

Shankland strikes to boost Hearts hopes in Europe

Birthday boy Lawrence Shankland rose to head home and provide Hearts with a vital goal as they bid to secure a passage to the next round of the UEFA Europa Conference League.

The 28-year-old (pictured) used all of his 6ft 1in height to get to the ball and angle it past the goalkeeper to cheer the Jambos fans in Trondheim and set Hearts up for the return at Tynecastle next Thursday.

Frankie McAvoy, Hearts' head coach, told Hearts TV that he was obviously disappointed to lose the game, but the tie is very much alive.

He added: "We made a few mistakes in the first-half. We had a lot of possession but were a bit safe."

In the second-half, he said, Hearts had more forward passing and were rewarded with the goal. McAvoy said: "They are strong in transition and are very good at it but they will play in front of a capacity crowd at Tynecastle where we believe we can get the job done."

And he praised the travelling fans adding: "They willed us on."

Skipper Lawrence Shankland said the Norwegians were a good side on the break and that is how they scored their two goals,

but he believes that the late goal changes the momentum of the tie.

He believes Hearts are right back in the tie but added: "We played some good stuff but could not break them down. We were happy with our performance overall, the second-half was much better than the first.

"The momentum swings with that last goal and we look forward to Tynecastle next week. The fans backed us all the way and we managed to get a goal for them as well so next week we hope they can back us to victory."

Earlier, Emil Frederiksen broke the deadlock, turning the ball into the net at the back post after 13 minutes. Alan Forrest threatened soon after for the Scots and his low drive was saved low down by goalkeeper Andre Hansen.

At the other end, Jayden Nelson forced Zander Clark into action and Kye Rowles mopped up to clear the ball. Then Frederiksen fed midfielder Tobias Borkeeiet who fired just wide.

The home side were rewarded for their pressure right on half-time when Nelson netted. Hearts sent on Peter Haring in place of Beni Banningime and the Jambos bench then made several other changes.

Defender Frankie Kent tested Hansen with a header before Shankland scored to set up the tie.