

# Marvin Bartley insists Hibs players can hold their head high after productive season



Hibs' midfield enforcer Marvin Bartley yesterday insisted that the players can hold their head high after a productive season which has culminated in a likely fourth place finish.

Wednesday's derby defeat means that only a six goal victory over Rangers would see them finish in a higher position but considering that Hibs were only promoted last year, Bartley is happy with the progress so far.

The headlines have been dominated by Head Coach Neil Lennon' after match comments when he claimed that fourth place was 'unacceptable' and how he would be considering his position in the summer but Bartley accepted that things can be said in the heat of the moment after an emotional night.

Lennon was due to have faced the press yesterday but that task was left to his assistant Garry Parker who explained that the Northern Irishman had been suffering from flu and had overslept.

Parker also took training which had been agreed in advance.

Bartley however spoke freely to the waiting journalists.

When questioned about Lennon's quote that fourth place would be 'unacceptable' he responded: " You would have to ask the gaffer what he meant by that. Maybe he had a different position that he wanted us to finish in. A lot of things are said in the heat of the moment after a match.

"It was a disappointing performance. We had lost to our arch

rivals and emotions were running high. Sometimes you say things you don't mean but only he can answer that question.

"The mood was flat straight after the game. The lads were disappointed to lose. We are like that with any game but especially that one.

"We are now looking forward to Sunday's match. As players we need to get on with our job because we have a game with Rangers. The most important thing is to break the points total because third looks beyond us.

"We can walk away with our heads held high. We are fourth in the league and have just been promoted from the Championship so people need to look at that.

"We have fallen at the final hurdle in terms of trying to finish second but we are happy with the way the season has gone.

"We still have a chance of Europe if Celtic win the (Scottish) cup but it would be a productive season with or without that.

"The lads have done very well. It would be nice for us to set up a new points total but even if we don't we can still look back on this season with a lot more positives than negatives.

"When you consider how long it took us to get out of the Championship, we've now come back up to the Premiership and finished inside the top four

"I don't think too many people can look at that and think it's a disappointing season.

"Can we win 6-0? Can I score? Listen we are just going to try and won and what will be will be. Stranger things have happened but not many stranger things.

"We will give it our all and try and put on a performance for the fans who have backed us all season. There will be a sell-

out crowd so we'll try to set that points total and win the game."

When asked about Lennon's 'unprofessional' quote, he replied: "We are a very professional group. I have been in changing rooms that are not so it is disappointing to be branded as unprofessional and amateur because we are not that, we are a good group.

"Sometimes we'll perform well and sometimes we won't. We'll win games and lose games.

"I don't think an amateur group or an unprofessional group could beat Celtic or go to Ibrox and beat Rangers, go up to Aberdeen and draw. We'll get on with it.

"I haven't seen the manager. We trained today but I haven't seen the gaffer since I left the team hotel on Wednesday.

"The manager is his own man. If (leaving) is the route he wants to go down and the decision he wants to make that's down to him."