

Sixty-years-ago tonight – Hibs 3 Barcelona 2

Sixty-years-ago tonight one of the most memorable games in the history of Scottish football took place at Easter Road and no-one who was there will ever forget the remarkable events.

The Inter Cities Fairs Cup was set up to promote international trade fairs and was originally established to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Swedish Football Federation.





In 1960 Hibs became the first Scottish club to compete in the tournament and were initially drawn against FC Lausanne of Switzerland but that game did not take place as FC Lausanne were in turmoil with almost every player handing in a transfer request, so in the circumstances Hibs were awarded the tie with a 'walkover.'

In the next round Hibs were drawn to play FC Barcelona and the first leg ended in an incredible 4-4 draw.

Before the second leg however, Hibernian faced Peebles Rovers in the Scottish Cup and progressed to the next round following a 15-1 victory which included NINE goals from Joe Baker.

Ahead of the return leg Hibs' wing half John Grant picked up an injury against Celtic at Parkhead and was replaced by inside left John Baxter. Baxter was replaced by Bobby Kinloch who hadn't featured in the team since mid-December.

The opening stages were disappointingly undistinguished, with the ball spending much time in the air until Sammy Baird took control of midfield and slowed the game down.

The Spaniards seemed more intent on keeping Baker quiet than demonstrating the skills they were capable of and the Hibs' centre forward was the victim of some robust challenges.

Baker, however, was not long denied his chance, for, with

tremendous encouragement from the crowd of about 50,000, he opened the scoring after 10 minutes.

Johnny MacLeod, was fouled just outside the penalty area and took the free kick himself. His perfect lob was headed into the net from nine yards by Baker, who out jumped Garay and directed the ball cleverly away from Medrano.

The Spaniards gradually began to make their presence known and Evaristo's fine run and shot, hit the side net, much to the relief of the Hibs defenders then Suarez's 20-yard free-kick struck the crossbar with Ronnie Simpson stranded.

The Spaniards won a series of corner kicks before they grabbed a deserved equaliser in the 28th minute after the Hibs' defenders were caught flat footed at a throw in and Martinez prodded the ball into the net from Evaristo's accurate cross.

Seven minutes later Hibs should have retaken the lead following a brilliant three man move involving Baird, Baker and Kinloch but the inside forward shot past the post with only the keeper to beat.

Two minutes from half-time, Koscis scored an opportunist goal after brilliantly controlling a pass from Evaristo before firing the ball past Simpson stunning the home fans.

The visitors looked calm and confident as they left the field at half time but that changed after the restart when Hibs piled on the pressure.

This caused the Barcelona defenders problems and in particular Gensana and Garay resorted to roughhouse tactics and both were warned by the referee after a succession of cynical fouls.

Twice Baker was barged off the ball inside the penalty area but on both occasions the referee awarded indirect free-kicks much to the bemusement and anger from the spectators.

Hibs continued to press forward and Kinloch almost got onto

the end of a Baker cross.

With 16-minutes remaining the equaliser arrived. Hibs won a corner on the left and Willie Ormond found Baird on the edge of the box. His header floated toward goal and Tommy Preston nipped in to head the ball past Medrano.

The Barcelona players looked nervous as Hibs continued to press forward then with six minutes remaining pandemonium broke loose when the German referee, Herr J Malka, awarded Hibs a penalty with the score at 2-2.

Johnny MacLeod was blatantly hacked down by Garay in the penalty area as he was about to collect a superb through ball from Baker.

To a man the Spaniards protested, chased the referee into the Hibs half of the field and back again to their own 18 yard line. He was pushed, tripped, kicked, and twice struck on the chest by gesticulating fists. The Hibs players wisely stood back and watched the mayhem taking place.

The police officers patrolling the track joined in to calm the Barcelona team whose officials also pled for order and eventually, some sort of order was restored and the match was restarted,

Bobby Kinloch who was Hibs' designated penalty taker calmly dispatched the ball into the net but as the players and fans celebrated the referee was once again abused by the visiting players and brutally knocked to the ground.

Once again the police intervened but the Spanish players fought with the officers as several fans invaded the pitch. The situation was in danger of getting out of hand before the police officers managed to restore order.

The remaining six minutes were farcical with the referee blowing for every perceived infringement as the Barcelona

players threw everyone into attack.

In the dying seconds the referee stayed on the half-way line near to the police officers then when he blew the final whistle he immediately ran down the tunnel and locked himself in the referees room.

A posse of Barcelona players chased him and attempted to kick open the door' leaving stud marks embedded in the wood.

Meanwhile the far side linesman was attacked from behind and punched to the ground as he was leaving the field.

The Hibs team that glorious night was : Simpson, Fraser, McClelland, Baxter, Easton, Baird, MacLeod, Preston, Baker, Kinloch, Ormond

Hibs met Roma in the semi-final, drawing 3-3 in Rome and 2-2 at Easter Road. Had the away goal rule been in existence at that time, Hibs would have become the first Scottish team to appear in a major European final. Instead after a coin toss, a play-off game took place in Rome and Hibs were eliminated.