

Neil Lennon hails 'magnificent' display by Hibs' players



Neil Lennon hailed his players as 'magnificent' after they comprehensively knocked city rivals Hearts out of the William Hill Scottish Cup for the second season in succession last night.

The biggest crowd since the redevelopment of Easter Road witnessed a fantastic performance from everyone in a green and white shirt and the final score could easily have been much higher.

Last Saturday, Lennon criticised the team for their 'abysmal' display in the 1-1 away draw with Raith Rovers but he had no such complaint after last night's pulsating 90 minutes.

Speaking after the final whistle, Lennon said: "I know what I've got in that dressing room. My players were magnificent. We blew Hearts away. We were so dominant. I couldn't have asked for more.

"It's a great result and psychologically it gives the club a lift. You could see what it meant to the players. They were ferocious – absolutely ferocious.

"We played against a good side and made them look ordinary tonight. In a derby, which is never easy to play in because it's always fraught. We handled the occasion very well.

"It should have been more. We could have had four or five. I couldn't see Hearts scoring. We know how they play and we were ready for it."

Lennon singled out Jason Cummings who made it five goals in his last six derbies and John McGinn who were both named by him after the game in Kirkcaldy.

He continued: "The players I singled out for criticism, Jason Cummings and John McGinn, were tremendous but it was right the way through the team. It wasn't just quality but character. They're big-game players.

"Jason's a big-game player. I don't know how many big-game goals he's got. But that's the talent he has – and it's invaluable. It was just Jason's all-round game, the opposite of what it was on Saturday I reminded him before the game that we had a £1.8 million bid in the summer – that wouldn't pay for his right leg!

"I want him to stay at that level now. He's a big-game player. With the derby goals he's got, and big game goals he's got and that's the talent he has. It's invaluable."