

Naismith on Well: 'we expect to put a challenge forward'

Hearts have won five of the last ten meetings between them and Motherwell but The Steelmen have won four and edged the Jambos 1-0 at Gorgie on September 3, midfielder Callum Slattery netting the only goal after 29 minutes.

BBC stats indicate that if the visitors were to achieve a back-to-back away league double over the Men in Maroon then that would be the first time since January 2014.

It is a big incentive for the Lanarkshire club who are seventh in the 12-strong cinch Premiership table, Hearts are third, 22 points better off.

Well manager, Stuart Kettlewell, travels following the disappointment of only earning only one point against Aberdeen as he walked out of Pittodrie on Wednesday night after watching his men give up a 3-0 lead.

However, Kettlewell said there were positives from the match he can take into Saturday's trip to Tynecastle.

Of course, former Hearts player, Andy Halliday, moved to Lanarkshire earlier this year on loan from Hearts, but the midfielder is sidelined and missed Wednesday's draw in the North-East with a calf muscle and is not expected back until Motherwell face Celtic on Sunday week.

Kettlewell's counterpart, Steven Naismith, said he believes Motherwell will prove tough opposition before a full-house.

Hearts are on a great run and have won eight of their last nine cinch Premiership league games and Naismith told his pre-match press briefing: "They have shown in all the games that they are well-organised.

"They have got a system that they play. Their personnel changes but their system vary rarely changes. At Tynecastle at the start of the season they got the better of us, a mixture of our schedule and playing in Europe, but they are set-up well and they caused us problems."

He added: "They have players in their team who are good footballers, have good game intelligence and know the right passes to make and we will need to guard against that. It will be a tough game but with us being at home we expect to go and put a challenge forward."

PICTURE: Kenneth Vargas, on the mark against Airdrie, but will he start against Motherwell? Picture **David Mollison**

SCOTTISH GAS, SCOTTISH CUP: UPDATE: Hearts have confirmed that their quarter-final tie at Greenock v Morton will be on Monday, March 11 (7.45pm). The game will be shown live on BBC Scotland.