

Final whistle greeted with chorus of boos from Hibs fans following defeat to Livingston at Easter Road

The Hibs' players were booed off the pitch for the second home game in succession after suffering a 3-2 defeat to Livingston at Easter Road yesterday.

At least on the last occasion they eventually won the game against Cove Rangers but yesterday the visitors were better organised and were more up for the game with former Hibs' player Stephane Omeonga who ironically is from Belgium, the best played on the pitch.











Photos Ian Jacobs

Hibs boss Shaun Maloney's pure football philosophy playing out from the back was lauded by the fans when he arrived but many now believe that the players he has at his disposal are not comfortable with his system.

To be fair to Hibs though, they had to contend with one of the poorest refereeing performances seen at the stadium in some time.

Maloney made four changes to the side that drew 0-0 with Motherwell during the week.

Rocky Bushiri, Josh Doig, Joe Newell and Chris Mueller all dropped to the bench while Ryan Porteous was back after being suspended and straight into the starting XI. New signing Demetri Mitchell and Ewan Henderson made their first league starts for Hibs and Christian Doidge was also back in the starting line-up.







Photos Ian Jacobs

Within 30-seconds Joe Nouble caught Porteous with a bad tackle and had referee Grant Irvine sent the Livingston striker off if could not have complained. Instead no punishment was dished out and the same thing happened moments later setting the tone for the afternoon.

Hibs almost took the lead in the 3rd minute when Henderson's superb cross found Doidge but his header came back off the post.

From the resultant corner from Henderson Max Stryjek punched the ball to Cadden on the edge of the box and from his cross Mitchell fired the ball into the net from an acute angle.

In the next passage of play Porteous's header back to Matt Macey was short but the keeper managed to get to the ball before Odin Bailey and pushed it behind for a corner.

Unbelievably the referee pointed to the spot but eventually took advice from his assistant and reversed his decision but started the game with a drop ball.

The visitors equalised in the 17th minute when Macey came to collect a free kick floated into the box, collided with Paul McGinn and Obileye managed to head the ball into the empty net.

Hibs should have had a penalty when Mitchell was bundled over in the box but the referee waved play on demonstrating that he would rather be wrong than influenced by the outraged home support.

McGinn then went down on the half-way line making him a major doubt for Tuesday night and was replaced by Rocky Bushiri then Hibs took the lead with a freak goal after the keeper misjudged a Cadden cross from the right.

Livingston then dominated the second-half and equalised when the Hibs defence were unable to deal with a long throw and Nouble's flick on was headed in by Jack Fitzwater from close range.

Cadden twice cleared from the line as the Lions pressed forward.

They eventually took the lead for the first time when Josh Campbell was disposed by Omeonga and from his through ball, Adam Forrest clinically finished by curling an angled effort beyond Macey.

Maloney brought on Chris Mueller, Jamie Murphy, James Scott and Josh Doig to try and influence proceedings and Kevin Nisbet almost grabbed an equalised in the 75th minute but Stryjek blocked his shot.

Nisbet and Bushiri both had late chances but David Martindale's side took the points back along the M8.

After the final whistle Maloney told BBC Sportsound: "Very disappointed, to lose the match in the way we did, two set plays and a counter-attack, is very disappointing.

"Very much a game of us being very good in the first half and then poor in the second, we lost control.

"In fairness, they were dangerous from set-plays but we knew that and we didn't deal with that today. That's the difference between the two teams."

Livingston manager David Martindale said: "It was a good win, we didn't start very well, in the first 15 minutes we struggled to get to grips with their shape, to be honest, and then they get an early goal.

"Overall we were well worth our three points today, to be honest. We played well on the counter and looked very, very

comfortable. In attack, we were decent and always looked offensive in our play.”

Hibs: Macey, McGinn, Porteous, Stevenson, Cadden, Doyle-Hayes, Campbell, Henderson, Mitchell, Doidge, Nisbet. Subs: Dabrowski, Doig, Wright, Newell, Mueller, Murphy, Allan, Scott, Bushiri.

Livingston: Stryjek, Devlin, Fitzwater, Obileye, Longridge, Holt, Omeonga, Pittman, Bailey, Forrest, Nouble. Subs: Maley, Boyes, Lewis, McMillan, Penrice, Montaña, Shinnie, Chukwuemeka, Anderson.

Referee: Grant Irvine.

Attendance: 15,480.