

# **Hearts made a good start but have to back it up this weekend**

**After their defeat of Celtic last weekend Hearts are now looking to make it two wins from two in the Cinch Scottish Premiership with victory over St Mirren.**

Hearts have not won a league match in Paisley since 2010, although they did beat the Buddies on their own turf, when en route to Scottish Cup glory in 2012.

Hearts defender Stephen Kingsley insisted that Hearts' victory over Celtic means nothing if the Jambos don't back it up at St Mirren.

Kingsley said: "Everyone knows how great a start it was for us getting the win over Celtic, but it means nothing if we don't back it up. You are always going to raise your game when you play the Old Firm, but it's about going to places like St Mirren and asserting yourself on that game.

"It's about putting that effort, desire and hunger to get the result into this game. We have spoken about it the last few days, it doesn't matter who we are playing, we want to have the same performance we had and hopefully we can do that against St Mirren.

"The gaffer has been saying to us that there are areas we can do better in and how we can progress that into this game. It

will be totally different to the Celtic match, but we will be right up for it and ready to go.

“We go into this game on the back of a great result but if we don’t do the same again then it is going to be a real disappointment after such a great high.”

But Kingsley was also full of praise for today’s opposition. The Buddies drew 2-2 with newly promoted Dundee at Dens Park last weekend with key men Eamonn Brophy and Jamie McGrath both on the scoresheet.

He said: “It will be a tough game and they did well last season. They have a good manager in Jim Goodwin, but we are in high spirits after last week. We can’t get carried away though.

“It’s a different type of challenge but we are going into it with a positive mindset. We have looked at St Mirren and we know we need to be wary of them. We will make sure we are ready for all the different challenges that will come to us.”

Hearts welcomed over 5,000 fans to Tynecastle last weekend and although a minimum of 5,000 fans will be allowed into outdoor stadia from Monday, only 1,000 will be at St Mirren Park this afternoon, with no away fans in attendance.

Kingsley said: “The fans were sensational against Celtic, so it’s disappointing we won’t have them in Paisley, but we dealt with that last season.

“It will be a tough game and it is a different challenge for us. It’s something we have to face and overcome.

“Every week this season is going to be different in terms of the types of games and we have to take it as it comes. We worked on how we are going to break teams down at this level but it’s something we are ready for.”

The Jambos away form has been their Achilles heel for many

years now and they will need to drastically improve on the road if they want to occupy a top four spot come May next year.

“It’s a strange league this year,” Kingsley admitted.

“The competition outside the Old Firm is so healthy. St Johnstone did so well last year, as did St Mirren and you have the likes of Aberdeen and Hibs.

“It’s going to be so interesting and there is going to be no games that you are going to go into thinking you are guaranteed to win. That’s not the case. We have to be on it every week, but we have to try and push ourselves to be better every week.”

Towards the end of last season Hearts moved to a back three system as John Souttar returned from injury and having brought in left back Alex Cochrane from Brighton, Kingsley finds himself playing on the left of the three-man defence.

He said: “I have played centre half before, not regularly but I have done it. Left back is my preferred position but coming into the left of the back three, it is a bit of both really.

“You try and read the game and you use your brain more than anything else really. You need to try and get your positional sense right, but I have to defend first and foremost.

“If I can then join attacks and build from the back then that’s great. It’s a different challenge but it’s something the more I play it the more I will get used to it and hopefully I can get better and better.

“Last Saturday was difficult and we didn’t have much of the ball but hopefully the more we get into this shape we can dominate games.

“We defended for large spells on Saturday but it’s something we are comfortable with now but there are areas we can get

better at and hopefully we can do that in the next few weeks.”



Scottish Championship – Heart of Midlothian v Queen of the South.

Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

12/12/2020.

Hearts play host to Queen of the South in the Scottish Championship at Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh.

Pic shows: Queen of the South reserve team manager, Wullie Gibson, tackles Hearts' Stephen Kingsley.

Credit: Ian Jacobs