

Hibs face uphill struggle following defeat at Starks Park



Hibs face an uphill struggle to progress into the semi-finals of the Ladbrokes Premiership Play-Offs after losing 1-0 to Raith Rovers last night at Starks Park in Kirkcaldy.

The only goal of the game came in the 74th minute when Rovers' substitute Harry Panayiotou headed home from a Louis Longridge's corner kick.

Head Coach Alan Stubbs made three changes to the starting XI that beat Queen of the South on Sunday.

Jason Cummings replaced James Keatings, captain David Gray took over from Niklas Gunnarsson and Marvin Bartley was selected in place of Liam Henderson. Conrad Logan retained the goalkeepers' jersey with Mark Oxley on the bench.

Not for the first time this season, Hibs dominated possession but were unable to make the break through with Cummings, Bartley and Anthony Stokes creating early chances.

Hibs best opportunity of the night fell to Cummings after some good play by John McGinn but the top scorer's lob went just over the bar.

After the break Hibs continued to attack looking for an equaliser but it was not to be and with 16 minutes remaining Panayiotou silenced the large travelling support.

It could have been worse moments later but Logan was on hand to save from Longridge.

Hibs continued to press forward and Stokes set up Henderson in time added on however his effort went wide of the post.

The second leg takes place at lunchtime on Saturday and a large crowd is expected at Easter Road. Should Hibs overcome the one goal deficit, they will face Falkirk in the semi-finals with the first leg taking place next Tuesday night at Easter Road with the return leg on Friday at the Falkirk Stadium.

Raith Rovers: Cuthbert, Thomson, Callachan, Toshney, Benedictus, Davodson, Hardie (Stewart 90'), Connolly (Longridge 65'), McKeown, Craigen (Panayiotou 65'), Barr. Substitutes not used: Law, Anderson, Longridge, Bates, Robertson.

Hibernian: Logan, McGregor, Hanlon, Fontaine (Henderson 84'), Gray, Bartley, Fyvie (Keatings 80'), McGinn, Stevenson, Stokes, Cummings (McGeouch 80'). Substitutes not used: Oxley, Gunnarsson, Boyle, Dagnall.

Referee: Kevin Clancy.

Attendance: 5,330.