

# Hearts now focus on Rosenborg

**Work continues at Hearts to create a really competitive team but the club's coaching staff and the fans had to be content with a no-score draw against a no-nonsense Kilmarnock side at Tynecastle.**

Steven Naismith, Hearts' technical director, was frustrated that his men did not create really good opportunities against the visitors and he added: "It is early in the season, it is a time when we have players coming in, trying to get used to our system, trying to get used to what we want to do.

"In a month the boys will be up to speed and sharp as ever and so there are lots of pleasing things but there is a sense of frustration."

Attention now focuses on Thursday when the club host Rosenborg in the second-leg of the UEFA Europa Conference League with his Men in Maroon 2-1 down from the first-leg in Norway.

He took the chance to give Alex Lowry, signed on loan from Rangers, and Kenneth Vargas, on loan from a Costa Rica club, a run. Lowry showed some nice touches, including an audacious back heel which opened the Killie defence, before being subbed.

Fleet-footed Vargas looked to have genuine pace but the tough Killie defence was determined not to let him wriggle free and young Aidan Denholm was also given a 20-minute run during which he was clattered heavily twice, however, he showed awareness and passing ability and that he was willing to

bounce back after those bruising tackles.

Naismith's work in progress also includes bedding in players like Frankie Kent, signed from Peterborough, and he was influential here, snuffing out danger and winning a number of aerial battles with the determined opposition. He looks to be bedding in well with the dependable Kye Rowles.

Peter Haring also contributed to the cause, the Austrian working hard to get Hearts into gear, and Cammy Devlin (pictured) did what Cammy Devlin does best, provide nuisance value in midfield.

Killie made it tough, particularly for Hearts' forwards, and skipper Lawrence Shankland had to drift back to get a touch on the ball, and Derek McInnes, the former Aberdeen boss, thought Kilmarnock dominated the game and the experienced manager felt his men had the better chances overall.

However, the Rugby Park side, who beat the drop last term, left Tynecastle with four points in the bag following a 1-0 win over Rangers and a draw at Gorgie and he explained that he has been trying to put a squad together to meet the demands of the cinch Premiership.

The team, over the last couple of games, has shown so many qualities. He added: "That was not a hanging in performance.

"Hearts came on in the last ten minutes but I thought we were pretty assured and comfortable throughout and I think that we looked as if we have played a lot longer together than we have.

"That's because we have signed a good level of player. Last week's performance ( against Rangers) helped us to get into this one and hopefully today's performance gets us into the cup tie with Celtic."

Hearts take a point and move forward into their UEFA Europa

Conference League qualifying tie with Rosenborg and they started well, Haring latching onto an Alex Lowry free-kick and his header was pushed away by Killie goalkeeper Will Dennis.

The fans expected but Hearts failed to deliver what they craved, a goal, indeed it was the men from Rugby Park who came close, Matthew Kennedy collecting a slack pass to go through on goal but Kent was in the right place at the right time to snuff the danger out.

Peter Haring had a shot at the other end, sending the ball just wide, and Lowry sent a curling corner across the goal but nobody was there to provide the final touch.

And there were other scares as the well-organised Kilmarnock side attacked at pace and Hearts' goalkeeper, Zander Clark, dived to push away a header from ex-Hibs player, Kyle Magennis, near half-time.

Much the same in the second, but Hearts upped the tempo in search of a winner to back up their 2-0 road success at St Johnstone in Match Day One in the final minutes, but they failed to break through.

They came close, a move involving Alan Forrest, Liam Boyce, who carried a threat when he came on, and Vargas who not just showed a turn of speed and a willingness to dig in in his 23-minute cameo. He also had a pop at goal from distance after the Killie defence was pierced by Boyce.

However, Kilmarnock also came close, Stuart Findlay firing inches wide with Clark at full stretch.

FOOTNOTE: Put your hands together for Cammy Devlin (pictured). It's a big deal for kids to be a mascot, especially in front of a crowd of over 18,000 at Tynecastle.

All the Hearts players come onto the pitch with a mascot. Cammy was with his mascot as they lined-up facing the main

stand.

The likeable Aussie said something to the youngster and they both waved, possibly in the direction of his proud parents. Hope they got a picture but the wee lad will remember that. Well done Cammy.

HEARTS: Clark, Kent, Kingsley, Haring, Shankland, Oda (Forrest 77), Atkinson (Sibbick 77), Devlin (Denholm 67), Rowles, Tagawa (Vargas 67), Lowry (Boyce 58).

KILMARNOCK: Dennis, Ndaba, Mayo, Deas, Lyons, Kennedy, Armstrong (Donnelly 90), Watson, Magennis (McKenize 87), Findlay, Watkins (Vassell 72).