

Levein happy as Hearts progress in Betfred Cup

Hearts manager Craig Levein

lauded the response from his players after Friday evening's impressive 2-1

Betfred Cup win at Motherwell saw the Jambos become the first team to reach the

quarter finals of this season's competition.

The Gorgie club struggled

against Ross County in the Premiership last weekend, a performance which

angered the fans and Levein himself. However, Hearts looked much better on a

rainy night in Lanarkshire and the manager was in a much better mood. He told

the official Hearts website:

"We were a hell of a lot better than last week.

I can't explain last week, I don't know what happened but we had a talk about

what's expected when you play for Hearts and I know the players were slightly

embarrassed, as was I."

"I had a good feeling in training that we'd put on a good show tonight."

Levein made four changes to the side and had special praise for Andy Irving and

Aaron Hickey who both impressed.

"Andy

Irving is a lovely football player. If I'm going to play him, I need to know he

can do the other stuff as well as he can pass the ball. If he can get to the level we hope for, his technical ability is second to none.

“Aaron Hickey’s technically excellent too, they just need to learn – Aaron has a bit of devilment and aggression about him – but Andy needs a bit more of that to compete in midfield.”

“Our defence was really poor on Saturday despite the clean sheet, but tonight Berra and Halkett were imperious.

“Michael Smith had tonsillitis and played like that, and then Hickey was what he always is, which is outstanding, so it was good to see them back to what we all know they can do.”