

Heart of Midlothian 10 (ten) Cowdenbeath 0



SPFL Championship, Saturday 28 February 2015 – Tynecastle

Prior to Hearts game with Cowdenbeath on Saturday, Head Coach Robbie Neilson spoke about his aim of getting the Maroons established as a top six club in the SPFL Premiership next season. Neilson has always preached the 'one game at a time' mantra so it was somewhat surprising to hear his thoughts at the pre-match press conference. But if anyone thought the Hearts chief and his players may have become over-confident, these thoughts were crushed on an astonishing afternoon in Gorgie.

Sam Nicholson replaced the injured Prince Buaben in the only change to the Hearts team who defeated Queen of the South last Saturday and it was young Sam who posed the first threat to the Cowdenbeath goal after just two minutes. The young winger was fouled on the edge of the penalty box and Alim Ozturk's free-kick crashed off the post.

Billy King then had a couple of chances, one of which hit the crossbar and with a quarter of the game gone and no score the afternoon was beginning to look like it could be a frustrating one for the Maroon Army. However, this theory was dispelled when Hearts were awarded a penalty in the 25th minute after Nicholson's effort was handled in the box by Wedderburn. Genero Zeefuik buried the spot-kick to put Hearts ahead.

A minute later it was 2-0 when Zeefuik fired home from 20 yards and the proverbial floodgates duly opened. A minute further on and Nicholson was again fouled in the penalty box by Toshney. The Cowden man was ordered off, Zeefuik fired home

the penalty – meaning a hat-trick within three minutes – and Hearts were 3-0 ahead and in cruise control.

Hearts swarmed forward at will and went 4-0 up in the 32nd minute. The impressive Sam Nicholson fired in a shot from 25 yards and, astonishingly it was 5-0 before half-time when Jamie Walker fired home after more fine work from Sam The Man Nicholson.

Half-time Hearts 5 Cowdenbeath 0

Shell-shocked Cowdenbeath must have hoped the league leaders would show them some mercy in the second half. Not a hope. Billy King and Callum Paterson came close to getting their names on the scoresheet before Hearts made it 6-0 with another penalty kick, Morgaro Gomis converting this time.

With an hour played it was 7-0 when Alim Ozturk fired in a trademark 25 yard screamer and it should have been eight when Nicholson set off on a superb run only to fire the ball over from 10 yards.

In the 68th minute, Hearts did indeed make it eight when captain Danny Wilson scored with a close range effort. Two minutes later, substitute Osman Sow got in on the act with a low shot which went beyond Cowden keeper Thomson to make it 9-0; a feat the big Swede repeated just two minutes later as, incredibly, Hearts made it 10-0.

There were still 15 minutes to go and at this stage anything was possible. Mercifully for the Fifers, Hearts ended the scoring, settling for just the ten goals.

Typically, Robbie Neilson kept calm after the game. He told the Hearts official website “It might be the club’s biggest league win, but that’s just a record for another team to try and beat now. It does wonders for our confidence and the goal tally, but it’s three points, it’s done, we’re focusing on

Dumbarton.

“I’ve never been involved in a result like that in my entire career. It’s a great performance but the win at Queen of the South was a better performance, for me.

“It was more important. If we don’t score 11 against Dumbarton in a fortnight, people will start to say we’re off our game again, so we’ll try and win that one as well.”

Hearts now need just five more wins to secure promotion back to the top flight of Scottish football. On today’s astonishing evidence who can doubt they won’t do it?

Hearts: Alexander, Paterson, Wilson, Ozturk, Gomis, Walker, Nicholson, King, Pallardo, Zeefuik, Eckersley.

Cowdenbeath: Thomson, Adamson, O’Brien, Wedderburn, Robertson, Nish, Herron, Kane, Brett, Toshney, Hughes.

Referee: Bobby Madden

Att: 15,180

Top man: Hearts goalkeeper Neil Alexander – what an afternoon he had! Seriously, Sam Nicholson was the pick of a team that was close to perfection.