

# Hibs come from behind to grab share of points against Ayr United



Hibs came from behind to grab a share of the points in a hard fought encounter with Ayr United at Easter Road this afternoon.

Head Coach Neil Lennon made two changes to the starting XI that beat Queen of the South last Saturday with front pair Grant Holt and Jason Cummings making way for Martin Boyle and Chris Humphrey.

Former Hibs' midfielder Paul Cairney started for Ayr United.

Ayr won the toss and chose to kick toward their own supporters in the Dunbar end and their plan paid early dividends when they took the lead in the 3rd minute.

Rab Crawford picked up the ball in midfield and the Hibs' defenders backed off allowing him to get his shot away. Ross Laidlaw appeared to have it covered but despite getting both hand to the ball it squirmed over the line.

From then it was one way traffic with United time wasting from the 7th minute, much to the annoyance of the home supporters.

The first half was littered with fouls and eventually referee Crawford Allan took action, booking Jamie Adams for a foul on Fraser Fyvie.

Greg Fleming did well to parry a James Keatings' free kick then Conrad Balatoni was shown a yellow card for barging into the back of Darren McGregor and United boss Ian McCall was spoken to for over protesting.

Humphrey's shot was deflected into the path of Boyle but Fleming was alert to the danger and managed to clear the ball.

Hibs almost equalised in the 35th minute after some great skill by John McGinn. He found Lewis Stevenson on the left and Andrew Shinnie toe poked his cross goalwards but again Fleming managed to save.

Moments later Shinnie should have scored but his diving header from Fyvie's inch perfect cross flew over the bar.

Shinnie was booked on the stroke of half time.

Grant Holt replaced Humphrey for the second half and Hibs continued to dominate possession as they looked to get back into the game.

A David Gray cross from the right was headed off the line with Holt ready to pounce.

Lennon then replaced Shinnie with Jason Cummings on the hour mark and McGregor had a chance when Fleming dropped Keatings' corner but his half volley went over the bar.

It looked as if it was going to be one of these days for Hibs but they managed to grab an equaliser with 1 minutes remaining. Keatings picked up the ball on the right and sent a great cross into the danger area and Cummings headed the ball into the net.

Brian graham replaced Boyle and Hibs continued to push forward as Ayr wasted time then in time added on goalscorer Crawford went down apparently injured after a challenge by Fyvie, The Hibs fans were convinced that he was feigning injury and booed his time wasting.

The referee made a point of showing his watch to the crowd suggesting that he was taking the injury into account then to the fury of the home supporters he blew for full time within seconds of the restart.

The referee and his assistants left the field to a chorus of boos from the frustrated Hibs' fans.

The result moved Hibs nine points clear at the top of the table however second placed Dundee United faced Raith Rovers in the late kick off.

Hibs: Laidlaw, Gray, Fontaine, McGinn, Fyvie, Stevenson, Boyle, Keatings, Shinnie, McGregor, Humphrey Subs: Gallacher, Bartley, Holt, McGeouch, Graham, Cummings, Crane.

Ayr United: Fleming, Devlin, Boyle, Crawford, McDaid, Harkins, Cairney, Adams, Meggatt, Balatoni, Docherty. Subs: Hart, Gilmour, Rose, Murphy, Forrest, Wardrope, McGuffie

Referee Crawford Allan

Attendance: 14,349