

Raith Rovers 1-2 Hibernian



Hibs consolidated second place in the Championship and moved to within five points of Rangers with a hard fought 2-1 win over Raith Rovers at Starks Park this afternoon.

Head Coach Alan Stubbs made two changes to the starting XI that beat Falkirk on Tuesday night with Liam Fontaine and Liam Henderson replacing Marvin Bartley and James Keatings who were both listed amongst the substitutes.

Hibs started with a 5-3-2 formation against a Raith Rovers side who were aiming for their sixth successive home win. Their line up included former Hibs' midfielder Scott Robertson and Jon Daly who turned down talks with Hibs to move to Starks Park.

Hibs started brightly and opened the scoring in the third minute, Henderson did well to find Dominique Malonga who knocked the ball into the path of John McGinn on the edge of the area. The Scotland Under 21 captain took one touch before firing a sensational strike into the top corner of the net leaving Rovers' keeper Kevin Cuthbert rooted to the spot.

Malonga almost doubled Hibs' advantage ten minutes later when he got on the end of a cross from David Gray but his effort was deflected past the post. From the resultant corner, Darren McGregor headed the ball wide.

Both teams shared possession then Hibs added a second in the 25th minute when Mark Oxley looked up and spotted Cummings before sending a long ball forward. Cummings allowed the ball to bounce on the edge of the penalty box before deftly lobbing the ball over Cuthbert's head into the net, to the delight of the large travelling support from the capital.

Moments later, McGinn found Stevenson on the left and the long serving full back sent a cross into the area, but Malonga's header was cleared off the line by Iain Davidson then Cummings set up McGinn whose shot flew inches past the post.

Hibs had a penalty claim denied in the 37th minute when Henderson was brought down inside the box but referee George Salmond ignored the appeal then Cummings tried a long range speculative effort when a pass to Stevenson would have been a better option.

Half Time Raith Rovers 0-2 Hibernian

Henderson fired a powerful strike toward goal which Malonga almost touched into the net then Robertson tried an acrobatic effort which went well over the bar.

Raith Rovers pulled a goal back in the 63rd minute when Jason Thomson sent a cross toward the back post and Daly dived to head the ball past Mark Oxley.

The Rovers' fans then claimed for a penalty when Stevenson block challenged Craig Wighton inside the area resulting in the youngster being stretchered off and replaced by Grant Anderson. Both sets of fans gave Wighton a round of applause as he left the pitch.

Rovers then started to pile on the pressure in the search for an equaliser and Stubbs replaced Malonga with Keatings then a few minutes later Henderson with Bartley in an effort to shore up the midfield.

The Fifers then had another penalty claim denied when Daly's overhead kick appeared to strike a Hibs' defenders arm then Kyle Benedictus was booked for a bad challenge on McGeouch on the edge of the area as play raged from end to end. McGinn's free kick was easily held by Cuthbert.

Fraser Fyvie replaced John McGinn in the closing stages and

the goal scorer left the field to a standing ovation from the 2018 Hibs' fans who made the trip over the Forth Road Bridge.

Daly was booked for dissent as tempers frayed as Keatings was spoken to after complaining about a decision when he appeared to have been brought down on the edge of the area.

In the last minute Oxley produced a great save from a Benedictus free kick then Fyvie did well to find Cummings who struck a powerful right footed effort toward goal which Cuthbert did well to tip over the bar.

Stubbs was spoken to by the referee as Raith fought hard to level the scores then in the last minute of time added on, ex Hearts' full back Jason Thomson was booked for diving inside the box in an attempt to win a penalty.

Hibs finally held on to secure the three points and move four clear of Rovers.

Raith Rovers: Cuthbert, Thomson, Toshney, Benedictus, McKeown, Matthews, Davidson, Robertson, Craigen, Stewart, Daly. Subs Callachan, Anderson, McCord, Megginson, Laidlaw, Wighton. Ford

Hibs: Oxley, Gray, McGregor, Hanlon, Fontaine, Hanlon, McGeouch, McGinn, Henderson, Cummings, Malonga. Subs Reguero, Bartley, Fyvie, Boyle, Keatings, Feruz, Forster

Referee George Salmond

Attendance 4514