

Witness appeal following report of racially aggravated abuse at Tynecastle



Police are appealing for witnesses following a report of racially aggravated abuse made by Kilmarnock player Josh Magennis which took place near the end of his team's game against Hearts at Tynecastle

A man, believed to be seated in Lower Section E of the Wheatfield Stand, directed racial abuse towards a Kilmarnock player.

The suspect is described as white, with a stocky build, in his mid 40s, with dark hair that is receding on top.

He was wearing dark glasses and a dark jacket that possibly had red lining.

PC Gavin Stupart of Wester Hailes said: "Racial abuse is absolutely unacceptable, in any circumstances.

"The behaviour of the majority of fans at Tynecastle on Saturday was excellent and I want to thank both clubs for their cooperation.

"We're conducting various enquiries in an effort to trace the perpetrator and I'd ask any witnesses to this abuse, or anyone who recognises the description of the suspect, to come forward."

Anyone with information is asked to contact Police Scotland on 101 or make an anonymous report through the charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Hearts issued a statement on the club website following the allegation.

“The club can confirm that following this afternoon’s game, a complaint was made to Police Scotland by a Kilmarnock player.

“The Kilmarnock player alleges that an abusive comment was made relating to his nationality by an individual seated within the home end at Tynecastle. The alleged abusive remark related to the player being Irish. The player is from Northern Ireland. To clarify, this allegation does not involve the player’s colour, religion or sexuality.

“Senior figures from both clubs were present when the player made the complaint and discussed the matter fully thereafter.

Heart of Midlothian FC has a number of players of different nationality playing in the current squad and is very proud of the international make up of our team. We will fully support any police investigation into reports of abuse such as the one which has been reported today.”