

Josh Doig believes watching Lewis Stevenson and Sean Mackie has improved his game

Hibs' youngster Josh Doig believes that he has improved his game by watching Lewis Stevenson and Sean Mackie after being rested following an impressive start to the season.

Doig was selected for the Boxing Day clash with Rangers and his performance won plaudits despite the narrow defeat, particularly as he faced on-form James Tavenier.





Speaking at the pre-match press conference ahead of tonight's visit of Ross County, Doig said: "Playing at Ibrox against the players I played against was a big occasion and you do get a few butterflies in your stomach before the game but once you are on the pitch you just play the game. I loved every second.

"I like to think I have got a wee bit of pace. I thought I would take a touch past him (Tavernier) and see what happens. I was fortunate to get past him but it's the final ball. When you play against Rangers you are not going to get many chances against them so when you do get opportunities you need to have that final ball, that killer pass.

"But it's good to know, one of the better players in the league right now, I can take him on and kind of keep him out the game a wee bit, so that was a big confidence boost for myself.

"Being out the team for a while has given me a bit of a break and a bit of a rest and I've been able to watch Lewi (Stevenson) and Sean Mackie as well and take a bit of their game into mine.

"It gave me a bit of a breather but it was good to be back at Ibrox and good to know the gaffer has faith in me to chuck me back in for such a big game and on such a big occasion. I was really pleased.

"I thought I had done well for being out for so long but obviously there are a few things to clean up on, like final ball and just a few tidy things, but that's something I can work on.

"The gaffer spoke to me a few weeks ago about it, sometimes you need to look back and be proud at what you have done.

"Coming in as an 18-year-old is a big thing. I took it well, I took a wee bit of a dip in confidence but I feel better in training I am building my confidence back up and I'm feeling good."

Doig hopes to start tonight against Ross County and he is aware that he will have to keep up his form to retain his place in the team.

He continued: "We know where Ross County are but we can't let that alter our performance or our effort. We know we have to win and treat it like every other game and get that three points.

"We just need to take it as it comes, give 100% effort and do the right things at home like rest.

The teenager came through the youth ranks after a successful loan spell at Queens Park which was cut short due to the pandemic.

He continued: "At the start of the year I was playing 18s and coming back from a back injury. (Sporting director) Graeme Mathie took me in and said 'I think the best thing for you is to go out on loan'. And I loved every minute at Queen's Park. Playing against men helped me so much and it kicked me on.

"I only got to play six or seven games for Queens Park because of Covid but I loved every second of playing at Hampden, it's an experience that not many get.

"Over lockdown it was hard to keep yourself fit and active and keep that enthusiasm up but I felt like I kept myself in good shape, watched what I was eating and went on runs.

"The hardest part was trying to keep playing football but I was in decent enough shape so when I came back I was ready to go and I felt I fitted in with the first team and was ready to push on.

"I'm hoping for a full season with none of this nonsense in 2021 but it is what it is. It's been weird with no fans and big crowds but I hadn't experienced that so it's nothing different for me, playing reserve level last year so I imagine when fans get back in it will be a surprise for myself."