

Hibs top Betfred Cup Group D with comfortable 3-0 win over Alloa Athletic



Hibs progressed to the last 16 of the Betfred League Cup as Group D winners after a comfortable 3-0 victory away to Alloa Athletic this afternoon.

A Fraser Murray goal was followed by a Simon Murray double to secure the three points.

Head Coach Neil Lennon made five changes to the starting XI that hammered Arbroath in midweek.

Ross Laidlaw, Ryan Porteous, Liam Fontaine and David Gray all dropped to the bench along with Danny Swanson who was suspended.

Ofir Marciano, Marvin Bartley Dylan McGeouch, Darren McGregor and Fraser Murray came into the team.

Steven Whittaker moved from midfield to right back.

Vykintas Slivka and Deivydas Matulevicius started on the bench alongside Paul Hanlon who returned to the squad after a spell out with injury.

Teenager Fraser Murray opened the scoring from close range after a Simon Murray cross in the 18th minute.

Hibs doubled their lead on the hour mark when Fraser Murray won the ball in midfield before finding Martin Boyle on the wing and his inch-perfect cross was tapped home by Simon Murray at the back post.

The striker then wrapped things up with his seventh goal of the new campaign with a fine header from Lewis Stevenson's cross which went in off the post.

Ross County drew with Arbroath leaving Hibs to of the group.

After the game a delighted Lennon told BBC Scotland: "Fraser Murray's a great little player, we have high hopes for him.

"He is deceptive; he is quite slight but has good feet and not only scored the goal but laid on the second with a great pass.

"I thought Martin Boyle was outstanding again as well. He has taken his game onto another level at the moment. He beats people at pace and still finds the pass – he has really improved his game and I am delighted with him.

"I am so pleased with the players so far. They have done everything I asked of them and won again in convincing fashion.

"We are going into the season with a lot of optimism but the real test is ahead of us. We are playing a proven Premiership team next week [Partick Thistle] who finished sixth last season, so we are not getting carried away.

"We have still got bits and pieces to do but the core of the squad is good. They have performed well for the club over the last two years and we just want that to continue.

"Last season the pressure of getting promotion was a bit of a millstone around the players' necks, and the Scottish Cup win [in 2016] was another millstone that has been lifted. So psychologically the club is in a very good place."

Hibs: Marciano, Whittaker, Ambrose, McGregor, Stevenson, McGinn, Bartley, McGeouch, F Murray, S Murray, Boyle. Subs: Laidlaw, Hanlon, Porteous, Gray, Slivka, Matulevicius,

Fontaine