

Jack Ross 'acutely aware' of high the stakes are tomorrow

Hibs' Head Coach Jack Ross is 'acutely aware' of how high the stakes are when his players face Hearts at Hampden tomorrow in the William Hill Scottish Cup.

The fact that Hibs have had so many important league games recently has allowed him and his players to focus on other things in the run up has been a bonus and he is now determined to secure a place on the Christmas final against either Celtic or Aberdeen.



Betfred Cup – Hibernian v Brora Rangers,.
Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.
07/10/2020.

Hibs play host to Highland League side, Brora Rangers in the Betfred Cup at Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh.

Pic shows:

Credit: Ian Jacobs

Speaking at the pre-match press conference yesterday, Ross said: "Playing in so many important league games prior to this has meant that it's not been a distraction and it's been quite easy for us to focus on other matches but now it's imminent we are acutely aware of how high the stakes are for us.

"We entered this tournament in January wanting to win it and we know that if we win on Saturday we take ourselves one step closer to doing it.

"(Being an Edinburgh derby) It adds to the intensity of the

match slightly but it's still a semi-final and when you get to that stage of any competition there is an intensity about the match but for us the most important thing is to reach the final and that's the be all and end all for us irrespective of who the opponent is.

"We very much understand the importance of winning this fixture (Edinburgh derby) at any time but being the semi-final there's a greater focus on winning the game to get us to the final and another step closer to winning the cup."

Ross previously worked as a coach with Hearts whilst Robbie Neilson enjoyed his first spell at the club when he left for MK Dons and he knows his opponent well.

Neilson returned to Hearts in the summer after guiding Dundee United to promotion and has started his second period at the club with a 100% record in the Championship and Betfred Cup and Ross is full of praise for what he has achieved so far.

He continued: "Robbie (Neilson) has recruited well. He very much understands what it takes to win the Championship which he has done on previous occasions with different clubs and he has recruited with that in mind.

"The thing for us is that we are coming up against an opponent which will be akin to what we face on a weekly basis so that in some ways is good for us. There will be no surprise element to the quality of the opposition we will face. That's been the standard we have faced in our league fixtures and we have performed well against that calibre of opposition.

"They operate in a different league at the moment and are playing in the Championship with the goal to winning that and return to the Premiership but what they have in the squad is players who have already played in the Premiership in Scotland and he has recruited ones that are good enough to play at that level as well.

“The fact that Hearts have played league games has allowed us to see them in person and that allows us to build a pattern of selection. We have more than enough information for us to work through. Our preparation has been OK in that respect. I think the group have grown in belief and stature in each passing week. We felt that our preparation for the season went well. We have that understanding how to win games in different ways and it’s gathered momentum in each passing week.”

“The points return we have to date is hugely encouraging and I do feel as if I have a group of players who are in the best possible frame of mind. I think they feel good about themselves and they have an understanding about why they have been so good this season.

“They have shown that again in their preparation this week and are excited about Saturday’s game. That’s the really good thing about it. There is a determination

“We will have a couple missing and a couple back and will see what tomorrow brings as well and that’s as much as I am going to reveal right now.”