

# **Can Hibs end Hampden derby hoodoo?**

**Hibs and Hearts fans will flock to  
Hampden this month for Scottish Cup  
semi-final.**

This will be the fourth meeting of the clubs at the National Stadium this century and no-one at Easter Road needs reminded that Hearts have taken the honours on the last three occasions.



Scottish Premiership – Hibernian v Livingston.  
Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.  
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Hibs play host to Livingston in the Scottish Premier League at Easter road, Edinburgh.

Pic shows: Hibs beat Livingston 2-1 thanks to a brace of first half goals from Kevin Nisbet and Martin Boyle.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

With Robbie Neilson's men all but guaranteed third place they go into the game as favourites but the Hibs players believe that they are turning a corner under new boss Shaun Maloney.

Influential defender Ryan Porteous has been a stalwart at the heart of the Hibs defence in the absence of Club captain Paul Hanlon and the centre-half has relished shouldering more responsibility both on and off the park.

He said: "We are in a good place defensively; I feel the structure of the team is really good. We are clearly trying to build something, and it is coming together.

"You can see the rewards in the last month with the clean sheets and our defensive performances.

"When you aren't on a good run of form everyone needs to shoulder the responsibility. I might not be the oldest in the squad, but I have played in a lot of games, a lot of big games for the Club.

"I feel like I've needed to take a bit more responsibility on the park and especially around the place as well. We have a good team and a young team too, so if I can pass on any experience to the younger boys and help lead them on and off the park I will try and do that.

"These are the games you want to play in. Two games against Hearts in a week – it is brilliant for the fans, its brilliant for the players and the city as well.

"At the moment, the mood is up, the spirit is up and we are all focused on reaching another final and finishing in fourth place."

Team mate Joe Newell has returned from injury and his record in both cup competitions since signing for Hibs has been remarkable, reaching at least the semi-finals of one of the cups in each of his three seasons, making it five in total so

far.

He did however feature the last time the teams met in front of an empty Hampden Park.

“I’ve been lucky since I’ve been here. I’ve been to Hampden in every cup competition. And with the fans there it should feel a bit extra special.

“The place will hopefully be rocking. That Hearts game feels a while ago now. The way that panned out, that was a shame.

“When the draw was made I just knew we’d get Hearts and to play them obviously the week after Tynecastle, it’s hopefully going to be a really good week.

“Do we owe Hearts one? Maybe. That was a good cup tie. Most of the games we have played against Hearts I have played in since I have been here have been quite tight, cagey affairs.

“Hopefully, with a sell-out crowd, the atmosphere will be good and it will go our way.”