

Hearts Announce New Captain and New Signing

A busy day at Tynecastle saw Hearts sign a new player and appoint a new captain.

Brazilian central defender Igor Rossi Branco put pen to paper in Gorgie this afternoon. The 26-year-old centre-half joins the Maroons, subject to international clearance, from Portuguese side Maritimo.

Branco, who has played in the Brazilian and Portuguese leagues has dual Brazilian and Italian nationalities. The defender, standing at 6ft 2", has signed a one year deal and will be considered for Hearts glamour friendly with Everton at Tynecastle this Sunday.

Branco told the official Hearts website "I believe that John Murray and the Hearts scouting network brought me to the attention of Craig Levein and he in turn watched a lot of footage of me with Robbie. Then we had a meeting and here I am.

"I had seen Scottish sides in Europe, particularly Celtic and the Scottish national side and when I was aware of Hearts' interest I read up quite a bit about them and saw that they won the league by a huge margin over Rangers so I was very impressed.

"I am very much looking forward to living in Edinburgh. As soon as I knew Hearts were interested in me I was on the internet looking at the city and it is beautiful and so full of history. My wife is also very excited to be coming to live in Scotland.

Also this afternoon, Hearts announced that defender Alim Ozturk, a cult hero with the Maroon Army following his 35 yard

goal against Hibernian at Easter Road last season, has been made club captain. He told the official Hearts website:

“Robbie spoke to me about responsibility and stuff like that. I need to help the young guys as well. I’ll do that and I tried that last year as well, I’ll do it now a little bit more.

“I’m looking forward to passing on my experience and knowledge. I love to help the young players.

Meanwhile, Hearts have announced that a development fee has been agreed with Rangers for former Jambo Jason Holt. The fee is believed to be in the region of £70,000.