

Impressive Hearts Cruise to Victory at Fir Park



Motherwell 0 Heart of Midlothian 3

Ladbrokes Premiership, Saturday 4th February 2017 – Fir Park

After their demolition job on Rangers at Tynecastle on Wednesday night, Hearts headed for Lanarkshire on Saturday in fine fettle. The Maroons record away from Gorgie this season has not been impressive – indeed, Hearts last league win on their travels was at Fir Park in September when they won 3-1. But they were confident of recording another win on Saturday.

Head Coach Ian Cathro made a couple of changes from the team that put Rangers to the sword in midweek. Recent signings Tasos Avlonitis and Tziolis were brought in at the expense of midweek scorer Krystian Nowak and, rather surprisingly, captain Perry Kitchen.

The 12.15pm kick-off for the benefit of satellite television didn't quite lend itself to the same raucous atmosphere of Tynecastle but Hearts began the game in positive fashion. Just four minutes had passed when Isma Goncalves fired an effort from just outside the penalty box and his effort was inches wide.

Moments later, the home side had a chance when Moults' header bounced off the goal line before Hearts keeper Jack Hamilton collected the ball. Home appeals that the ball had crossed the line were pointless as the striker was offside in any case.

Jamie Walker then nearly replicated his goal against Rangers in midweek when he dispossessed Jules but the winger's effort on goal went over the bar.

The impressive Lennard Sowah then set up Walker but this time his effort hit the side net.

On the half hour, Malaury Martin fired in a free-kick which lacked power but nonetheless forced home keeper Samson to push the ball wide.

Motherwell nearly went in front just before half-time when Ainsworth's effort on goal was scrambled clear by Avlonitis.

Half-time Motherwell 0 Hearts 0

Ian Cathro made a change at the interval, taking off Bjorn Johnsen and replacing him with Choulay.

Hearts were dominating the game without making the breakthrough but their chances were given a boost in the 52nd minute. McHugh challenged Don Cowie and his attempt to get the ball was deemed dangerous by referee Andrew Dallas who promptly showed the Well man a red card. It seemed a harsh decision but then Mr Dallas was having one of those days his refereeing father Hugh occasionally had, underlined by his decision to book Malaury Martin in the first half for tripping a Motherwell player when the 'offence' had been committed by a Motherwell team mate.

On the hour mark, Hearts at last took the lead. Tziolis fired in an effort from 25 yards which took a deflection before spinning over the head of keeper Samson and into the net.

Despite being reduced to ten men, Motherwell almost grabbed an equaliser when Lasley fired an effort which whistled past Jack Hamilton's post.

The home side kept pressing but the visitors sealed the points with two goals in the final five minutes. In the 85th minute Choulay burst forward at speed and fed Goncalves who fired past Samson to double Hearts lead.

It was Goncalves who put the icing on the cake when he scored again with just two minutes left. Again, it was fine play from Choulay who delivered a teasing cross into the penalty box which Goncalves took first time to drill past Samson.

It was another fine performance and result for Hearts who dominated the game and thoroughly deserved their victory.

Now they look forward to Hibernian in the Scottish Cup at Tynecastle next Sunday.

Motherwell: Samson, Tait (McMillan, 17'), Hammell (Lucas, 55'), Heneghan, McManus, Ainsworth (Pearson, 55'), McHugh, Moulton, Cadden, Lasley, Jules.

Hearts: Hamilton, Struna, Avlonitis, Hughes, Sowah, Cowie, Tziolis, Martin (Kitchen, 60'), Walker (Nicholson, 75'), Goncalves, Johnsen (Choulay, 46').

Ref: Andrew Dallas

Att: 4,651

Top Man: Isma Goncalves