

Starman Boyle's late equaliser gives Hibs share of points in Edinburgh derby

A last gasp equaliser from the 'Starman' Martin Boyle on his second debut for the club secured a share of the points for Hibs in a hard fought Edinburgh derby at Easter Road this afternoon.



cinch Premiership – Hibernian v Livingston
28/8/2021.

Hibernian play host to Livingston in the cinch Premiership at Easter Road Stadium, Edinburgh, Midlothian, UK.

Pic shows: Hibs' winger, Martin Boyle, celebrates after putting the home side 2-0 in front in the 89th minute.

Credit: Ian Jacobs

Hibs boss Lee Johnson made one change to the starting XI that beat St Johnstone last Saturday as Josh Campbell replace the suspended Jair Tavares.

Paul Hanlon returned to the matchday squad and was amongst the substitutes along with new signing Boyle who was given a thunderous welcome by the Hibs fans ahead of kick off.

Hibs started well and Chris Cadden fired a low cross for Elie Youan at the front post, but his effort was easily saved by Craig Gordon.

Moments later, Marijan Čabreja found Youan but his angled, strike was beaten away by Gordon.

Another Cadden cross went begging as Hibs continued to make chance but Hearts looked dangerous on the break and Lawrence Shankland curled effort from the corner of the box was deflected wide by Rocky Bushiri.

Hearts took the lead in the 22nd minute when. Barrie McKay ball found Shankland and his effort beat David Marshall although television replays suggest the ball struck his upper arm in the build up.

The BBC Radio pundits after multiple action replays couldn't decide whether the referee should have given a foul.

But he didn't and Hearts could have doubled their advantage but Liam Boyce's header was easily saved.

Hibs almost equalised on the half hour mark when Nohan Kenneh's header from Joe Newell's free kick looped back across goal only for Shankland to hook it off the line.

Moments later Joe Newell should have done better with a clear shot from 15-yards which flew over the bar.

Then once again Gordon produced a world class save to deny Hibs and this time it was from Youan's header.

Hearts should have increased their lead just after the restart when McKay raced clear but it took a superb tackle from Ryan Porteous to prevent his shot.

Marshall then kept Hibs in the game with a wonderful double save to deny Shankland and McKay in quick succession from point-blank range.

The Hibs face were becoming restless but an injury to Josh Campbell meant a second debut for Boyle and he came on to a tremendous reception.

Hearts were content to slow the game down and every tackle seemed to result in a player requiring treatment and every throw or free-kick took forever as the time ticked on.

But the added time by referee John Beaton would come back to haunt the visitors .

A late chance for Boyle was deflected for a corner then Bushiri headed over with the goal at his mercy and everyone though that was that.

But with seconds remaining the 'starman' Boyle got on the end of a Youan cutback and fired the ball into the net sparking wild celebrations from three quarters of the stadium.

After the final whistle Boyle told BBC Sportsound "It's up there with one of the best feelings. The reception before the game, warming up, coming on, but that was the icing on the cake. I'm really delighted to help the squad to a well deserved point.

"I got the call last night to say I was eligible to play and asked if I fancied it. It was a no brainer. Hopefully I can get fitter, stronger, and kick on.

"He [Johnson] gave me the nod, asked how I felt. I knew the adrenaline, the buzz of the fans, and the magnitude of the game. I knew I was more than ready and I showed that."

Johnson added: We were really brave as a team with tactics and substitutions. Putting Martin on for that long was a bit of a risk, but we know what he can do and he's popped up at the right time with a Roy of the Rovers type return.

"It was important we didn't lose the game and with five minutes of injury time to go, 1-0 down, that feels a like a victory."

Hearts manager Robbie Neilson said:"We're devastated not to get the three points which I think we merited. We dominated the game throughout except the opening 10-15 minutes

"We had total control and a number of chances to get that second or third goal and we didn't take it. We've paid the price. We should've just been over the line but we didn't do it."

Hibs: Marshall, Čabreja, Porteous, Kenneh (Doyle-Hayes 79'), Newell, Cadden, Henderson, Melkersen (Doidge 54'), Youan, Campbell (Boyle 62'), Bushiri. Substitutes not used: Dąbrowski, Miller, Hanlon, Bojang, McGregor, O MacIntyre.

Hearts: Gordon, Smith, Halkett, Haring, Grant (Devlin 77'), Shankland, Boyce (Halliday 88'), Rowles, Forrest (Atkinson 62'), McKay, Cochrane. Substitutes not used: Stewart, Mackay-Steven, Neilson, Sibbick, Henderson, Ginnelly.

Referee: John Beaton.

Attendance: 20,179.