

Neilson's told his Scottish Cup squad: 'We have to turn up'

Robbie Neilson described Sunday's Scottish Cup fourth round tie at Easter Road against Capital rivals Hibs as "massive" for the Tynecastle club. The reason? Hearts want to win the cup.

The manager has been handed a two-game ban after being red-carded by referee David Munro for protesting as Hearts beat St Mirren 1-0 at Tynecastle on January 7, so he must watch the game from the stand.

But Neilson told a pre-match press briefing at The Oriam that playing Hibs is always a massive game and he added: "It is a game you look for at the start of the season. It is obviously a Scottish Cup game as well, so it is massive.

Overall, he added: "If you are in good form that is great to take into the game, but if you are not in good form it can be a catalyst. We know we have to turn up and get a result, no matter what."

Neilson said the club are sitting third in the league and added that Hearts have had a decent season so far but stressed: "There is still a lot to play for and a long way to go and we have 15 to 18 games in the league and, hopefully, a Scottish Cup run as well."

Hearts were runners-up in the Scottish Cup to Rangers last year (the Ibrox side winning 2-0 at Hampden), but Neilson said that last season is over. He added: "As soon as the final whistle goes it is move on to next season and, for us, it (Sunday) is a Derby, no matter if it is in the Scottish Cup or the West of Scotland Cup, or what league it is, it does not matter. It is a Derby."

Hearts recent record in the Edinburgh derby is "great" – they are unbeaten in the last eight Derby games – according to the manager, but the Paisley-born coach warned: "You are only as good as your last one. We have to make sure we are ready for Sunday and, hopefully, we can continue our good record."

Hearts go into the game on the back of a 5-0 win in the cinch Scottish Premiership on Wednesday at Tynecastle against Aberdeen and a 3-0 victory over their rivals from Easter Road in the New Year cinch Scottish Premiership clash at Tynecastle when an injury time strike from Stephen Humphrys and a double from skipper Lawrence Shankland, one from a penalty, secured the points.

The Men in Maroon are also looking to extend an unbeaten eight-game run which goes back to before the World Cup break. The 1-0 defeat at Ibrox by Rangers on November 9 was the last time the players walked back to the dressing-room after a defeat, United States international, Malik Tillman, on loan from German cracks Bayern Munich, netting after 66 minutes to earn the points.

Neilson was asked if complacency was a worry after the shutout of Aberdeen and the recent league win over Hibs and the 42-year-old argued: "I don't think so. The players understand the magnitude of the game and the place will be rocking and it is up to us to turn up and get a result."

Most of his players, he said, are experienced in big games and, when the game starts, it is up to the Hearts players to

impose themselves.

Reflecting on the last clash with Hibs, Neilson added: "Hibs have a couple back and players in form and these games are about who turns up on the day."

The former Hearts defender acknowledged that Hibs striker Kevin Nisbet, who claimed a glory double last weekend in the club's home league clash with Dundee United, which ended 2-2, is a threat.

Neilson added: "He (Nisbet) has come back (from injury) flying and he is a player we will have to watch, but we want to get back to the final and win it this time. We are looking to make that final step, but we have to win that game on Sunday and move on to the next one."