

# Ten man Hibs drop to second place after shock defeat to Ayr United



Hibs hopes of creating history by winning their first six league games were dashed by a shock 2-1 defeat to Ayr United at Easter Road this afternoon.

The home side looked comfortable with a one goal lead before Marvin Bartley was controversially sent off before two late goals by Ayr silenced the large crowd and resulted in Hibs dropping to second place in the table, behind queen of the South.

Neil Lennon kept the same starting XI that beat Dumbarton last weekend.

Hibs started brightly and almost took the lead in the first minute when Greg Fleming produced a world class save to deny Grant Holt after a great cross from David Gray.

The keeper then did well to save from Andrew Shinnie as Hibs totally dominated possession.

Holt almost grabbed the opener in the 20th minute when Lewis Stevenson's cross was flicked on by Jason Cummings but the veteran striker's toe poke rebounded off the post.

John McGinn went close with a long range effort before Fleming did well to save from Stevenson at point blank range.

A looping Fraser Fyvie cross was palmed out by Fleming into the path of McGinn, but the Scotland's star's lob flew inches wide.

Fyvie struck the side net with a superb free kick then tested Fleming again with a powerful low cross but United somehow managed to hold out and went in at the break on level terms.

Hibs eventually opened the scoring in the 49th minute when Shinnie was tackled on the edge of the area and the ball fell to Cummings who sent a sensational 25 yard strike into the top corner of the net.

Ayr fought back and almost equalised moments later when Jamie Adams' header was cleared off the line by Stevenson.

Shinnie then played a one-two with Cummings before unleashing a powerful drive which Fleming parried away.

On the hour mark, Fyvie set up Shinnie but once again the keeper managed to block his effort as Hibs looked to wrap things up.

The game changed in the 66th minute when Bartley was shown a straight red card after losing possession and lunging at Adams to win the ball back. The referee had no hesitation in sending the midfielder off although Adams recovered without requiring treatment.

Moments later Partick Boyle was lucky to escape a red card after deliberately tripping Shinnie who was breaking clear then Paul Hanlon went close with a long range effort.

Neil Lennon was spoken to by the referee just before United equalised. Hanlon's header back to the keeper went out for a corner kick which Brian Gilmour fired into the six yard box and Conrad Balatoni headed home from close range.

With ten minutes remaining Ayr grabbed the winner when Gilmour fired home Kevin Nisbet's cross and despite some late pressure from Hibs, the game ended without further scoring.

After the game Lennon said: " I'm not convinced that it was a red card. there was no real malice in the tackle so the red

card was very harsh to say the least. What annoys me is conceding from a set play. That should not happen but this is a set back and not the end of the world.”

Hibs: Marciano, Gray, Hanlon, Bartley, McGinn, Fyvie, Holt, Stevenson, Shinnie, McGregor, Cummings. subs: Laidlaw, McGeouch, Boyle, Keatings, Forster, Graham, Harris

Ayr United: Fleming, Devlin, Boyle, Gilmour, Forrest, Harkins, Cairney, Adams, Meggatt, Balatoni, Docherty. Subs: Hart, Murphy, Thomas, Crawford, Donald, Nisbet, McGuffie

Referee Nick Walsh

Attendance 15,056