

# Cowdenbeath 1 Heart of Midlothian 2

**SPFL Championship, Saturday 25 April 2015 – Central Park**

Hearts travelled to Fife on Saturday afternoon for their final away trip of a momentous season. With the SPFL Championship title clinched some time ago and some of the Hearts team who have dominated the league this season moving to pastures new in the summer, Head Coach Robbie Neilson took the opportunity to make some changes to his established team.

Skipper Danny Wilson is one of those players taking his leave and the former Rangers, Liverpool and Scotland defender was suspended for the trip to Central Park. Neilson made four changes in all to the side that edged past Raith Rovers last Saturday with young goalkeeper Jack Hamilton joining Jordan McGhee, Brad McKay and Genero Zeefuik in this week's starting eleven.

The last time these two sides met, at Tynecastle at the end of February, Hearts rattled ten goals without reply past the hapless Fifers. This time round, it took just 12 seconds for Hearts to post their intentions when Callum Paterson fired in an effort which bounced off the crossbar.

Osman Sow then went close with a fine effort which just went wide as Hearts looked like controlling the game. However, they were given a shock when Cowdenbeath grabbed the lead in the 15<sup>th</sup> minute. Marshall was unchallenged when he fired the ball low past Jack Hamilton much to the delight of the home support who still have nightmares of their last trip to Tynecastle.

Kenny Anderson came close to equalising with a half-volley which was brilliantly saved by Thomson. However, Hearts did equalise in the 33<sup>rd</sup> minute when Jamie Walker's cross was

headed home from close range by Callum Paterson.

The home side should have gone in front again right on half-time when, not for the first time this season, Morgaro Gomis' casual approach saw him dispossessed by Nish. The former Hibernian striker's effort was well saved by Hamilton.

### **Half-time: Cowdenbeath 1 Hearts 1**

Sam Nicholson replaced the ineffective Zeefuik early in the second half and the young winger almost put Hearts in front with an effort which was well saved by the home keeper.

Good work from Kevin McHattie and Nicholson then set up Jamie Walker whose effort on goal was brilliantly saved by Thomson. Clearly, Cowdenbeath were not going to lose ten goals this time around.

Indeed, it looked as if Hearts would have to settle for just the one goal and one point when, in injury time, Walker was fouled in the penalty box. The departing Brad McKay was coolness personified when he stroked home the penalty kick to give Hearts all three points.

Robbie Neilson admitted afterwards that Hearts were probably fortunate to leave Fife with a victory – one which meant Hearts achieved a points record for the SPFL Championship, beating the record set by Hibernian in 1999. "This is a difficult place to come, for a variety of reasons," the Head Coach told Hearts official website. "The pitch isn't great, and when you combine that with them fighting for their lives, it's not going to be easy. They were probably deserving of a draw.

"On the other hand, we've done it so often – winning when not at our best, that's what wins you championships. When it's not going your way, you must believe it can be salvaged. Cowdenbeath put a lot into it, but football is a ruthless game."

“We’re delighted to get the points record for the league,” he continued. “Hibs obviously had a good season when they were relegated back in 1998, but we’ve matched them and surpassed them in a really difficult league.”

Hearts complete a memorable league campaign next Saturday when Rangers visit Tynecastle.

**Cowdenbeath:** Thomson, O’Brien, Armstrong, Wedderburn, Robertson, Milne, Nish, Brownlie, Oyenuga, Marshall, Toshney.

**Hearts:** Hamilton, Paterson, McHattie, Ozturk, Gomis, Walker, Sow, Anderson, McKay, Zeefuik, McGhee

**Referee:** Craig Charleston

**Att:** 2,394

**Top man:** Jamie Walker