

Injury ravaged Hibs overcome champions Celtic with a superb display

Injury ravaged Hibs overcame champions Celtic with a superb performance at Easter Road this afternoon.



Hibs were without a number of experience players including Paul Hanlon, Mark Milligan, Marvin Bartley, David Gray, Martin Boyle, Harry Mavrias and Thomas Agyepong.

Neil Lennon made three changes to his starting XI that defeated Hamilton last weekend with Steven Whittaker, Daryl Horgan and Emerson Hyndman taking over from Mavrias, Boyle and Miquel Nelom.

'Super' John McGinn returned from Aston Villa duties to provide his opinion for Sky Sports.

Hibs opened the scoring in the first minute thanks to a superb move which started at their own corner flag.

Whittaker did well to surge forward before finding Hyndman in midfield. The American played the ball to Oli Shaw who played a terrific cross field pass to Vykintas Slivka.

The Lithuanian cut inside onto his left foot before curling his strike into the corner of the net leaving Craig Gordon helpless.

Gordon then did well to save a long range effort from Stevie Mallan as Hibs looked to increase their lead.

The Hoops dominated possession but the Hibs defenders coped with everything thrown at them.

Odsonne Edouard went close with a long-range effort which flew just over the bar then Ryan Porteous did well to clear a dangerous low cross from Scott Sinclair.

In the 38th minute Scott Brown was fortunate not to be sent off for a late challenge on Slivka but referee Don Robertson produced a yellow instead.

Florian Kamberi almost made it 2-0 with the last action of the first half but was unable to get on the end of a deflected Mallan free-kick.

From the resultant corner kick Mallan found Hyndman unmarked at the edge of the Celtic box, but he mishit his shot.

Slivka was replaced by youngster Sean Mackie at the restart and it was the visitors who started the half on top.

Ofir Marciano did well to turn behind a Sinclair cross then then from the resultant corner Oliver Ntcham tested the Israeli international with a long range shot.

Hibs almost doubled their advantage in the 55th minute when

the impressive Mackie sent a tantalising cross into the danger area but the ball just evaded the onrushing Kamberi.

Two minutes later Marciano produced a fine save to deny James Forrest as play raged from end to end.

Moments later Lewis Stevenson did well to win the ball before finding Mackie who fired a long ball into the path of Kamberi. The striker did well to cushion the ball on his chest before firing an unstoppable strike high into the net, sparking mayhem amongst the home fans.

Hibs could have added a third but Daryl Horgan was just failed to get on the end of Kamberi's cross.

Gordon did well to save Kamberi's deflected effort then was called into action again with a great save to deny Mallan from a free-kick.

After the game Lennon told BBC Scotland: "It annoys me because two weeks ago at Kilmarnock we were absolutely pathetic," said Lennon.

"Two weeks later off the back of a great win last week and then a great win today we start looking like the team that we know we can be again.

"It was an outstanding team performance, we were very, very good and we could have won the game by more. The most important thing is it's the three points and it puts us back in the mix for the top six again.

"You can't save your games for the big games, the performances. You've got to do it week in, week out. There was a dip, from all of us, really, but we've sort of got our mojo back.

"Oli's (Shaw) had a poor start to the season but he's bounced back really well the last two or three weeks where his contribution's been immense. I was delighted with him today.

“Ryan’s (Porteous) been outstanding. Very consistent this season.

And we had Sean Mackie on in the second so we’ve got three academy players out there playing against the champions and it didn’t phase them. It’s a remarkable performance under the circumstances. I’m very, very proud of the team.

“We know if we win on Wednesday night, we’re back in the top six.

“Rangers away from home or at home are one of the best teams in the country again so we’ll have to try and find that performance again.”

Hibernian: Marciano, Whittaker, Horgan, Slivka (Mackie 46’), Mallan, Stevenson, Hyndman, Kamberi, Ambrose, Shaw (Allan 87’), Porteous. Substitutes not used: Bogdan, Maclaren, Nelom, McGregor, Gullan.

Celtic: Gordon, Izaguirre (Hayes 61’), Simunovic, Brown, Sinclair (Morgan 61’), Ntcham, Edouard (Johnston 73’), Benkovic, Ajer, McGregor, Forrest. Substitutes not used: Bain, Hendry, Mulumbu, Ralston.

Referee: Don Robertson.

Attendance: 18,142.