

# Hibs through to Betfred Cup quarter finals after eight goal thriller



Hibs joined neighbours Hearts in the quarter finals of the Betfred League Cup after a dramatic 5-3 extra time victory over Morton at Easter Road this afternoon.

Head Coach Paul Heckingbottom made six changes to the starting XI that lost to Rangers last week and gave on-loan winger Glenn Middleton his debut for the club.

Popular left back Lewis Stevenson returned to the first team after a lengthy spell on the sidelines with an injury and he was given a warm welcome back by the home fans.

There was an early scare for the hosts when Darren McGregor had to leave the field with an injury and was replaced by Adam Jackson.

Hibs took a deserved lead when Middleton slid a perfect pass to Scott Allan who fired the ball past Danny Rogers into the bottom corner of the net then added a second after Josh Vela fired home a superb cutback from Daryl Horgan.

It looked as though Hibs would win by a cricket score as they continued to mount attack after attack but Morton fought back and went in at the break level.

Nicky Cadden drilled in a cross that Bob McHugh managed to knock past Chris Maxwell then just before the half time whistle Aiden Nesbitt's cross was bundled into his own net by the unfortunate Stevenson.

Morton started the second half in a confident mood but it was Hibs who regained the lead after Florian Kamberi benefitted from a mix up in the Morton defence and rounded Rogers before calmly sliding the ball into the net from the edge of the area.

Hibs appeared to have done enough but in the 90<sup>th</sup> minute Kyle Jacobs fired a hopeful ball into the six-yard box which substitute Steven Whittaker turned past his own keeper.

Both sides had chances before Kamberi grabbed his second when he raced onto a perfect pass from Allan and fired the ball past Rogers.

Morton manager David Hopkin protested about what he claimed

was an earlier foul on Cameron Salkeld and was shown a red card.

Morton almost equalised but Maxwell produced a fantastic save to deny Reghan Tumilty then in the last minute Fraser Murray found fellow substitute Christian Doidge who calmly looped the ball over Rogers to secure the victory, much to the relief of the home supporters.

After the game Hibs' assistant manager Robbie Stockdale told BBC Scotland: "We took the foot off the gas and it doesn't matter what opposition you do that against, it's difficult to turn that momentum around.

"We spoke at half-time and reminded us of what got us into the lead and for large periods of the second half we were dominant. We got sucker-punched right at the end but the aim was to get through to the next round and we are. We've had to go through a little bit of pain to get there, but hopefully that might put us in good stead going forward.

"It's the first time we've had to come through that pain today, and we've done it well."

Hibs: Maxwell, Gray, Hanlon, McGregor, Stevenson, Vela, Horgan, Slivka, Middleton, Kamberi, Allan. Substitutes: Marciano, Whittaker, Doidge, Newell, Jackson, Shaw, Murray

Morton: Rogers, McLean, Jacobs, Millar, McAlister, Nesbitt, McHugh, Strapp, Lyon, Blues, Cadden. Substitutes: Ramsbottom, Tumility, Grant, Muirhead, Orsi, Salkeld, Sutton

Referee Alan Muir

Attendance 6,557