

Hearts Through After League Cup Scare

Forfar Athletic 1 Heart of Midlothian 2 (after extra time)

Scottish League Cup Second Round, Tuesday 25 August 2015 – Station Park

Hearts may have set the Ladbrokes Premiership alight this season with five wins in a row but they made hard work of progressing to the third round of the Scottish League Cup, requiring extra-time to defeat League One side Forfar Athletic at Station Park.

Head Coach Robbie Neilson made seven changes from the side that defeated Partick Thistle on Saturday with Jack Hamilton, Jordan McGhee, Kevin McHattie, Sean McKirdy, Billy King and Gary Oliver all finding a starting place.

As you might expect for a team top of the Ladbrokes Premiership, Hearts dominated possession but found former Scotland goalkeeper Rab Douglas in fine form.

With the game goalless and thoughts turning to extra-time, it looked like Hearts had at last made the breakthrough when they were awarded a penalty. However, as in keeping with much of Hearts season so far, the penalty kick was missed – Douglas producing a fine save from Gavin Reilly.

With 16 minutes left, Hearts finally got the goal their play deserved when Kevin McHattie fired home Sam Nicholson's cross. Relief at last for the travelling Maroon Army – but not for long.

With just six minutes left, The Loons equalised with a header from Dunlop and thus another thirty minutes extra-time had to be played – but not before Denholm was sent off for the home

side.

Midway through the extra-time period, Hearts made their numerical advantage and superior fitness pay off when Gavin Reilly diverted Callum Paterson's effort past the despairing Douglas to ensure Hearts went through. Forfar were then reduced to nine men when Nicoll was sent off for a shocking tackle on Hearts youngster Callumn Morrison.

Forfar Athletic: Douglas, Dunlop, Campbell, Nicoll, Travis, Young (Malin, 46'), Hay, Hodge, Templeman, Fotheringham, Denholm.

Hearts: Hamilton, L. Smith, McGhee, Rossi, McHattie, Gomis, McKirdy, King, Nicholson, Oliver, Reilly.

Referee: Greg Aitken

Att: 1,844