

Champions Celtic too strong for Hibs



Hibs lost three players to injury during their 2-0 defeat to champions Celtic at Parkhead last night.

Caretaker boss Eddie May made two changes to the starting XI from Saturday's match with Aberdeen, with Sean Mackie and Ryan Gauld, replacing Marvin Bartley and Stevie Mallan.

Celtic started brightly and Ofir Marciano made a great save from Timothy Weah before the Hoops opened the scoring in the 24th minute when Jeremy Toljan's cut-back found Ryan Christie who fired the ball into the corner of the net.

Hibs fought back and Gauld fired wide before setting up Mark Milligan who did likewise.

Former Hibs' midfielder Scott Brown was lucky to escape a yellow card for a reckless challenge on Milligan then Oli Shaw required treatment after a cash with Jozo Simunovic just before the break. The youngster was replaced by Marc McNulty

at the restart.

Brown was booked for a reckless challenge on Milligan and could easily have been sent off but Craig Thomson decided a yellow card was sufficient.

Celtic who almost doubled their advantage as Marciano produced a world class save to deny Dedryck Boyata from close range.

The home side did extend the lead in the 64th minute when Oli Burke's shot deflected off Darren McGregor into the net. Gauld and David Gray both had to leave the field due to injuries with Mallan and new on-loan signing Darnell Johnson coming off the bench. McNulty chance to pull one back but his shot from the edge of the box flew over the bar.

Johnson was booked for a late challenge on Emilio Izaguirre who was stretchered off.

Celtic held to secure the three points as Hibs dropped to eighth in the table.

Hibs quest to find a replacement for Neil Lennon continues and an announcement is expected in the next few days.

After the game May told BBC Scotland: "We can play better. We could have defended the two goals we lost a bit better but Celtic are a top class team."

Celtic: Bain, Toljan, Boyata (Bitton, 74'), Simunovic, Izaguirre (Hayes, 82'), Brown, McGregor, Christie, Weah, Sinclair (Johnston, 73'), Burke. Subs: Gordon, Bayo, Lustig, Henderson.

Hibs: Marciano, Gray (Johnson, 64'), McGregor, Hanlon, Stevenson, Milligan, Mackie, Slivka, Gauld (Mallan, 60'), Kamberi, Shaw (McNulty, 46'). Subs: Dabrowski, Nelom, Bigirimana, Omeonga.

Referee Craig Thomson Attendance 56.730