

Hibs' Betfred Cup dreams end with Hampden nightmare

Hibs' Betfred Cup dreams ended with a comprehensive defeat to St Johnstone at Hampden Park tonight.

Head Coach Jack Ross made two changes to the starting XI that beat Kilmarnock last Saturday with Ofir Marciano replacing Matt Macey and new signing Chris Cadden taking over from Melker Hallberg.







Fans' favourite Scott Allan returned to the bench along with Kyle Magennis but Joe Newell and Stevie Mallan did not make the squad.

Former Hibs' player David Wotherspoon started for the Saints

who had Callum Booth and Liam Craig on the bench.

St Johnstone started aggressively and both Jackson Irvine and Ryan Porteous suffered knock from reckless challenges in the opening two minutes.

Hibs quickly started to dominate possession and in the 12th minute a Martin Boyle cross deflected off a defender and deceived Zander Clark but the ball floated inches wide of the post.

Moments later a Boyle corner found Paul Hanlon but his acrobatic effort was pushed away by Clark into the path of Alex Gogic. The Cypriot international sent a low cross into the area which fell to Jamie Murphy eight yards out. Murphy's side footed effort was saved by the heel of Clark then he tried to dink the ball over the keeper but overhit his effort and it rebounded off the bar and was cleared.

In the 25th minute a Boyle cross was flicked on by Irvine but once again the ball flew agonisingly wide of the post.

At the other end Crain Conway sent a long ball into the Hibs area which found Shaun Rooney in space at the back post but he sliced his effort and the danger was cleared.

Hanlon then sent a cross into the area and Irvine's header struck the junction of the post and bar.

Hibs looked to be in total control however fell behind in the 34th minute when Wotherspoon's corner was headed into the net by Jason Kerr.

Hibs fought back and enjoyed a sustained spell of pressure without testing the St Johnstone keeper.

Saints doubled their advantage just after the restart when Rooney's powerful header from Conway's free-kick flew past Marciano.

Ross made an immediate change with Christian Doidge replacing Cadden as Hibs switched to a 4-4-2 formation.

A Boyle corner was then cleared into the path of Irvine but his volley from the edge of the area flew wide.

Alex Gogic was next to try his luck from long range but was off target.

Murray Davidson was booked for a foul on Irvine then Chris Kane was shown a yellow card for a late challenge on Porteous.

Disaster struck for Hibs in the 61st minute when Conway made it 3-0 from close range after a superb low cross from Rooney.

Ross then replaced Murphy and Gogic with Allan and Magennis but it was the Saints who looked the more likely to score, keeping possession and hitting Hibs on the break.

Hibs resorted to long balls which were easily dealt with by the St Johnstone defenders and Callum Davidson's men deservedly qualified for the final.

Hibs now face champions elect Rangers at Easter Road on Wednesday night.

St Johnstone: Clark, Kerr, Rooney, Tanser, McCart, Gordon, McCann, Davidson, Conway, Wotherspoon, Kane. Subs: Parish, Brown, Booth, Bryson, Craig, May, Hendry, Melamed, O'Halloran.

Hibs: Marciano, P. McGinn, Hanlon, Porteous, Doig, Gogic, Irvine, Cadden, Boyle, Murphy, Nisbet. Subs: Macey, McGregor, Stevenson, Hallberg, Magennis, Allan, Wright, Gullan, Doidge

Referee Nick Walsh