

Neilson confirms Craig Gordon contract negotiations are underway

Like many other Scottish teams, Hearts have struggled away from home against the Old Firm, Robbie Neilson was actually the last Hearts manager to take three points at Ibrox.

Osman Sow's late winner allowed Hearts to start their Championship winning campaign with victory at Ibrox seven years ago.

Hearts currently sit second in the table and know that victory at Ibrox would see them leapfrog the Gers into top spot.

The Hearts boss acknowledged the magnitude of the fixture but admitted it's just another chance to claim three points.

Neilson said: "It's a huge game for us.

"We've started the season really well, both clubs have. It's a chance for us to go there and see where we are at, but in the grand scheme of the whole season, it's another game and another chance to win three points.

"It's been a long time since Hearts have won there, 2014 was the last time, so we know it'll be difficult, but we're in good form now, but we know we need to play the best game we can play and have a bit of luck on the day.

"We had a good team back in 2014, similar to the team now, a lot of young hungry guys and a few experienced ones. They're looking forward to the game and that's a big difference from teams I've been involved in in the past going through to Glasgow.

"We're hoping to go there and win the game. What will be will be on the day. When you go to Glasgow, you know it's going to be difficult, so we want to come out the game, firstly having put on a good performance and secondly, having taken some points from the game."

In previous years, many Hearts fans would argue that their side has lost in Glasgow before they've even turned off the M8.

It's different this season though and Neilson wants his side to continue playing the way they have been, a method which sees them the only remaining unbeaten side in the top-flight.

Neilson said: "If you go to Ibrox on the front foot, then you give yourself a chance.

"We're planning to go there and play the way we always play. The teams been doing well, so we go there and give it a shot.

"It's easier said than done. To go there and say we're going to go and do this and that, but then you play against 11 internationalists, who are very good players and there's 52,000 fans there as well, so we have a plan, but it's now about going there and implementing it.

"People talk about them not hitting form, but they're still sitting top of the league, so we understand we're going there as underdogs, but we feel if we can bring our game then we'll give ourselves a chance."

After another successful international break with Scotland, Craig Gordon returned to the Hearts camp in high spirits and

Robbie Neilson confirmed contract negotiations with the Hearts skipper are underway.

“Craig trained today, he’s in good spirits, two good performances and results, so he’s ready to go. Hopefully he can continue that form with us.

“We’re keen to get Craig tied down, he’s got a clause in his contract and we’re trying to move forward with that, but I don’t see it being too much of an issue. He’s very settled here; he’s enjoying it and his family stay just around the corner.

“As long as Craig wants to play, he’ll be here hopefully. He turns 39 in December, and he’s still fit as a fiddle, so whatever he wants to do we’re happy to facilitate.

“With his age, his family situation and the fact he wants to get into coaching, I think this is the perfect place for him. We knew he’d come in as number one, so it all just fell into place.”

With the removal of Covid-19 red zones in Scottish stadiums, Hearts were granted an away allocation for the match, Neilson is hoping to give the travelling support an enjoyable Saturday night.

The Hearts boss added that John Souttar has trained with the squad all week and will be in contention for tomorrow’s match after missing the previous two with injury.

“It’s brilliant. We’ve got 900 fans going, so they’ll be making some noise that’s for sure, so hopefully we can keep them happy and have a good Saturday night.

“John has trained all week, so he’ll be ready for the weekend.”



Scottish Championship – Heart of Midlothian v Dundee.

Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

06/3/2021

Hearts play host to Dundee in the Scottish Championship at Tynecastle Park, Edinburgh.

Pic shows: Hearts' manager, Robbie Neilson, shades his eyes from the sun during the first half.

Credit: Ian Jacobs