

Biereth bursts Hibs Euro bubble with stunning goal

Mike Biereth, on-loan from Arsenal, was inspirational for Motherwell, setting up the first goal and scoring a stunning second as the Fir Park combine beat a Hibs side which lacked zip 2-1.

The Easter Road men, on a high after their 3-1 first-leg victory over FC Luzern in the UEFA Europa Conference League, first-leg, at Easter Road on Thursday, suffered a deflating defeat, their second straight reverse in the cinch Premiership after the 3-2 home defeat by St Mirren, and again showed glaring inconsistency.

Second-half goals from Connor Wilkinson and 20-year-old Londoner Biereth, his dancing feet mesmerising Will Fish and another Hibs defender, before he coolly slotted home past goalkeeper David Marshall.

Substitute Adam Le Fondre scored from the spot in injury time after a header from Christian Doidge touched a defenders hand, an error confirmed by VAR, but it was too little, too late for Hibs who made three changes to the side which won in midweek.

Lee Johnson (pictured), Hibs manager, told BBC Scotland Sport that his men were not clever enough on the ball or brave enough to make angles and he added: "They were a little brighter and sharper than us. We did not feed our forward players enough."

He desperately wanted his men to do more and felt the two goals highlighted players losing their individual duels and he hinted that Thursday-Sunday fixtures were proving tough on the squad.

The man of the moment, Biereth, modestly said that the result was something to build on."

His manager, Stuart Kettlewell, was up-beat and felt that in the second-half his men produced what he called "moments of quality" and he added: "We were really comfortable in the game."

Early on, newcomer Dylan Levitt dragged a shot wide for Hibs and Doidge was denied, but Well saw efforts from Blair Spittal deflected wide and Pape Soare broke down the left and his cross was headed back off the crossbar and then Slattery headed the rebound wide.

Doidge threatened again in the second-half after a long throw by Lewis Miller but it was the home side who broke the deadlock when Biereth showed real upper body strength to hold off Lewis Stevenson and then found Wilkinson near the penalty spot. He did the rest to record his first goal for Motherwell.

Biereth then took center stage, taking the ball in a tussle with Manchester United loan signing, Will Fish, and then twisting and turning before firing home low into the net. It was a joy to watch for Motherwell fans and neutrals, but not for Hibs supporters.