

Hibs 100th European game ends with defeat in Croatia

Hibs' 100th game in Europe ended with a disappointing 4-1 defeat to Rijeka in Croatia tonight.

Head Coach Jack Ross made two changes to the starting XI that beat Ross County on Sunday. McGregor replaced Paul Hanlon who suffered a head injury in the opening leg and Kevin Nisbet took over from Christian Doidge who picked up a knock in training.



Jack Ross . Credit: Ian Jacobs

Rijeka made five changes to their starting line-up.

Hibs took the field wearing all green and the game kick off in 27 degree heat.

The hosts had an early penalty claim when Issah Abass went down in the box under a challenge from stand in captain Paul McGinn but the referee waved away the appeals.

Joe Newell then gave away a free-kick in a dangerous position but the effort was blocked by the wall and cleared.

Domagoj Pavicic was shown a yellow card for simulation then Hibs mounted an attack when Jamie Murphy cut in from the left and found Nisbet in the box but the striker was robbed as he was about to pull the trigger.

McGregor did well to block a shot from Abass then Rijeka opened the scoring in the 35th minute when Pavicic took a cross from the left and side-footed the ball past Matt Macey from eight yards.

Hibs responded and the Rijeka keeper Andrej Prskalo did well to save from Murphy then Nisbet.

Rijeka almost made it 2-0 just before the break but Macey produced a superb save to deny Abass.

Hibs started the second half on the front foot and Nisbet set up Martin Boyle on the right but he overhit his cross. Newell was next to try his luck from distance but his curled effort went high and wide.

Then in the 55th minute Kyle Magennis capitalised on a mistake in the Rijeka defence and fired a superb angled drive into the bottom right hand corner of the net to level the score.

Moments later Nisbet turned his marker but his shot was deflected for a corner as Hibs continued to press forward.

Jake Doyle-Hayes then did well to win possession in midfield before finding Boyle who unleashed a powerful strike which the keeper did well to save.

Hibs kept up the pressure but the hosts looked dangerous on the break and Prince Ampen went close with a curled drive.

In the 65th minute McGregor was caught in possession and pulled back the striker who went to ground resulting in a red card for the veteran defender. The resulting free-kick appeared to go out for a goal-kick but the referee gave a corner which was to prove fatal for Hibs.

The corner was fired into the near post and Abass appeared to get a foot on the ball which ended up in the net.

Alex Gogic replaced Murphy with 20-minutes remaining but before he could touch the ball Hibs went 3-1 down when a cross from the right was knocked into his own net by McGinn.

Nisbet then had a chance but his shot from the edge of the

area was deflected over the bar.

Josh Campbell replaced Newell for the last five minutes but from then the hosts were content to manage the game to victory.

In time added on Denis Busnja scored a terrific solo goal to make the final score 4-1 and 5-2 on aggregate.

Rijeka: Prskalo; Tomecak, Galovic, Kresic, Smolcic; Pavicic, Cerin; Muric, Issah, Ampem; Obregon. Subs: Frigan, Braut, Merkulov, Galesic, Liber, Vukcevic, Lepinjica, Velkovski, Vuk, Mudrazija, Busnja, Joao Escoval.

Hibs: Macey; McGinn, Porteous, McGregor, Doig; Doyle-Hayes, Newell; Boyle, Magennis, Murphy; Nisbet. Subs: Dabrowski, Samson, Wright, Gogic, Stevenson, Mackay, Gullan, Campbell, Brydon.