger was wrongly ruled offside after finding himself one on one with the keeper.

Gray was injured just before the break and limped off the field but was able to return at the start of the second half.

Hibs started brightly and Danny handling went close with a long range effort. As Hibs pressed, el Aalgui appeared to have been brought down on the edge of the box but the referee waved play on allowing Rangers to break at pace and only a last gasp interception by Handling prevented a Rangers goal.

El Alagui then sent Stanton clean through on goal but with only the keeper to beat, the youngster shot straight at Bell and the danger was cleared.

Hibs finally got the goal their pressure deserved in the 59<sup>th</sup> minute when the Rangers defence failed to deal with a Gary cross from the right and the ball fell to Handling who made no mistake from eight yards.

El Alagui then had the chance to give Hibs the lead when he latched onto a Craig through ball but after chesting the ball down he volleyed just over the bar.

Jordon Forster was booked for a professional foul on Zaliukas on the half way line as Rangers struggled to get back into the game then Oxley did well to gather a Nicky Law cross under pressure.

Sam Stanton fired over the bar after good work by Handling then el Alagui headed inches over from a Harris corner.

Within the space of 5 minutes referee Beaton showed the

inconsistencies that infuriate supporters when he failed to take any action against Ian Black for a blatant barge into the back of El Alagui then sent off Handling for a mistimed challenge on substitute David Templeton.

Lee McCulloch went close with a header from a Macleod corner as Rangers pressed for the winner then Boyd should have wrapped things up in the last minute but ballooned the ball over the bar from 5 yards and Hibs held on to see out the 90 minutes and take the game to extra time.

Rangers should have taken the lead four minutes after the restart but Macleod's cross just missed Boyd and Wallace at the back post.

Three minutes later Rangers were awarded a dubious free kick on the edge of the box and Oxley did well to save Boyd's effort.

Nicky Law finally gave Rangers the lead with a curling shot from just inside the box on the 100<sup>th</sup> minute after taking advantage of Scott Robertson's cramp. Robertson was immediately replaced by Owain Tudur Jones.

Bell did well to save a long range strike from Craig as Hibs looked to take the game to penalties but Rangers held on to win the tie.

Rangers; Bell, Zaluikas, McCulloch, McGregor, Wallace, Black, Forster, Macleod, Law, Boyd, Miller. Subs Simonsen, Smith, Aird, Hutton, Faure, Templeton, Shiels.

Hibs: Oxley, Gray, Forster, Hanlon, Stevenson, Robertson, Craig, Harris, Handling, Stanton, El Alagui. Subs Perntreiu, Nelson, Jones, Booth, S Allan, Heffernan, Cummings.

Attendance

18,138

Photo by John Preece

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