

Hearts sunk by two late strikes at Pittodrie

Robbie Neilson's men had at least two gilt edged chances to open their account against Aberdeen at Pittodrie, but the Dons made them pay when they claimed two late strikes to claim a welcome win and slip into fourth position in the Scottish Premiership.

Luis Lopes netted after 74 minutes and Vincente Besuijen five minutes later to take resurgent Dons onto 16 points from 11 games, a record which now reads win five, drawn one and lost four.

Hearts, who have won four of their ten games, drawing two and losing four, slip to seventh behind St Mirren, who are also on 16 points, and Livingston on 15. Hearts have 14 points.

It was Aberdeen's fifth win in ten games and it takes them to within a point of third-placed Hibs who have played a game more, but Neilson will rue missed opportunities by Cochrane, bundling the ball into the Aberdeen goalkeeper instead of netting, and Lawrence Shankland failing in front of goal.

Neilson's woe is increased by an injury to substitute Peter Haring (pictured by *Nigel Duncan*) who left the pitch on a stretcher with what appeared to be a head knock, Jorge Grant coming on as a replacement.

Hearts, who have only won one of their last five matches, actually had 59 per cent of possession during the game but that produced 13 shots against Aberdeen's 16.

Kelle Roos was forced to make several stops to keep Hearts at bay and Craig Gordon was also a big player for the injury-hit visitors who lost Andy Halliday with a leg injury after only nine minutes, forcing a reshuffle.

Soon after, Cochrane missed out on his opportunity in the opposition penalty box and and Shankland was denied by Roos as half-time loomed.

Stephen Humphrys' strength was a a factor as Hearts drove forward in search of a breakthrough and he was thwarted by the Aberdeen goalkeeper.

The 14,700-plus fans, including a healthy contingent from the Capital, groaned when Shankland failed to make solid contact with the ball when in a good position near goal as the pressure mounted.

And Aberdeen made them pay when Lopes made no mistake with his chance, drilling the ball past Gordon, and then Besuijen took advantage of poor defending by Hearts to net the second.