

# Hearts Fall to Heavy Defeat at Celtic Park

❌ Celtic 4 Heart of Midlothian 0

**Ladbrokes Premiership, Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2017 – Celtic Park**

It was an all-too familiar story for Hearts in Glasgow on Sunday afternoon as they succumbed to another heavy defeat from Celtic in the Ladbrokes Premiership. Hearts have undergone significant changes in recent weeks with a new Head Coach and new additions to the squad but the outlook of the team who travelled to Glasgow's east end remained as it has done for many years. Hearts simply don't have the belief they can win at Celtic Park.

Head Coach Ian Cathro made two changes to the side that required extra-time to knock Raith Rovers out of the Scottish Cup on Wednesday night. Liam Smith took over from Andraz Struna while there was a welcome return for Sam Nicholson who took the place of young striker Rory Currie who could count himself hard done by to not even make the substitutes' bench after he scored on Wednesday.

Celtic were without key players Griffiths and Dembele but were still dominant in the early stages. Bitton had an effort which was well wide while the best Hearts could muster were a couple of shots from distance from Malaury Martin and Jamie Walker.

It had been an uneventful first half until, inevitably, Celtic opened the scoring after half an hour. Sinclair raced past an admiring Hearts defence before passing to McGregor who slotted the ball beyond Hearts keeper Jack Hamilton.

Hearts did briefly threaten right on half-time. A free kick from Martin found the head of Jamie Walker but his header was just too high.

## Half-time Celtic 1 Hearts 0

The second half began in the same manner as the first. Celtic launched into attack with Gamboa firing just wide.

A mistake from John Souttar was pounced on by Forrest who really should have doubled the home side's lead but was thwarted by a fine tackle by Liam Smith.

Roberts then came close for Celtic before Hearts created a rare opportunity and ought to have equalised after 72 minutes. Substitute Choulay set up Martin with a brilliant pass but the Frenchman's shot was saved by former Hearts keeper Craig Gordon.

After Sinclair missed a sitter for the home side, Celtic doubled their lead with twelve minutes left. Tierney's cross from the right was blocked half-heartedly by Aaron Hughes and Sinclair reacted first to score.

Within two minutes Celtic were 3-0 ahead. Tierney was again the provider, Roberts blasting home and the home side had sealed yet another victory as well as establishing an unbeaten domestic record of 27 games, eclipsing that of the Celtic side of season 1966/67.

With Hearts looking for the game to end, their afternoon of misery continued. John Souttar was stretchered off with what looked like a serious Achilles injury.

With many of the travelling Maroon Army long gone by this point, those who remained rather wished they had left too when Sowah brought down Aitchison in the penalty box well into stoppage time. Sinclair despatched the penalty kick and yet another woeful afternoon for Hearts in Glasgow's east end was complete.

**Celtic:** Gordon, Gamboa (Lustig, 78'), Simunovic, Boyata, Tierney, Bitton, McGregor, Brown, Roberts (Aitchison, 82'),

Forrest (Henderson, 67'), Sinclair.

**Hearts:** Hamilton, L.Smith, Souttar, Hughes, Sowah, Kitchen (Beith, 81'), Cowie, Martin (Sammon, 78'), Nicholson (Choulay, 59'), Walker, Johnsen.

**Referee:** Bobby Madden

**Att:** 58,247

**Top Man:** Sad to say, no one in the Hearts team stood out today.