

All square following pulsating Edinburgh derby

A frenetic Edinburgh derby ended with honours even at Easter Road last-night.

Both sides had chances to win the game but after 95-minutes of non-stop end to end action a draw was probably a fair result.









Photos Ian Jacobs

Shaun Maloney made five changes to his starting line-up after Saturday's defeat to Livingston and Kevin Dabrowski made his competitive debut in goals to replace the injured Matt Macey.

Hearts should have taken an early lead when Beni Baningime's pass found Cameron Devlin inside the box but he lacked the necessary composure and his effort flew high and wide.

In the 17th minute Ryan Porteous got on the end of a Joe Newell free-kick and in the crowded six-yard box the ball entered the net via a Hearts' defender but the linesman's flag was raised.

On 17 minutes we had the ball in the back of the visitors' net when a Hearts player turned it in from close range after a spot of head tennis, however the celebrations were short-lived as Nisbet was flagged offside.

Chris Cadden then sent over a low cross that was headed wide by Christian Doidge under pressure from Toby Sibbick.

Devlin was lucky not to see a red card after a late challenge on Chris Mueller as tackles flew oin thick and fast.

Rocky Bushiri's header from Newell's corner looked goalbound but deflected off Ellis Simms.









Photos Ian Jacobs

At the other end Dabrowski did well to save from Liam Boyce and Simms headed the rebound over the bar.

Hearts had a penalty claim when captain for the night Lewis

Stevenson clashed with Simms in the box but referee Don Robertson was in the perfect position to see the incident and immediately waved away the appeals.

Robbie Neilson was shown a yellow card for his protests.

Devlin went close with an angled drive just before the break.

Demetri Mitchell replaced the injured Doig at half-time.

Dabrowski's confidence was growing and produced a fine save from Simms in the 51st minute then did the same moments later and for a third time after that.

Mitchell did well to dispossess Nathaniel Atkinson before releasing Kevin Nisbet but Sibbick's deflection to take all the sting out of his shot.

Hibs finished the stronger and substitute Ewan Henderson's shot was well saved by Craig Gordon.

There was a scare for Hibs near the end when Rocky's back pass forced Dabrowski into saving with his hands.

Hearts were awarded an indirect free kick and Atkinson's shot was blocked by the charging Lewis Stevenson's arm but once again Don Robertson was in the perfect position to decide no offence had been committed.

Hibs almost scored a late winner in time added on when Chris Cadden's cross was headed by Henderson into the path of Campbell but his first-time shot beat Gordon and was cleared off the line by Sibbik and the game ended in a draw.

After the final whistle Maloney told BBC Sportsound: "I loved it. I thought it was a great game. As it went on, it felt like we had more chances but the momentum swung both ways and that's what you expect in derbies.

"Kevin Dabrowski was incredible and he should really enjoy

tonight.

“I want the players to play as much as possible but you have to adapt and the pitch is not the easiest. It’s going to take time to implement what I’m asking them to do, but I’m super-proud of what they gave me.”

Neilson said: “The first one [penalty appeal] is a stonewaller. The second one, I can understand a wee bit. The referee said it struck his hand but he thought it was close to the body. I differ in that opinion.

“I think we need VAR. If we had it, we get two penalties. It is what it is, but there is still a responsibility to get key decisions right when it’s as blatant as that.”

Hibs: Dabrowski, Doig (Mitchell 46’), Porteous, Doidge (Henderson 79’), Newell (Campbell 68’), Mueller (Wright 59’), Nisbet, Stevenson, Doyle-Hayes, Cadden, Bushiri. Substitutes not used: Mitchell, Jasper, Allan, McGregor, Scott, Henderson.

Hearts: Gordon, Kingsley, Banningime, Boyce (Ginnelly 79’), Atkinson, Devlin (Haring 90’), Moore, Halliday (Cochrane 68’), McKay (Woodburn 68’), Simms, Sibbick. Substitutes not used: Stewart, Mceneff, Mackay-Steven, Henderson, Pollock.

Referee: Don Robertson.