

SWPL Cup Roundup – both Edinburgh sides crash out at semi-final stage

In a double header at Forthbank Stadium on Sunday Spartans and Hibernian both lost to Glasgow sides, results which mean that both teams will miss out on a place in this season's SWPL Cup final.

Both sides will rue missed chances and lapses in concentration, as the SWPL Cup final is without an Edinburgh side for the first time since 2006.

The first match was between Spartans and Glasgow City. Glasgow City put nine past Spartans when they met earlier this season in the league, and it felt like it could've been a repeat of that fixture early on today, as City missed from point blank range inside of the first minute. But Spartans grew into the game and went toe-to-toe with one of Scottish women's football's three professional sides in the first half. While City had the lion's share of possession, Spartans matched their energy and put them under real pressure on the break. Two chances fell to Tegan Reynolds during a sustained spell of Spartans pressure, but both were saved by City keeper Lee

Alexander. The half-time score was 0-0 and Spartans would have felt that their level of performance merited a goal.

Glasgow City showed their class in the second half though, piling on the pressure as the crowd rallied their team on, urging them to shoot at every opportunity. City's Priscilla Chinchilla, surely one of the best technical footballers in all of Scotland, had been banging on the door for a while, getting Louise Mason booked in the first-half. She made it 1-0 in the 60th minute, slotting the ball past Spartans' Rachel Harrison. Spartans appeared to have lost concentration as Glasgow City doubled their lead through Hayley Lauder's sliding shot, barely a minute after scoring their first.

City's third, and Costa Rican international Chinchilla's second, of the game was an exquisite diving volley, surely the best goal of the tournament so far. The 3-0 scoreline perhaps flattered City, but shows how a few lapses of concentration and some star quality can turn a game on its head.

Hibs got off to a flying start against Celtic Women, as Scotland international Rachel Boyle's cracking long range strike rifled past Kelly Clark to take the lead in the 12th minute. Chances fell to both sides throughout the first-half, but Dean Gibson's side were unquestionably the superior side on the stroke of half time. Celtic responded by making two half-time substitutions to try and tilt the game in their favour in the second half.

And tilt the game they did – Celtic equalised straight from the whistle at the start of the second half through talented young forward Jacynta. Just like Spartans did a few hours earlier, Hibs didn't seem prepared from kick-off and sloppily allowed their opposition back into the game. Jacynta slotted the ball past Gabby English and it was 1-1, undoing all of Hibs dominant work in the first half. Charlie Wellings and Jacynta lit up the second-half, combining well with one another and fashioning chances for their side to take the

lead.

In the 79th minute Celtic scored the second and final goal of the game, taking the lead for the first time through Charlie Wellings – a player who Hibs own Colette Cavanagh pipped to the player of the month award. Wellings' shot struck the crossbar and bounced over the line, leaving Hibs with little over ten minutes to keep their cup hopes alive.

Hibernian lost out in the end, bringing their run of four successive SWPL Cups to an end. Dean Gibson's side will be disappointed in their failure to sustain the level of performance they displayed in the first half, as they have struggled against three professional sides in the SWPL this season.



11th April 2021 Edinburgh – Hibs Rachel Boyle breaks away from the Motherwell midfielder during the SWF1 game between Hibs and Motherwell at Ainslie Park in Edinburgh on Sunday April 11, 2021.

The result was Hibs 3-2 Motherwell.

*** NOT FOR SYNDICATION ***