

Neil Lennon looking forward to cup replay but insists league is priority



Hibs' Head Coach Neil Lennon was delighted with the performance of his players in yesterday's Edinburgh derby despite the poor condition of the Tynecastle pitch however he insists that his focus is now on the forthcoming game against Raith Rovers at Starks Park.

Lennon has always claimed that automatic promotion is his number one priority although he did admit the Scottish Cup is not far behind.

He also praised the contribution of the travelling support which has filled more or less every away game this season.

Speaking to Hibernian TV after the game Lennon said: : "I enjoyed it immensely. I thought we were excellent and I thought for long periods of the game that we were the better team. The pitch dictated the way we had to go and we played to the pitch.

"We were strong, we looked physically very good and if we had taken care of the ball in the final third a bit better we could have come away with a win. But I'm very pleased with that performance and the tie is very much alive.

"Our fans were magnificent and I think the players really enjoyed the environment and you can see the psychological shift between the two clubs. In years gone by Hearts were the dominant team but it's not the case anymore.

"The last time Hearts played here they beat Rangers 4-1 so we were up against a good team. They backed their manager in a

big way in January but we've come here and negated them.

"I thought defensively and in midfield we were superb at times. I would like us to attack set plays a bit better as we get good delivery from James (Keatings) and we have good height in the team.

"I made five changes and the goalkeeper was great, Jordon Forster had a great game, Marvin Bartley was superb and the two front men worked very well together.

"I know what I have got but I am annoyed with them. the first half hour last week was disappointing and then we played great and we played great today but we need to do that consistently.

"The season is bubbling nicely. We are top of the league and have a big replay to look forward to so it's great at the minute.

"We will look forward to it when it comes but we have to focus on Raith Rovers now because we have an opportunity to extend the lead at the top of the table and if we can do that it will give us confidence for the replay and hopefully we can overcome Hearts, but the priority is always the league but pretty close to that is the Scottish cup.

"Away from home we've been great this season and a big part has been the support. They have filled more or less every ground and they filled Tynecastle so hopefully they have gone home happy that we are still in the cup.

"Jordon picked up a hamstring injury so we don't know the exact prognoses at the minute but if it is a hamstring you are looking at 4-6 weeks so we are hoping that it's not going to be that bad. It might be a strain but hamstrings are pretty delicate injuries."

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