

# **Naismith assures Hearts fans: 'I'll not let things drop'**

**Midfielder Beni Banningime has been ill this week and could miss Hearts trip to St Mirren on Saturday (kick-off 15.00) in the cinch Premiership and Calem Nieuwenhof has not reached the level of fitness required so he will be an absentee.**

Barrie McKay, who made a short appearance during the second-half of Hearts' 1-1 draw with Kilmarnock at Tynecastle last weekend, is in the squad.

That's the current state of play according to Hearts' head coach, Steven Naismith, who told the media that the Tynecastle team have games before the split and the Scottish Gas, Scottish Cup, semi-final with Rangers were his prime focus currently.

He added: "I felt last week (against Kilmarnock) that there was a lot of good stuff we did but we just did not have the cutting edge and I put that down to the travel (due to the international matches).

"A lot of the guys did not come back until the Friday and so I would hope that we will be fresher in that part of the game and I want to see that tomorrow (at St Mirren). A lot of our build-up play has been good."

He confirmed that the players who were on international duty had a couple of days off to mentally recharge but the squad has enjoyed a good week of training, despite the weather.

Naismith (pictured during a game) added: "It helps that we have a competitive squad and a lot of boys are fit but did not make the squad last week and that shows the strength we have and where we are with injuries. We are in a good place.

"If we achieve what we want to achieve in the league before the end of the season the full focus will be on going as far as we can in the cup and beyond that is how do we get better for next season.

"It does not stop, we are not easing off, and, individually, players have got international competitions in the summer. As the last international camp showed, we had 11 players away.

"So there is loads to be competitive about and it is not in my nature to let it drop off."