

# Hearts further adrift at the bottom as Motherwell make a point

Heart of Midlothian 1 Motherwell 1

Ladbroke's Premiership – Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> March  
2020 – Tynecastle

## Hearts

dropped two precious points in their battle against relegation today after they

were held to a draw by Motherwell at Tynecastle. A mistake from Craig Halkett

gave the Fir Park side a first half lead but Conor Washington scored his second

goal in as many games to snatch a point for the home side. But with relegation

rivals Hamilton Academical winning again, Hearts are now three points

# adrift at the foot of the Ladbrokes Premiership.

After  
their derby triumph at Easter Road on Tuesday evening, Hearts  
manager Daniel  
Stendel made just one change to the team – captain Steven  
Naismith replacing  
Liam Boyce.



Ladbrokes Scottish Premiership – Heart of Midlothian v  
Motherwell.

Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

07/03/2020.

Pic shows: Honours even at 1-1 when the final whistle blows as  
Hearts play host to Motherwell in the Ladbrokes Scottish  
Premiership, Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

There

was another big crowd inside Tynecastle, the majority hoping  
to see their

favourites win for the third time in a week. However, it was  
Motherwell who

made the early running and Aarons missed what seemed a decent  
chance to open

the scoring when he failed to connect with a cross.

The

hard-working Conor Washington almost caught out the Motherwell  
defence when he

forced keeper Gillespie to clear only as far as Sean Clare.

The Englishman

tried to take advantage of the visiting keeper being off his  
line by lofting

the ball goalward – only to be denied by Grimshaw.

Just

as Hearts looked to be assuming control of the game calamity struck after 20

minutes. Hearts defender Craig Halkett dallied on the ball and was caught out

by Long who took the ball from the defender, ran through on goal, rounded

Hearts keeper Bobby Zlamal and fired home to give the Steelmen the lead.

The

home crowd were stunned but they were soon almost cheering an equaliser when

Steven Naismith saw his shot on goal from a tight angle trundle agonisingly

wide. Hearts despair increased when Sean Clare, who hadn't recovered from an

earlier hefty challenge, limped off. He was replaced by Jamie Walker.

The tension was palpable among the Maroon Army and Daniel Stendel brought on Liam Boyce for Ollie Bozanic at the start of the second half. Roared on by their supporters, Hearts launched into attack and the second half was only four minutes old when their team drew parity. Naismith's low cross into the Motherwell penalty box was fired home by Conor Washington and it was 1-1.

It

was mostly Hearts in the second half, but it has to be said they were wasteful with

the chances that came their way. Jamie Walker came close as did Liam Boyce and

one could sense the home side were letting their anxiety to take the lead

affect their decision making.

The

visitors time-wasting tactics appeared to indicate they would be happy to leave Gorgie with a point, but they nearly stole all three when Bobby Zlamal saved brilliantly from Hylton.

At the death Steven Naismith couldn't connect with Washington's cross and a golden chance to win the game was gone. A draw was hugely disappointing given results elsewhere.



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Credit: Ian Jacobs

Daniel

Stendel couldn't mask his disappointment after the game. He told the official Hearts website:

"We

wanted to win but this is the result. Motherwell showed they have had a really good season. When we went 1-0 down, it was more an own goal than a goal from Motherwell.

"After

1-1 I thought we could change the result, but we wanted it too much.

"We

did not really play with patience when we had the chance to play ahead.

“They had some chances, we had two big chances, but when you see the other results one point is not enough.

“I said to the players I want us to play more. I think we would get more chances then, but I understand I am not on the pitch.

A huge game now awaits Hearts on Wednesday. They travel to Paisley to play the team immediately above them in the league table. Victory against St Mirren will take them level on points with the Buddies. Defeat will open a six-point gap at the foot of the table – and may well mean the Maroons will be visiting the likes of Arbroath, Alloa and Dunfermline next season...

**Hearts:** Zlamal, Smith, Bozanic (Boyce, 46'), Clare (Walker, 28'), Washington, Naismith, Damour, Halkett, Moore (Meshino, 79'), Dikamona, Hickey.

**Motherwell:** Gillespie, Tait, Grimshaw, Hartley, Campbell (Maguire, 18'), Long, Hylton, Aarons, Polworth (Turnbull, 73'), Gallagher, O'Hara.

**Referee:** Don Robertson

**Attendance:** 17,339

**Top man:** Conor Washington

Photos: Ian Jacobs