

Hearts Fall to Defeat in the Highlands

Inverness Caledonian Thistle 2 Heart of Midlothian 0

Ladbrokes SPFL Premiership, Friday 11 September 2015, Tulloch Caledonian Stadium

Hearts slipped to a second league defeat in row as they were beaten by Inverness Caledonian Thistle in the heart of the Highlands on Friday evening. A promising first half display was undone by defensive lapses and, also for the second game running, Hearts had a player sent off when Oshaniwa was shown a red card. However, unlike Callum Paterson's 'punishment' at Hamilton a couple of weeks ago, the Nigerian defender did deserve to see red for foolishly lifting his hands to Sho-Shilva.

Hearts Head Coach Robbie Neilson gave a debut to new signing Danny Swanson while there was a surprise starting place for youngster Sean McKirdy, who took the place of Morgaro Gomis who didn't make the trip north following a family bereavement.

Although there was some nice passing play from both sides, there was scarcely a threat on goal in the first forty-five minutes. Hearts captain Alim Ozturk fired in a trademark long-range effort from 25 yards which was just off target while, at the other end, Tansey saw his effort saved by Neil Alexander.

Then, an excellent pass from Swanson found Juanma inside the penalty box but the Spaniard completely missed the ball with his kick, much to the amusement of the home support.

Soon afterwards, the pace of Sam Nicholson fed young McKirdy who, in turn, set up Swanson but the former Dundee United player's effort on goal was blocked with Oshaniwa firing the rebound wide.

Half-time Inverness Caledonian Thistle 0 Hearts 0

The second half was just four minutes old when the home side went in front. Hearts failed to clear their defensive lines and when Christie picked up the loose ball his cross was converted by Vincent to put the Caley Jags ahead.

John Hughes' side should have doubled their lead shortly afterwards when Draper cut through the Hearts defence far too easily but before he could fire home, Swanson challenged allowing Neil Alexander to clear the danger.

Hearts substitutes Billy King and Jamie Walker tried their level best to drag their team back into the game but the evening had a look of frustration for the Maroons.

This feeling was reinforced four minutes from the end when Oshaniwa was involved in an altercation with Sho-Silva and while the home player fell to the ground as if shot by a sniper from the stand, the Nigerian had raised his hands and so had to go. It was a foolish act from a player who should know better. Sho-Silva almost secured the win but Alexander produced a brilliant save.

In the final minute, Caley Thistle did get that second goal when Storey fired past Alexander from close range.

A night of huge disappointment for Hearts who never really got going. With games against Aberdeen and Celtic next up, Robbie Neilson's side will know things will only get tougher before the month is out.

Inverness CT: Fon Williams, Raven, Tremarco, Vincent (Vigurs, 76'), Meekings, Draper, Devine, Tansey, Williams, Christie, Storey (Sho-Silva, 72'),

Hearts: Alexander, Paterson, Ozturk, Rossi, Oshaniwa, McKirdy (Reilly, 77'), Buaben, Swanson (Walker, 67'), Sow (King, 59'), Nicholson, Juanma,

Referee: Steven McLean

Att: 4,160

Top man: Prince Buaben