

Neilson's men fire five to dump Dons

Hearts moved seven points clear of Livingston when they blew Aberdeen away 5-0 at freezing Tynecastle, equalling their biggest win over the men from the Granite City in the club's history.

Four goals hit the back of The Dons net in a pulsating first-half in this cinch Scottish Premiership clash and a single in the second session put the Jambos onto 38 points from 22 games with Livingston, whose game at the Tony Macaroni Stadium against Dundee United was postponed, on 31 points from 21 starts, and Aberdeen on 29 points from their 22 games.

A Graeme Shinnie own goal after 15 minutes started the goal rush with Michael Smith scored the second after 28 minutes and Lawrence Shankland netting a third from the penalty spot with five minutes left of the opening period. It was his 19th of the season and continued his perfect record from the spot so far this term.

And Josh Ginnelly claimed No 4 a minute into stoppage time to warm fans as the thermometer dipped below freezing.

Cammy Devlin (pictured by *Nigel Duncan*) netted the fifth in 61 minutes, his first of the season, and the visitors had a 'goal' from Marley Watkins ruled out in the final minute for offside in a game in which Hearts had 55 per cent of the possession against 45 per cent from Aberdeen.

Robbie Neilson's men, who finished third in the table last season, had six shots on target against two in return and they completed 450 passes against 362.

Aberdeen have only recorded one win in their last eight games but contrast that with the jubilant Jambos who are unbeaten in their last eight games and move into Sunday's Scottish Cup fourth round at Capital rivals Hibs (14.00) on a real high.

Neilson was pleased with the scoreline and admitted to BBC Sport Scotland that it was an even game for the first ten minutes but added: "We got the goals at the right time."

His counterpart, Jim Goodwin, said: "The talking needs to be done on the pitch."