

Levein Happy With Hearts Progress



Hearts Head Coach Craig Levein declared himself satisfied after his side's hard-fought victory over Hamilton Academical in the Ladbrokes Premiership on Saturday. Goals from Ross Callachan and Kyle Lafferty – a penalty – secured a 2-1 win for Hearts, a result which lifted the Maroons into eighth place in the league.

Levein told the official Hearts website:

“It was a strange game. We had an excellent first thirty minutes, where we were dominant, then the turnaround came when we lost a goal due to a mistake, and Hamilton punished us. We had to defend excellently in the second half to win the game.

“It would have been great to extend the lead, but first and foremost we had to make sure Hamilton didn't score again. Other than a free-kick that Jon McLaughlin had to save superbly, I don't think we were troubled much in the second half.

“Jon actually picked up a groin injury in the first half, which clearly affected his kicking, and I wasn't sure he'd see out the 90 minutes, but obviously his mobility was pretty good to save the free kick and he caught 3 or 4 crosses to take a lot of pressure off the defence.”

“Hamilton's midfield is a tough one to fight against, so it was a scrap at times. It does our confidence the world of good, however, to know that when there's a fight on the pitch, that we can dig deep and grind out a win like that.”

Levein was delighted with the contribution of goalscorer Ross Callachan, a dyed-in-the-wool Jambo who was clearly thrilled

at scoring for the club he loves.

“Ross was terrific last week, and almost got the goal he deserved,” Levein added. “And this week he goes and scores right in front of a massive Hearts support, who were terrific as well. The fans understood the nature of the game, saw it was a scrap and stuck with us until the end.”

Callachan himself told the Hearts website: “It’s always been an ambition for me. It is for any fan – you dream of scoring for the team you support. It was a great feeling.

“My mum, my auntie, her man and my son were all here, and it was good to see them at the end.

“They were all really happy for me, and I’m delighted to get off the mark, especially scoring at the end our fans were in,”

The Head Coach was also impressed by Jamie Walker. “I told him that his performance was fantastic. He did what Jamie Walker does, a great bit of skill in midfield to set up the first goal, he led the pressing from the front, which he’s not normally associated with.

“He worked his socks off for the team and I thought he was outstanding.”