

McKay magic opens up determined Dundee

Barrie McKay picked up a loose ball near halfway eight minutes into the second half, looked up and, in the blink of an eye, sent it slightly to his left, a move which split the determined Dundee defence.

Busy Alan Forrest was the recipient of the inch-perfect pass and did not have to break his stride before touching it with his right foot to evade the rapidly advancing Dundee goalkeeper Jon McCracken, and driving towards goal, before caressing the ball into the back of the net with his left foot.

It was a sublime moment, arguably the best move of the game, in a fine performance by Hearts who now move on to 66 points in the conch Premiership, 11 ahead of Kilmarnock who edged St Mirren 1-0 in Paisley.

As the clock ticked down towards injury time a neat pass, this time from substitute Scott Fraser, deeper inside the Dundee half, was gobbled up by Lawrence Shankland.

The inevitable happened. Goal No 3 for Hearts as the ball nestled in the back of the Dundee net and the points were secured.

Earlier, Kenneth Vargas had opened the scoring after 35

minutes, steering the ball home after McKay had lifted a cross to the back post from the left edge of the box. VAP confirmed that the Costa Rican striker was onside.

Steven Naismith, Hearts' head coach, was pleased with the performance and the clean sheet. He added: "When we started moving the ball quicker in the second half we created more chances and scored some good goals."

Tony Docherty, Dundee's manager, felt the game hinged on a decision by referee Nick Walsh not to award a penalty against Hearts' defender Stephen Kingsley when the score was 1-0.

He also indicated that his men had chances which they failed to take but added: "Hearts are a very good team and Steven has done a fantastic job here, but I'm not pleased with the goals we conceded, particularly the first two."

Nest up for Hearts is a trip to St Mirren on Wednesday (19.45) before their final game of the season at home to Rangers on Saturday (12.30).

PICTURE: Kenneth Vargas celebrates scoring