

Cailin eyeing victory over Capital rivals Hibs to open seven point gap in the women's Premier League

Cailin Michie said Sunday's Capital derby with her former club, Hibs, at Easter Road was crucial for Hearts for one simple reason. She said: "We want to close the gap between us and the top three."

Currently, Hearts are fourth with 18 points, nine behind third-placed Celtic with both clubs having played ten games, but fifth-placed Partick Thistle are only three points adrift of the Tynecastle team with Hibs, who are sixth, on 14 points.

Victory on Sunday would open up a seven point gap between the city rivals but the politics graduate from Edinburgh University, who is now undergoing public policy masters at Strathclyde University, and who spent 18 months playing at Glasgow City before moving to the other end of the M8, is aiming higher.

Her former club, Glasgow City, are second on 28 points with Rangers leading the 12-strong league on goal difference and Aberdeen-born Michie, who has also enjoyed a spell with Swedish side, Pitea, said: "Sunday's game is really important for us.

"We want to be pushing away from the clubs below us and

closing that gap between us and the top three. We're also going into this game ahead of Hibs which hasn't happened before.

"It is a real opportunity for us to show why we are ahead of them and we want to continue to progress in the table. I believe the club so far has surpassed expectations for this section of the league campaign. We have changed from wanting to get into the top six to seeing how close we can get to the top three."

The midfielder, who scored on her recent debut for Hearts in a 3-0 victory over her home town team, Aberdeen, acknowledges that they have not played Hibs so far this season but added: "We will be well-briefed."

Estimates indicate that a crowd of around 10,000 could be at Easter Road for the game sponsored by Edinburgh-based fund manager, Baillie Gifford, which also doubles as the first-leg of the Capital Cup, and Michie is excited by the prospect. That would, incidentally, be a Scottish record for a women's league game.

She said: "It's exciting. It is something you want to have in the women's game and it something you always dream of, playing on a par with the men. It will be a big noise but, when the game kicks-off, it will be the same game of football that we know but perhaps with a better and a more exciting atmosphere."

The four times capped footballer hopes both teams produce a package which will excite and encourage some of the expected 10,000 crowd to return to watch women's football later in the season.

Michie said second-leg of the Capital Cup is in February so Hearts also want produce a good performance so that they are watched by a similar crowd at Tynecastle for the second-leg.

She believes what the Lionesses achieved in the European Championships for England last summer has helped boost the game North of the Border and added: “It shows what is possible in Britain.

“It raises the question as to why can’t the same interest be generated in Scotland and for that we have to look at the investment, the funding and the advertising and I believe we are making steps to show that that this can be replicated in Scotland.”



Media attention for Hearts women’s team ahead of the Capital Cup. Picture shows (l-r) Katie Rood, Eva Olid (manager) and Cailin Michie at Tynecastle