

# **McKay stunner sees Hearts move into third spot**

**Barry McKay fired a long-range effort towards goal after a pass from Cammy Devlin to secure a welcome three points for injury-hit Hearts in a 3-2 victory at St Johnstone in the cinch Scottish Premiership.**

The strike after 64 minutes made the score 3-1 in favour of the visitors who held out despite a late strike from the Perth club.

Earlier, Robbie Neilson's men started well and Robert Snodgrass sent an effort over the bar before the Jam Tarts were awarded a penalty after a Saints defender was adjudged to have handled in the box.

The decision was checked by VAR and stand-in skipper Lawrence Shankland stepped up to send a low strike past the Saints goalkeeper into the net to record his ninth penalty of the season and his 16th goal overall. Time: 14 minutes.

At the other end, Stevie May had a chance but Devlin deflected the ball to safety then Andy Halliday then made his mark, beating his marker before blasting the ball just over the bar as the tempo stayed at a high level.

And Shankland then found Josh Ginnelly who saw his shot deflected for a corner as Hearts continued to press. They were

rewarded when Halliday sent Alan Forrest away and he slotted into the bottom left corner for 2-0 after 32 minutes.

Five minutes later and Saints had a chance to get back in the game when they were awarded a penalty after Halliday was adjudged to have handled but Graham Carey sent his effort well wide of Hearts' goalkeeper Zander Clark.

The stand-in goalkeeper, making his first start following the double-leg break suffered by Hearts No 1, Craig Gordon, at Tannadice on Saturday, made a big save to prevent May opening the home side's account.

Three minutes into injury time, Forrest was denied a second goal when his close-range effort was beaten away, but Saints clearly had a talking to from their coaching staff at the break and they emerged a much more lively side.

They were rewarded when May converted from the spot after Snodgrass was said to have brought down a Saints player.

The Perth combine continued to press but McKay (pictured by **Nigel Duncan**) struck after 64 minutes with a brilliant goal to restore Hearts- two-goal cushion,

Saints refused to give up and Drey Wright sent a free-kick into the box. It was nodded on but Clark was there to stop the ball reaching the net.

As the clock ticked down, St Johnstone grabbed a second, Jamie Murphy's low shot beating Clark after 78 minutes to set up a nerve-tingling finish, but the Jambos held out to move into third spot in the table.