

Lewis Stevenson insists that the league is Hibs' priority



Long serving defender Lewis Stevenson is looking forward to another Hampden trip as Hibs face Celtic in the semi-final of the Betfred Scottish League Cup next month but he insists that the league is the priority.

This will be Hibs' fifth visit to the national stadium in the last 18 months and Stevenson has played in every one however given the depth of the squad he knows that he will have to be on top form to earn a starting place.

After being an ever present, the popular Fifer was dropped to the bench recently and replaced by Steven Whittaker but he has no issue with Neil Lennon's decision and hasn't knocked on his door to demand an explanation.

Stevenson returned to the first team in Tuesday's 3-2 victory over Livingston and hopes to retain his place against Ross County this afternoon.

Speaking at the press conference ahead of that game Stevenson said: "We are through to the semi final of a cup and we have only been beaten once so it is more than a decent start to the season.

"I have been lucky, even when we weren't doing all that well before, we were still getting to a lot of cup semi finals and finals and I have been to Hampden a good few times now. It is nice to be called cup specialists but the league is the priority so that is a bonus.

"It is a good start to the season and it is something for us to build on. I don't want to set a target but we want to

finish as high as possible in the league. It will be tough as we have just been promoted.

"I had no complaints about not being in the team. The manager had to make changes after the Hamilton defeat and it could have been any one of us. You just have to accept it sometimes and as a footballer I've been there before.

"You just have to get on with your job and work hard in training and hopefully get another chance.

"It is not like I was being dropped for just anyone, it was a Scotland international full-back who was coming in.

"I always want to play but sometimes you have to take a spell on the side and, to be fair, the boys played well against St Johnstone and Dundee so I had no qualms about being on the bench for those two performances.

"There is competition for places but the squad is only as strong as our performances at the weekend. When I first came in to the Hibs team it was obviously a strong squad but this is as strong a team and squad as I have ever known. We had five away on international duty.

"We played Ross County in the League Cup earlier this season and it was a pretty close game. We played pretty well on the night. Both teams have brought players in but it will always be tough up there, but if you win it's a nice trip down the road."