

Women's Football: SWPL Cup roundup

Hibs, Hearts and Spartans women were all in SWPL Cup action yesterday with two teams recording wins.

An intriguing SWPL Cup group match at Oriam saw Hearts hosting a St Johnstone side who narrowly missed out on promotion to the Premier League last season.

Early signs for the home side were good as a Holly Aitchison corner saw Lia Tweedie's header held by Saints keeper Becky Cameron and on four minutes, Claire Delworth's corner picked out Georgia Hunter but the header went wide.

On eight minutes, a long Delworth free kick was mishandled by Cameron who was glad to see the ball slip behind, but from the resultant corner, Delworth's delivery was allowed to bounce inside the goal area by a very passive Saints defence and Tweedie was there to force a header home at the back post and give the home side a perfect start.

Hearts continued to be the dominant side and Aimee Anderson's cut back from the goal line brought out a good save from keeper Cameron and she was called into action again when another Delworth free kick saw the ball come off the woodwork in a back post melee before the keeper made the save.

Despite Hearts dominating possession, Saints almost equalised after 33 minutes when Tegan Browning gave the ball away in midfield and Morgan Steedman strode forward before unleashing a fierce 18-yard low drive which Charlotte Parker-Smith held

well low to her right. Right on half time the same players faced off as, from a Becky McGowan cutback, Steedman's 10-yard drive was touched onto the post and behind by Parker-Smith.

Tweedie had the ball in the net again after 48 minutes from a Claire Williamson cross but the flag was up as Hearts again began brightly and from another corner, Monica Forsyth smacked a shot over the Saints bar from 16 yards. Hearts were finding it difficult to get through a determined Saints rearguard although they went close when a Delworth free kick from out wide came back off the junction of post and bar with keeper Cameron nowhere.

Ten minutes from time, another Forsyth effort from around 22 yards was confidently handled by Cameron and despite some late Saints pressure, Hearts deservedly held on to get their new season off to winning start.

Hibs eased passed Kilmarnock at Volunteer Park in Armadale by winning 4-0.

A brace from Amy Gallagher followed by goals from Colette Cavanagh and Alex Coyle scoring on her debut ensured it was a good day at the office for the Easter Road side.

Spartans were held to a 2-2 draw at Ainslie Park against Hamilton Academical.