

Hearts – Devlin says skipper's professionalism will calm derby nerves

Hearts midfielder, Cammy Devlin, has already tasted the Edinburgh Derby experience at Easter Road, but the Aussie insists that having a captain and a manager with plenty of experience in the fixture will help the new boys prepare.

Devlin played the full 90 minutes in the only derby match played at Easter Road last season, as the sides played out a goalless draw and explained that match was completely different to what he had experienced in the A-League.

"I remember walking out in that game, and it was really cool," said Devlin.

"I do just think of myself as such a normal person from Australia. You don't really get those atmospheres in a packed-out stadium in a derby.

"It was frustrating not to win because I want to win every game, but to see what it means to the fans gives it that extra bit of meaning for us.

"As a player, going back home nobody knows who you are. You are just some normal Aussie bloke. Over here, I still see myself as that, but if me and the rest of the Aussies are out

anywhere and you see the fans, they are not shy about telling you what this derby and Hearts as a whole means to them.

“They’ve grown up supporting them and going to the game with their Dad’s and their Dad’s where the same with their Dad’s, so they share the meaning of it and that for me is super cool to see.

“It opens your eyes to you that you are not just here to play a game, you are here to play because it means something to people. As players, we love that.”

Robbie Neilson is looking to achieve his first Easter Road victory as Hearts manager as he takes his players down to Leith on Sunday afternoon, but despite his poor record in EH7, Devlin explained he is delighted to have him in the camp.

The midfielder also heaped praise on his skipper, who he explains is able to keep him, and the rest of the players calm when the going gets tough.

“The skipper and the gaffer speak for themselves. They are so experienced. Seeing the way, they are around the changing room just settles everyone down. We all know the meaning of the fixture and how important it is, especially away from home.

“When you see Craig, he is so calm and then he pulls off a couple of worldie saves most games. That just settles all the new boys who look at him and the other senior boys to give us a bit of calmness.

“I think there is a clip last year when he saved a penalty against Aberdeen, and I ran to give him a hug and he had already thrown the ball over my head, and it nearly hit me in the head. I was just too excited, but he certainly straightens me out.

“We know in ourselves that we are a good enough team. We’ve got a couple of young guys, we’ve got some experienced players

and we've got debutants, but that pressure just gets turned to motivation. We just need to soak it in, do our stuff and hopefully get the win."