

Hearts slump to bottom of the table after Kilmarnock loss

Heart of Midlothian 2 Kilmarnock 3

Ladbrokes Premiership – Wednesday 5th February
2020 – Tynecastle Park

After the weekend's all-too brief respite from the Ladbroke's Premiership basement, Hearts returned there on Wednesday evening after a 3-2 loss to Kilmarnock at Tynecastle.

Killie

have proved something of a bogey team to Hearts in recent seasons, particularly in Gorgie and they deepened the Tynecastle side's relegation worries with a clinical performance.

With

the recent win over Rangers and hard-earned draw against St Johnstone, optimism had returned to the Maroon Army once more and they enjoyed watching their team dominate the early stages against Killie. In the opening seconds Liam Boyce set up Steven Naismith but the former Killie striker saw his effort on goal blocked as

the home team forced a succession of corners. Then Euan Henderson drove at the Killie defence before forcing keeper Branescu into a save.

However,

Hearts early pressure came to nothing and their short fallings in defence were

exposed yet again as the visitors took the lead in the 24th minute

when Findlay headed home after Burke's corner took a deflection.

Seven

minutes before half-time Killie doubled their advantage with a brilliant goal

from Burke and you could almost hear Hearts recent optimism hissing away in the

Gorgie night sky.



Ladbrokes Scottish Premiership – Heart of Midlothian v

Kilmarnock. Tynecastle Park, 05/02/2020. Credit: Ian Jacobs

If

the Hearts support were hoping for a change of fortune in the second half they

got their answer after just five minutes. Killie striker Brophy was given the

freedom of Gorgie Road to turn on the edge of the Hearts penalty box before

firing a shot on goal which Hearts keeper Joel Pereira really ought to have

done better with. 3-0 to the visitors and many Hearts fans headed to the exits

with 40 minutes still to play.

With

10 minutes to go Hearts were given a glimmer of hope when Killie keeper

Branescu fouled Hearts substitute Conor Washington inside the penalty box and

was shown a yellow card. Sean Clare scored with the resultant penalty and when

he tried to retrieve the ball from the net the Killie keeper foolishly booted

the ball away. A second yellow card was brandished at Branescu and he was on

his way.

In

the final minute Hearts ensured a grandstand finish when fine play from

substitute Jamie Walker found Craig Halkett and the defender fired home to

bring the score back to 3-2.

Sadly

for Hearts it was too little too late and with Hamilton Academical drawing at

St Mirren Hearts slumped back to the foot of the Ladbrokes

Premiership table.

Hearts: Pereira, White, Souttar,
Clare, Naismith, Halkett, Moore (Walker, 68'), Boyce, Langer
(Ikpeazu, 52'),
Irving, Henderson (Washington, 61').

Kilmarnock: Branescu, O'Donnell,
Power, McKenzie (Koprivec, 80'), Dicker, Brophy (Kiltie, 74'),
Hamalainen,
Findlay (Broadfoot, 66'), Del Fabro, Kabamba, Burke.

Referee: David Munro

Attendance: 16,211

Top

man: Sean

Clare