

Hibs held to draw in Perth



Despite having 64% possession, Hibs had to settle for a point against in form St Johnstone at McDiarmid Park this afternoon.

Head Coach Neil Lennon made two changes to the starting XI that drew with Dundee, with Darren McGregor and Vykintas Slivka making way for Martin Boyle and Efe Ambrose.

Anthony Stokes forced a great save from Alan Mannus in the opening spell and Paul Hanlon did well to cut out a pass from former team mate David Wotherspoon as both sides carved out early chances.

Mannus did well to save from John McGinn but the first half ended all square.

Hibs started the second half in style and Mannus produced a superb save from Boyle strike before follow-ups from Stokes then Murray were blocked by the Saints' defenders.

It was the home side that took the lead in the 49th minute against the run of play when former Hibs' captain Liam Craig's cross found Michael O'Halloran unmarked to tap in from close range.

Hibs fought back and grabbed an equaliser on the hour mark after Simon Murray latched onto a mistake from Steven Anderson and his cutback was knocked into his own net by Paul Paton with Stokes waiting to finish.

Anderson then redeemed himself by clearing off the line following great work by Stokes.

Boyle's powerful strike from the edge of the box was tipped onto the bar from Mannus then from the resultant corner the ball was cleared off the line.

In the last minute, Stokes fired over from 12 yards after good work from Simon Murray and the game ended with honours even.

After the game Lennon told BBC Scotland: "To come here and play as well as that, I'm delighted. We looked a very good side today and I can't criticise any part of the team, I thought we were outstanding and thoroughly deserved to win the game.

"The dominance of the team pleased me. St Johnstone do what they do very well and when they get the goal you're thinking 'it's difficult to break them down at times'.

"But we deserved the equaliser and went on and looked the stronger side. Our play in general, our football at times was spectacular against a very, very good side."

St Johnstone manager Tommy Wright: "I'm more satisfied with the point than I am with the performance. We started the game so well. The first 20 minutes we moved the ball well, looked energetic and then for whatever reason from 20-25 minutes in Hibs totally dominated the game.

"But when we get a goal ahead you think 'that'll lift us' but it didn't. I just thought all day we were too deep and allowing Hibs too much possession and they controlled the game and will be disappointed they didn't win it.

"I've just said to (the players) there's not many teams who'll play so poorly but still get a point from the game and I suppose that shows a bit of character but overall I've got to be extremely disappointed with the performance. I would expect better."

St Johnstone: Mannus, Shaughnessy, Anderson, Easton, Foster, Davidson (Craig, 46'), Paton, Wotherspoon (Tanser, 88'), Scougall (Johnstone, 69'), O'Halloran, MacLean. Subs not used:

Clark, McClean, Gilchrist, Cummins.

Hibernian: Marciano, Gray, Ambrose, Hanlon, Whittaker, Boyle, Bartley, McGinn, Barker (Swanson, 74'), Stokes (Matulevicius, 90'), Murray. Subs not used: Laidlaw, Stevenson, Porteous, McGeouch, Slivka.

Attendance: 5591

(2548 Hibernian fans)