

Hearts top Championship with win at Morton

Greenock Morton 0-2 Hearts

Hearts returned to winning ways with a goal in each half from Jamie Walker, enough to see the Gorgie outfit run out winners against Greenock Morton.

With Dunfermline and Raith Rovers drawing in the Fife derby in Kirkcaldy, the result meant the Jambos hit the Championship summit after six rounds of fixtures.

There was pressure on Hearts to deliver ahead of their first competitive visit to Cappielow in 33 years following last weekend's [embarrassing League Cup defeat to Alloa](#). Hearts' boss Robbie Neilson shuffled his pack with Halkett, Irving and Wighton coming in for Popescu, Haring and Boyce. The dropping of main striker Liam Boyce to the bench was notable after a misfiring last few games.

As the Jam Tarts will find for most games this season, their opponents sat deep and packed players behind the ball. Whilst the boys in maroon looked a little clueless in how to respond to such tactics last weekend, on Scotland's west coast they

managed to be more imaginative and moved the ball with energy and more swiftly thanks, in part, to the inclusion of Andy Irving in the starting XI.

Hearts dominated possession and territory but it was the home side that had the first opportunity of the game when Sean McGinty lashed across Craig Gordon's goal just past the far post after being set up by former Jambo, Robbie Muirhead, on 19 minutes. Just 120 seconds later however, Hearts should have taken the lead when Jamie Walker's snap shot from 10 yards was too close to Aidan McAdam in the Morton goal. However, he did have the ball in the net on 35 minutes when his piledriven shot in to the ground bounced in to the far corner of the net.

Hearts could have gone in to the break two to the good, but McAdam pulled off a terrific save from Olly Lee's poked effort to tip the ball on to the bar. Hearts found themselves cruising early in the second half when Walker, thanks to a cracking Irving pass, cut in from the left to slot nicely into the far corner of the net just three minutes after the restart. It was perfect timing for the JTs and clearly deflated the home side who were looking for something to spark them in to life for the second period.

As the clock ticked on there wasn't much sign of any more goals, but the victory and a clean sheet were more than welcome for the Jambos who have had questions asked of them recently after the defeat in Alloa and [away to Dunfermline in the league](#). It's the age old cliché, but in a season shortened by the current pandemic restrictions, Hearts need to go to places like Morton and win in order to bounce back to the Premiership on the first time of asking.

They did that convincingly and with promise that they can alter their playing style from the rather rigid format on show so far this season. They move on to next weekend with the visit of Allan Jonhston's Queen of the South to Tynecastle on Saturday afternoon.

Greenock Morton: McAdams, Fjørtoft, McLean (Salkeld, 60), McGinty, McPake, Jacobs, McAlister, Omar, Strapp, Muirhead (Nesbitt, 78), MacIver (Oliver, 75) Unused subs: Millar, Orsi, Lyon, Colville

Hearts: Gordon, Smith, Halkett, Berra, Kingsley, Walker, Irving (Haring, 76), Lee, Halliday, Naismith, Wighton (Roberts, 78) Unused subs: White, Boyce, Stewart, Popescu, Henderson

Referee: Greg Aitken