

Leigh Griffiths returns to top-flight football with a hugely valuable goal

Former Hibs' striker Leigh Griffiths returned to top-flight football with a goal to help Celtic secure a valuable three points against St Johnstone in Perth this afternoon.

This was Griffiths' first appearance since scoring a hat-trick against St Mirren in March and he started the game on the bench.



Leigh Griffiths whilst playing for Hibs
The 29-year-old was criticised by Neil Lennon in the summer for failing to come back in match condition following the Covid-19 break and has not started this season.

He was left out of Celtic's pre-season trip to France and subsequently picked up a calf injury that has kept him out of action ever since.

After last week's tremendous performance and victory over Hibs at Parkhead, Celtic looked lacklustre particularly in the first-half and Griffiths replaced new signing David Turnbull with 14-minutes remaining.

He was quickly in action and an acrobatic strike flew well wide then in the last minute the Edinburgh born striker headed home a cross from Hatem Elhamed.

Incredibly the Hoops added a second in time added on through

Patryk Klimala.

Celtic manager Neil Lennon hugged the striker as the player as he was leaving the field then praised the contribution of substitutes Griffiths and Scott Brown. He told BBC Radio Scotland: "I think the subs gave his more urgency. "I think our first half was not good enough, the second was better.

"It is evident Scott Brown's influence on the team. You can't dress up any kind of stats what he brings. "We have been waiting and waiting for Griffiths and he responded today. The squad won today."

Griffiths said: He said: "Listen it's not just about me, it's about the team getting the three points.

"We knew St Johnstone would be stuffy and we just had to keep working away and try and break them down and fortunately for us we got two in the last couple of minutes.

"It's frustrating sitting on the bench watching but we know what these types of games are going to be like. St Johnstone sit in a low block, are hard to break down and try and hit us on the counter. We had to be patient.

"It's about us keeping going. The game is 90 minutes long so it's just about taking a chance as quickly as we can and unfortunately it didn't come until the 90th minute but two goals again, a clean sheet and a win

"I will keep working hard and need to keep my fitness up. I'm delighted to be back involved and get minutes on the pitch again.

"We have another couple of weeks before the big game so hopefully the fitness levels will improve in time.

"The manager has a difficult decision because Albion has been on fire, Patryk has come on and scored. There are four good strikers competing for two places but that's something you

enjoy.”