

No need for Hibs to cash in on Nisbet and Porteous says Jack Ross

Jack Ross has insisted that Hibs do not need to cash in on highly rated youngsters Kevin Nisbet and Ryan Porteous following bids from two English Championship clubs.

Earlier this week Birmingham City reportedly offered £2 million for 13-goal striker Nisbet whilst Millwall bit over £1m for Porteous.





Photos by Ian Jacobs

When asked about the speculation at yesterday's pre-match press conference ahead of the visit to Tannadice Ross said: "The club has had some stronger interest over the last couple of days but as we are both trained this morning and will be in the squad for the game.

"As a manager you have to keep your best players in the squad

particularly as we have so much to play for but I accept we have to progress the club in an effective manner from an economic point of view.

“I think the bids were sensible and realistic enough for us to give them consideration. I don’t think they were disrespectful in any way. They reflected how well these players have done this season.

“There will always be a value that a club believes is the correct one for assets. I think they were enough to get people’s attention, which is not a bad starting point.

“I don’t see that changing over the next 24 hours, although I can’t say for certain. Right now they are very much part of my plans for Dundee United and Tuesday’s game with St Mirren, but I am sensible enough to know that can change quickly.

“Selfishly as a manager, you want to keep your best players, especially as we have so much to play for, but equally, I am broad-minded enough to accept we have to continue to progress the club.

“When I brought Kevin to the club and first started working with Ryan I explained to them that part of my job is to make them better and help progress their career. Hopefully they see this as another indicator they are going in the right direction with that and they are both comfortable with their own situations and how things might move forward.

“In fairness, Ron (Gordon) has been supportive of the fact we don’t need to sell. It helps me and I hope it gives comfort to supporters that the owner is in it for the longer term and is trying to build something over a period of time.

“There is always a right value to move the club forward, but if he doesn’t feel it is right, there is no need to do something. I think that’s a reflection on how well people have brought us through this period. It hasn’t been easy.

“Hopefully the fact we have already had such firm interest in Kevin justifies that judgement. A lot of work has gone on behind the scenes and in other areas to maximise our revenue streams.

“I think that has enabled them to hold a relatively strong position in terms of what they feel is the right value of the players. If we hadn’t done that, our position might have been weaker in terms of a bargaining point of view.

“If you were to speak to any manager they would say if they were going to lose important players they would like to do it earlier in the window rather than later. And with the window closing over the weekend it’s a little more challenging as well. Naturally, I want to keep my best players at the club.

“We have tried to put a plan in place should we lose any players and I think we have that ready. If nobody departs it’s more likely we wouldn’t do anything.

“The longer it goes, the higher the risk that you don’t get to complete your back-up plan and that is risky. So the earlier the better.”

Ross also addressed speculation regarding Stevie Mallan who was linked with a move to Turkey and promising left back Josh Doig who is on the radar of several top English sides.

He continued: “Stevie (Mallan) was someone that I didn’t necessarily want to lose from the squad. He’s been frustrated at the lack of game time and had the opportunity to finish the season over there but that fell down at the last minute for him. He’s back with us and was on the bench for Wednesday. There has been nothing further for Josh (Doig) which is pleasing for me. His progress this year has been brilliant.

“He’s a mainstay in our side at the moment but I’m sure that will come in the future.

“Joe Newell is back training. He trained yesterday and today

so for the first time this season we have no players in the treatment room."