

Neil Lennon praises Hearts ahead of Edinburgh derby



Hibs' Head Coach Neil Lennon has praised rivals Hearts ahead of tonight's Edinburgh derby at Tynecastle but insists that his players will be ready for the challenge.

Hibs have a number of injury worries with skipper David Gray, Paul Hanlon, Thomas Agyepong and Emerson Hyndman all doubtful.

Lennon said: "They (Hearts) are a powerful team who are very strong on set-plays as well. Craig Levein has them well drilled.

"Defensively, they are excellent. So they are a very competent team. Yes, they cross the line, but no more so than other teams.

"We have to be prepared to be ready for that, stand up to it and get on with it."

"I'm just looking forward to a game because rigor mortis is setting in!

"The month we have had has been absolutely ridiculous."

When asked about the Steven McLean incident which has resulted in the Hearts' striker being cited by the SFA for an 'act of

brutality' on Celtic's Eboue Kouassi by grabbing his groin, Lennon joked: "We are going to give them cricket boxes to wear just in case."

"I don't think there was any malice in it, but under the rules, it's not supposed to be the done thing.

"I don't think Kouassi was too impressed, and I don't think I would have been too impressed either. I probably would have rolled over in pain too.

"It was cheeky, and we're prepared for it. You've got to be prepared for any eventuality.

"But you do Hearts a disservice if you think they just do that."