

# Hibs have to settle for share of points despite dominating in Dingwall

Hibs had to settle for a share of the points despite dominating the majority of the game against Ross County at the Global Energy Stadium in Dingwall this afternoon.

Head Coach Jack Ross made nine changes to the starting XI that beat Forfar Athletic at Station Park in midweek with only Kyle Magennis and Christian Doidge retaining their places in the side.



The five internationals, Ofir Marciano, Paul McGinn, Paul Hanlon, Ryan Porteous and Alex Gogic returned to action along with Lewis Stevenson, Joe Newell, Martin Boyle and Kevin Nisbet.

Josh Doig is still self-isolating after being part of the Under-19 squad that faced England when the news broke that manager Billy Stark had tested positive for coronavirus.

Ross County boss Stuart Kettlewell was without teenage left-back Josh Reid who was required to self-isolate like Doig. Two former Hibs' players Ross Laidlaw and Oli Shaw had to be content with a place on the bench.

Hibs started brightly and in the fourth minute Boyle broke clear but Regan Charles-Cook produced a superb tackle as he was about to shoot. From the resultant corner, the ball eventually fell to Magennis who curled a tremendous strike from 22-yards which rebounded off the post with keeper Ross Doohan stranded.

Moments later Newell set up Boyle who beat the offside trap but after drawing the keeper out he slid the ball inches wide of the post.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> minute Hanlon overlapped down the left wing and Nisbet managed to get on the end of his low cross but the striker's effort was cleared off the line.

It looked only a matter of time before Hibs scored but it was the Staggies who took control of midfield and enjoyed a sustained spell of pressure.

Hanlon did well to block a strike from Charlie Lakin then Michael Gardyne fired narrowly wide from the edge of the area.

Marciano did well to dribble round Gardyne after a slack pass from Newell.

In the 34<sup>th</sup> minute Ross Stewart played a one-two with Harry Paton but his shot from an acute angle went wide of the far post.

Lakin did well to pounce on a through ball but McGinn did well to prevent the cross as County looked the more likely team to score.

Lakin then tried an ambitious long-range effort which Marciano

gathered as the second attempt.

Joe Newell was booked for a late challenge on Lakin then just before the break Nisbet did well to create a chance but the ball bounced awkwardly and his shot flew well over the bar.

In the 51<sup>st</sup> minute Boyle set up Nisbet but Charles-Cook managed to block his shot.

Stevie Mallan replaced Magennis on 63 minutes then the substitute set up Doidge inside the area. Doohan did well to block Doidge's close range effort and the ball fell to Nisbet who fired a powerful volley goalwards but the keeper managed to save the strike.

Nisbet then found Doidge inside the area and the Welshman slid the ball into the path of Mallan but his shot was saved by Doohan who palmed the ball into the path of Stevenson who fired high over the bar.

With 12-minutes remaining County were reduced to 10-men when Connor Randall hauled back Boyle on the half-way line and from then on Hibs threw everything into attack to try and secure a winner.

Boyle cut in from the right and found Hanlon but his through ball just evaded Nisbet.

Nisbet then broke clear and Mallan in support was tripped on the edge of the box but referee Nick Walsh didn't see the infringement.

Jamie Gullan replaced Stevenson then Ross Stewart was lucky not to have been shown a red card for a vicious challenge on the youngster which earned him a booking.

At the other side of the pitch Charles-Cook chopped down McGinn and from the resultant free-kick Doidge headed just over.

In time added on McGinn's cross found Hanlon but once again the keeper was on hand to block the skipper's downward header.

In the last minute Porteous was cynically tripped on the edge of the area to prevent him getting inside the box but once again the referee was looking elsewhere and the game finished goalless.

Ross County: Doohan, Randall, Gardyne, Vigurs, Watson, Jacovitti, Charles-Cook, Lakin, Paton, Donaldson, Stewart. Subs: Laidlaw, Tremarco, Shaw, McKay, O'Connor, Grivosti, Hylton, Kelly, Tillson.

Hibs: Marciano, McGinn, Stevenson, Hanlon, Porteous, Gogic, Newell, Magennis, Boyle, Doidge, Nisbet. Subs Barnes, Gray, McGregor, Mackie, S. McGinn, Hallberg, Mallan, Shanley, Gullan.

Referee Nick Walsh