

Hibs almost end 'Invincibles' run after stunning fight back from two goals down



Hibs came within a whisker of ending Celtic's 67 game unbeaten run following a pulsating 90 minutes at Easter Road this afternoon.

Only a goal-line clearance in time added on kept the run going and Hibs had to settle for a share of the points after fighting back from two goals down.

Neil Lennon made three changes to the starting XI that beat Partick thistle last weekend with John McGinn, Steven Whittaker and Brandon Barker replacing Darren McGregor, Simon Murray and Vykindas Slivka.

The visitors started brightly and Dedryck Boyata's through ball sent Callum McGregor through on goal but a superb last ditch tackle from Lewis Stevenson denied the Celtic youngster.

A mistake by Dylan McGeouch then gave James Forrest a clear cut chance but his effort flew inches wide of the post.

Hibs fought back however and Craig Gordon did well to save from Martin Boyle as play raged from end to end.

Just after the half-time break, Scott Sinclair's outpaced Whittaker but Ofir Marciano did well to block his shot.

Celtic eventually took the lead on the hour mark when Sinclair tapped the ball into the empty net after Edouard's shot rebounded off the post and landed at his feet.

Four minutes later Celtic looked to have secured the three points when Sinclair cut in from the left and his heavily deflected shot wrong-footed the Hibs' keeper.

Lennon's men however refused to accept defeat and pulled one back moments later following a cleverly worked corner.

McGinn drove into the Celtic box before finding Whittaker with a cut-back. His shot was blocked but rebounded to Efe Ambrose whose strike ended up in the net after deflecting off former Hibs player Scott Brown.

Three minutes later, substitute Oli Shaw equalised after great work by Anthony Stokes and Stevenson sparking wild scenes from three sides of the stadium.

From then it was end to end action and Celtic almost retook the lead but Boyata headed over a well taken free-kick from Stuart Armstrong.

In time added on, Hibs looked to have won the game when Gordon dropped a cross from Ambrose and Shaw side-footed the ball past the former Hearts' keeper but Mikael Lustig was on hand to clear the ball off the line.

Brown then carried the ball 60-yards before setting up Sinclair but with twenty thousand fans holding their breath, the Celtic winger fired the ball over the bar and the game ended all square.

After the game Lennon told BBC Scotland: "The performance wasn't as good as it could've been, but we showed tremendous character to come back

"We almost could've won it, but I think that would've been undeserved.

"There's an immense amount of pride, also an immense amount of

frustration at times as we can do the basics better.

"I'm thrilled to come back from 2-0 down against a team that normally goes on and wins the game by three or four.

"You always hope you get one and you can maybe get something out of it, but the way the game was going we looked physically weaker than Celtic at times and that didn't please me.

"We weren't aggressive enough with our pressing or the challenges for 15 to 20 minutes of the second half. That's why they got the goals, so we need to look at that and do it better, but we're not going to come up against a team of that quality every week.

"First half was OK, they had a lot of the ball, that was fine. Second half for 15-20 minutes we weren't at it and the subs gave us a little bit of a spark. Once we got the goal we looked very good.

"We could've won it and lost it at the end, so we had a bit of luck today."

"McGinn was outstanding, a real cut above, and [Martin] Boyle's playing as well as anyone in this league," he said. "Martin gave Kieran [Tierney], who is a majestic player, plenty of problems, which is good.

"Some of them will be disappointed that they didn't do more in the game but overall I've got to be pleased with the point.

"Ambrose was outstanding today, I thought he read the game brilliantly. We've got some good players here."

Hibernian: Marciano, Whittaker (McGregor 82'), Hanlon, Bartley (Shaw 71'), McGinn, McGeouch, Stevenson, Boyle, Barker (Slivka 82'), Ambrose, Stokes. Substitutes not used: Dabrowski, Matueelvicius, Murray, Porteous.

Celtic: Gordon, Simunovic, Brown, Sinclair, Boyata, Ntcham

(Armstrong 86'), Edouard (Dembele 71'), Lustig, McGregor, Forrest (Hayes 79'), Tierney. Substitutes not used: de Vries, Bitton, Ajer.

Referee: John Beaton.

Attendance: 20,193.