

Hibs dismal run continues with defeat to Kilmarnock



Hibs dismal start to the league season continued with a 2-0 defeat to Kilmarnock at Rugby Park this afternoon despite an improved performance,

Under-fire Head Coach Paul Heckingbottom made four changes to the starting XI that lost to Motherwell two weeks ago.

New signings Melker Hallberg and Jason Naismith made their debuts whilst Ryan Porteous returned from injury and Josh Vela regained his place.

Six of Heckingbottom's summer signings started on the bench.

Hibs started brightly and Florian Kamperi went close with a first time effort from Naismith's cut back before Kilmarnock goalkeeper Laurentiu

Branescu produced a sensational save to deny Daryl Horgan.

Moments later the Kilmarnock goalkeeper produced another superb save to prevent Stevie Mallan's free-kick from finding the top corner of the net.

From the resultant corner kick Vela's volley was cleared off

the line.

Hallberg did well to control the midfield area as Hibs continued to press forward in search of an opening goal but it was the hosts who almost opened the scoring just before the break when Naismith did well to deflect a shot from Rory McKenzie over the bar.

Kilmarnock took the lead in the 55th minute against the run of play when Liam Millar raced onto a long ball from Stephen O'Donnell to slot past Ofir Marciano.

Moments later Hallberg volleyed into the net from close range, however referee Kevin Clancy disallowed the 'goal' for an earlier infringement.

Branescu had to be on his toes to deny Mallan as Hibs searched for an equaliser with the home side content to hit on the break

Hibs hopes of taking a point vanished in the 78th minute when Paul Hanlon's pass was intercepted and Mohamed El Makrini fired in from close range.

Marciano produced a fine save to prevent the Killie McKenzie adding a third goal then in time added on Kamberi cut the ball back to substitute Christian Doidge who knocked the ball over the bar from close range.

The travelling supporters made their displeasure known for the third game in succession and called for the Heckingbottom's sacking.

After the game the Yorkshireman told BBC Scotland: The

disappointing thing is we controlled the game but got beat 2-0 from two shots on target.

“That’s not to say we deserved to win the game, you get what you deserve. They are a good defensive side but the goals we conceded were terrible on our part.”

Hibs face fellow strugglers Hearts next Sunday at Easter Road with pressure mounting on both Heckingbottom and Craig Levine who was the subject of protests outside Tynecastle today following Hearts 3-2 defeat to Motherwell, a result which leaves the Gorgie side bottom of the table.

Kilmarnock: Branescu, O’Donnell, Del Fabro, Findlay, Hamalainen, Power, Dicker, El Makrini, McKenzie, Millar (Thomas 88’), Brophy (Sow 88’).
Unused Substitutes: Koprivec, Hendrie, Bruce, Wilson, St Clair.

Hibernian: Marciano, Hanlon, Vela, Horgan (Doidge 68’), Mallan, Stevenson, Hallberg (Newell 76’), Naismith, Kamberi, Allan, Porteous.
Unused Substitutes: Maxwell, James, Jackson, Middleton, Shaw.

Referee: Kevin Clancy.

Attendance: 5,458. Away: 902