

Hearts Crash To Defeat



Heart of Midlothian 0 St. Johnstone 3

Ladbrokes SPFL Premiership, Saturday 19 March 2016 – Tynecastle

Supping a pint of foaming ale in the Ardmillan Hotel around 2.15 on Saturday afternoon, I watched television coverage of Celtic struggling to overcome a stubborn Kilmarnock side. As the game drew to its conclusion, it appeared the champions would drop two points. I turned to Norman, a Jambo from Houston, Texas and Ian, a Jambo from Aberdeen and suggested Hearts could move to within eight points of Celtic and perhaps mount a late push for the title. Celtic duly snatched a late winner and, less than three hours later, I was skulking out of Tynecastle with my ten year old grandson having witnessed an abject Hearts display which resulted in St. Johnstone coasting to a 3-0 win. Two headers from Davidson in the first half put the Saints on easy street before a last minute counter from Fisher put the icing on the cake.

Hearts Head Coach Robbie Neilson decided to tinker with a team that had won four games on the bounce without conceding a goal. Captain Alim Ozturk was injured and replaced by Blazej Augustyn, who also wore the captain's armband; Sam Nicholson and Prince Buaben found themselves on the substitute's bench while Abiola Dauda and Perry Kitchen were given starting places.

Don Cowie was forced to leave the field after just 14 minutes because of injury and was replaced by Buaben

Below, from a Hearts perspective are the highlights of the game...

Neilson pulled no punches when he spoke afterwards.

“I’m disappointed, we’ve been doing well this season but today wasn’t good enough,” he told the official Hearts website “We’re not a good enough side to win a match when five or six players don’t perform at all. We just didn’t hit the mark today.

“We were a bit naive from set plays, which is something we normally pride ourselves on. We didn’t give up a lot of chances from open play, but they won’t score two easier goals this season. We shouldn’t be getting beat 3-0 at home by anybody.”

It was, as they say, a bad day at the office for Hearts and the Maroon Army and the Gorgie side’s poorest display since Neilson was appointed Head Coach less than two years ago. With no game now for a couple of weeks, one can only hope the display can be flushed out of the system ahead of Hearts visit to Celtic Park in a fortnight.

Hearts: Alexander, L. Smith, Augustyn (Reilly, 66’), Souttar, McGhee, Cowie (Buaben, 14’), Kitchen, Djoum, Walker, Dauda (Nicholson, 46’), Juanma.

St Johnstone: Mannus, Anderson, Millar, Davidson, Wotherspoon, Shaughnessy, Swanson (MacLean, 53’), Fisher, Easton, Kane (Cummins, 78’), Craig.

Referee: Craig Thomson

Att: 16,295

Top man: No one this week, folks...

