

# Neilson Fury As Hearts Unbeaten Run Ends

Hamilton Academical 3 Heart of Midlothian 2

Ladbrokes SPFL Premiership, Saturday 29 August 2015, New Douglas Park

Hearts 100% winning record in this season's Ladbrokes Premiership was blown away in controversial fashion at Hamilton as the Maroons let slip a 2-1 lead in the last seven minutes to lose 3-2.

Hearts Callum Paterson was shown a straight red card by referee Willie Collum – a man never far away from controversy – and the drama continued after the game when Hearts Head Coach Robbie Neilson didn't disguise his feelings of contempt for the match officials. The Gorgie gaffer will almost certainly be summoned by the SFA to 'explain' his post-match comments.

Neilson made several changes from the side that required extra-time to knock Forfar Athletic out of the League Cup on Tuesday evening. Neil Alexander, Callum Paterson, Alim Ozturk, Jamie Walker, Prince Buaben, Juown Oshaniwa and Juanma all returned to the Hearts starting line-up in Lanarkshire.

It was the home side who had the first real chance after just three minutes when Crawford fired in an effort from 25 yards which was pushed over the bar by Hearts keeper Neil Alexander.

In the 25<sup>th</sup> minute the first controversial moment arrived when Jamie Walker was crudely fouled by Kurankins with the Accies man receiving just a yellow card for his indiscretion.

Walker then came close with a long-range effort which brought a save from Accies keeper McGovern. Just after the half-hour

mark, Billy King's free-kick found Callum Paterson. The utility man headed across goal but Osman Sow couldn't direct his header on target.

Accies then spurned a golden opportunity to open the scoring when Crawford set up Kurtaj but the German stumbled at the most inopportune moment and Hearts breathed again. The visitors didn't heed the lesson, however and just before half-time Gillespie and MacKinnon both wasted chances to break the deadlock before Kurtaj atoned for his earlier error when he took advantage of a mistake from Alim Ozturk to poke the ball past the on-rushing Neil Alexander.

### **Half-time Hamilton Accies 1 Hearts 0**

Hearts began the second half determined to draw parity and they did just eight minutes in. Osman Sow's pace took him down the left before he pulled the ball back for Billy King who escaped the attention of the home defence before firing the ball past McGovern. 1-1 and it was game on once more.

With 20 minutes left, Hearts went ahead when great play from Juanma found Callum Paterson who volleyed a superb effort beyond McGovern to put the Maroons ahead. Joy among the 2,500 travelling Maroon Army – but not for long. In the 78<sup>th</sup> minute goalscorer Paterson went for the ball and caught McKinnon. Referee Willie Collum, seeing Paterson raise both feet off the ground, opted for a red card meaning Paterson went for an early bath and Hearts were down to ten men.

It was a decision that had huge implications. With seven minutes left, Accies equalised through a long-range effort from Crawford which, it has to be said, was superbly struck.

Just four minutes later, Accies grabbed all three points when ten man Hearts couldn't clear the ball and Tena fired home the winner.

It was Hearts first loss of the season in the league and the

Maroons toppled from top of the league to third place.

The Hearts players and coaching staff struggled to contain their anger at the end of the match. At the post-match conference, Hearts gaffer Robbie Neilson let rip.

“The game has been ruined by a decision that is not a sending-off,” he said.

“We are sitting 2-1 up and we get a red card against us that I don’t think is a red card and it totally changed the flow of the game.

“We actually practised during the week going down to 10 men because of the environment we’re coming to and the officials who are taking the game.

“In the recent past, the statistics involving these officials have shown a lot of red cards against us, so we have to prepare for it.

“The next time we get these officials, we will again train with 10 men. Believe me, the players are highly motivated to get back to training and work hard because they know what we have to deal with.”

It isn’t the first time Hearts have been involved in a controversial match at New Douglas Park and this latest incident – and Robbie Neilson’s post-match comments in particular – is likely to have ramifications for the Tynecastle club.

**Hamilton:** McGovern, Gordon, Kurakins, Gillespie, Imrie (Nade, 80’), Crawford, Kurtaj, Morris (Longridge, 89’), Mackinnon, Tena, Tagliapietra.

**Hearts:** Alexander, Paterson, Ozturk, Rossi, Oshaniwa, Gomis, Buaben (Reilly, 88’), King (Nicholson, 80’), Walker, Sow (McGhee, 80’), Juanma.

**Ref:** Willie Collum

**Att:** 4,745

**Top man:** Jamie Walker