

David Gray praises character of Hibs' team-mates



Hibs' captain David Gray has praised the character and team spirit of his team-mates during yesterday's Championship victory over a stuffy Queen of the South at Easter Road.

The players knew that league leaders Rangers had been beaten by Falkirk before the game started and that a victory would take them level on points at the top of the table but for long spells it looked as though they would have to settle for a share of the points.

The winning goal came in controversial circumstances in the last minute of time added on. The ball struck Queens' winger Kyle Hutton on the face and he stayed down, forcing the referee to stop play when the ball was at the other end of the field. Hutton then 'recovered' hoping that he would not have to leave the field of play, but his plea was rejected and he had to go off.

At the other end of the field, the referee played a 'drop ball' which landed at the feet of Liam Fontaine who passed to John McGinn on the left wing. McGinn did well to beat his marker before sending a long cross field pass to Henri Anier who did well to control the ball before setting Gray up on the overlap. The former Manchester United player somehow found the energy to beat the Queens' full back before sending in a perfect cross which Dominique Malonga headed into the ground and bouncing up into the net.

The goal sparked angry scenes from the 'Doonhamers' who surrounded the referee and the ill feeling carried on after the final whistle.

Speaking immediately after the game to Cliff Pike of Hibs TV Gray said: "It, once again, shows the character and the team spirit that we have got at the minute and sets it up nicely for next week.

"Obviously I'm delighted to get the win and at one stage you were thinking 'is it gonna come?', but in the last ten minutes I felt we really pushed on. The fans were great and really spurred us on. It was a relief to get the goal.

"It took an eternity to get over the line and I thought it might go over the bar, but I think Dom (Dominique Malonga) and Henri (Anier) when they came on really changed the game. They were more physical up there.

"Dom has shown how to deal with being left out the team. he was disappointed to be left out today but that is how to react to being left out and he has come on and won us the game. It shows the strength in depth we have in our squad at the moment and it really sets us up for next week."