

# **Naismith: every game post split has something riding on it**

**Hearts square-up to Aberdeen in a key clash in the cinch Premiership on Saturday at Tynecastle and three points are a must if they want to maintain their ambition of finishing third in the table.**

Steven Naismith told a pre-match press briefing at The Oriam that everybody that is realistically in contention is back training but that he does not consider that Beni Baniyine and Liam Boyce will feature.

Stephen Kingsley has returned to this week and Naismith said they will monitor his progress and then make a decision.

And Hearts have confirmed that Peter Haring's red card from the second-half at St Mirren in Paisley for a foul on Mark O'Hara has been reduced to a caution following a hearing at Hampden.

It's only Haring's second yellow card of the season so he is available for selection against Aberdeen.

Naismith said: "Every game after the split has something riding on it with everybody in the top six having something to play for. Everybody is desperate to get as many points as they can."

“There is always a demand at Hearts to win games, whether that ‘s been at the start of the season or at the end. Our players have been successful with that over the last couple of years by getting the club back into Europe.”

He added: “We have a group of players who have shown good character and good performances and have been taking on things that we have been trying to get across in nearly every game.

“So, it is now about trying to get more of that from now until the end of the season to finish as high up the table as we can.”

It’s a 12.30 kick-off on Saturday and Aberdeen occupy third place with 54 points from their 35 starts. Hearts are fourth with 49 points from the same number of games with Hibs on 48 points and St Mirren, who are sixth, on 45.

The Dons and Hearts have identical records in the last two games, a draw and a defeat, and the men from the Granite City have scored 52 goals and conceded 53, the same as the Jambos but the Men in Maroon have scored 58 goals.

PICTURE: Peter Haring is in the middle of the group. Picture by ***Nigel Duncan***