

# Ministers give approval for Premiership games to go ahead from August

After weeks of uncertainty, the Scottish Government has finally confirmed that competitive professional football matches will be permitted in Scotland behind closed doors meaning unless there is another spike in the COVID-19 virus, Hibs will face Kilmarnock at Easter Road on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August.

Ministers yesterday approved plans to ensure suitable public health and safety measures are in place, so long as Scotland continues to suppress the COVID-19 virus.

The approval only relates to the Scottish Premiership which is the only domestic league due to return in August, after Championship, League One and League Two clubs voted to resume in October.



Ladbroke's Scottish Premiership – Heart of Midlothian v Hibernian.

Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

26/12/2019.

Pic shows: Hibs' winger, Martin Boyle, goes for his hat trick as Hearts go down 0-2 to Hibernian in the Ladbroke's Scottish Premiership, Edinburgh Boxing Day derby at Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

Professional football clubs will also be able to participate

in appropriate closed-doors training matches with immediate effect and this allows Jack Ross's men to face St Mirren at the club's training centre tomorrow.

Minister for Sport Joe FitzPatrick said: "The Scottish Government appreciates the importance of football to many people in Scotland, and I share the enthusiasm of many in seeing our national game returning at elite level, albeit behind closed doors.

"That's only possible thanks to the national effort to continue to suppress this devastating virus, not to mention the work of the Scottish Government, public health authorities, and football governing bodies to come up with a viable and safe solution for football to return.

"Given the nature of the virus there is not an imminent prospect of fans being allowed back into stadiums, but we will continue to review this situation in the coming months. I am sure everyone will appreciate that this will only be able to happen when it is safe to do so. In the meantime I welcome the progress that football clubs can get back on the pitch, behind closed doors."