

# Cowdenbeath 0 Heart of Midlothian 2

**SPFL Championship, Tuesday 23 December 2014 – Central Park**

Another impressive performance from Hearts tonight saw Robbie Neilson's side ease to a comfortable 2-0 victory at Cowdenbeath to stretch their lead at the top of the SPFL Championship to 12 points. The original game against the Blue Brazil was postponed ten days ago because of a frozen pitch. But Hearts, backed by another magnificent travelling support of nearly 3,000 fans, made no mistake tonight to give those fans the perfect Christmas present.

Hearts suffered a pre-match blow when Alim Ozturk had to pull out of the game with a hamstring injury. On the plus side, influential midfielder Morago Gomis returned from suspension.

There were just three minutes gone when Hearts almost opened the scoring when Jamie Walker fired in a shot which struck the post. It was all Hearts in the early stages and they deservedly went in front after 25 minutes. After Walker had come close again, Adam Eckersley raced down the left wing and found James Keatings with a fine pass. The former Hamilton Accies striker did what he does best and finished with a first time effort into the corner. 1-0 to the visitors and Keatings almost made it 2-0 moments later when his 25 yard free-kick came back off the post. Brad McKay then headed straight at Cowdenbeath keeper Thompson when it seemed easier to score.

**Half-time Cowdenbeath 0 Hearts 1**

No doubt fired up at half-time by manager Jimmy Nicholl, Cowdenbeath began the second half in determined fashion. Higgins almost equalised in the 57th minute but his effort on goal was well saved by Neil Alexander.

Hearts then put the game to bed in spectacular style in the

62nd minute. Callum Paterson volleyed home from 25 yards out to give the Cowden keeper not an earthly and his magnificent goal put Hearts two goals ahead.

Soon after, Prince Buaben set off on a trademark run and his effort on goal from 20 yards went narrowly wide.

Neil Alexander produced a fine save late on but Hearts ended the evening with a fine, comfortable win – one which puts clear daylight between them and second placed Rangers. The Ibrox side visit Easter Road on Saturday. If Hibs can do their city rivals a good turn – and they beat Rangers at Ibrox last time out – and Hearts maintain their winning run at Livingston, the gap at the top will be 15 points.

It would be difficult to see a so far unbeaten Hearts side throw away that kind of lead.

**Cowdenbeath:** Thompson, O'Brien, Wedderburn, Milne, Higgins, Kane, Miller, Johnston, Callaghan, Marshall, Halsman.

**Hearts:** Alexander, Paterson, Wilson, Ozturk, Gomis, Walker, Pallardo, Buaben, Keatings, McGhee, Eckersley.

**Referee:** Greg Aitken

**Att:** 3,500

**Top man:** Callum Paterson