

# Hearts Fight Back to Rescue a Point at Hamilton

Hamilton Academical 3 Heart of Midlothian 3

Ladbrokes Premiership – Monday 21 November 2016 – The  
Superseal Stadium aka New Douglas Park

Hearts headed to The Superseal Stadium on Monday night on Ladbrokes Premiership business hoping to thwart Hamilton Academical's home improvement bid (do you see what I did there?) Robbie Neilson's side were hoping to get back on the winning trail following draws with Inverness Caledonian Thistle and St Johnstone. However, despite taking an early lead, the Maroons defensive frailties were exposed again when Accies scored three times and it looked like another defeat for Neilson's team. But Hearts battled back to score two late goals to salvage a draw – their second successive 3-3 draw away from home.

Neilson made one change to the side that drew with St Johnstone 16 days ago – Alim Ozturk replacing the suspended Igor Rossi.

Hearts made a bright start on a freezing cold night in Lanarkshire. Tony Watt – referred to as Tom Watt on the official team sheet provided by the home club – set off on a trademark run but his shot on goal didn't trouble Accies keeper Woods.

Jamie Walker was looking lively and the winger opened the scoring after just eight minutes. Bjorn Johnsen's cross fell kindly to Walker who half-volleyed a fine effort past Woods to the delight of the travelling Maroon Army.

Walker had another chance soon after when he broke forward but his effort was wide. Hearts were looking good value for their

lead but, as happens so often with the Gorgie Boys, the self-destruct button was pressed. Some Hearts fans questioned the inclusion of Prince Buaben in the team at the expense of Arnaud Djoum – arguably Hearts best player. These questions were asked vociferously in the 23<sup>rd</sup> minute when Prince Buaben needlessly fouled Imrie. From the free-kick, Crawford bent the ball over the Hearts defensive wall and past keeper Jack Hamilton for the equaliser.

The home side had their tails up now and Crawford had another chance when he was through on Jack Hamilton but the Hearts number one saved well.

Hearts were on the ropes somewhat but they did fight their way back. Bjorn Johnsen headed a Don Cowie corner over the bar before the American produced a superb save from Woods with a diving header. Jamie Walker latched on to the rebound but his effort was scrambled off the line.

### **Half-time Hamilton Academical 1 Hearts 1**

Whatever Robbie Neilson said to his team at half-time was apparently wasted as Accies took the lead almost straight from the re-start. The Hearts defence was posted AWOL as Bingham scooped the ball past Jack Hamilton to put the home side in front.

Hearts should have drawn parity after an hour when the unlikely figure of Alim Ozturk had a great chance to equalise from close range. The Turk may be deadly from 35 yards out but from just two yards out he was hapless and the chance was gone.

It was a missed chance Hearts soon regretted. Seven minutes later, Bingham scored his second of the night from a tight angle. At 3-1 down with little over 20 minutes left, it was an uphill task for Hearts now to avoid defeat.

However, with sixteen minutes left, Hearts grabbed a goal

back. Don Cowie was fouled in the Accies penalty box. Referee Maclean awarded Hearts a penalty which Jamie Walker scored and it was game on.

Walker came close to snatching an equaliser with seven minutes to go when his 25-yard shot bounced off the crossbar. Agony for Hearts and their supporters. But with just four minutes left, Walker set off on a run before passing to Perry Kitchen. The American put Callum Paterson through on goal and the big man struck the ball past Woods for a dramatic equaliser. 3-3 was how it ended.

Three draws in a row now for Hearts who remain in fourth place in the Ladbrokes Premiership.

**Hamilton Accies:** Woods, Seaborne, Devlin, Gillespie, Imrie, Crawford, Kurtaj, Bingham, Mackinnon, Donati. Sarris.

**Hearts:** Hamilton, Paterson, Ozturk, Souttar, L.Smith, Buaben, Kitchen, Cowie, Walker, Johnsen, Watt.

**Referee:** Steven MacLean

**Att:** 2,339

**Top man:** Jamie Walker