

Late Shankland double ends Dundee hopes

Lawrence Shankland netted twice in eight sensational, second-half minutes as Hearts came from behind to edge Dundee and extend their unbeaten run in the cinch Premiership to eight games.

The 28-year-old Scotland striker scored from the penalty spot to level at 2-2 with 11 minutes of regular time remaining and then latched onto a Kenneth Vargas pass with three minutes left to claim the game-winner.

The jubilant Jambos now move 12 points clear in third spot in the 12-strong table after results elsewhere and Dundee must wonder what they have to do to beat the Tynecastle team.

They led 2-0 at rain-soaked Tynecastle recently only to go down 3-2 and they suffered again by the same scoreline at Dens Park.

Steven Naismith, Hearts' head coach, said: "We started well and had a lot of control but the goals we conceded were poor. Second-half we showed more urgency and put more pressure on."

His opposite number, Tony Docherty, was angry at the final whistle and protested to referee Graham Grainger about the penalty award which allowed Hearts to level but, once again, super Shankland proved the difference.

His game-winner showed his footwork and calmness after picking

up the ball from Vargas before sending the ball into the bottom corner out of the reach of Dundee stopper Trevor Carson to claim the three points.

The double moves Shankland on to 21 goals for the season, but it would be wrong not to mention the contribution of Alan Forrest who opened Hearts' account after 55 minutes.

Earlier, Jordan McGhee fired Dundee in front after 26 minutes and Lyall Cameron finished off a fine move involving several players to score after 59 minutes and edge Dundee into a 2-1 lead.

They looked to be on course for a confidence-boosting win before Shankland intervened to help Hearts claim their fourth straight win, the first time they have achieved that in away games since 2011.

The Capital combine now have 45 points from 24 starts while fourth-placed Kilmarnock have 33 points from the same number of starts with St Mirren fifth on 32 points also from 24 games.

Hearts are next on duty at St Johnstone on Wednesday (19.45) before their Scottish Cup fifth round clash with Airdrie on Sunday, February 11 (17.00) in the West of Scotland, but they must beware of Caig Levein's men who earned a 1-0 win at Ross County through a Kimpioka goal after 34 minutes and are now in ninth position, only two points out of sixth spot.