

Star striker Shankland wins fifth award

Heart of Midlothian go into Saturday's final cinch Premiership clash boosted by news that star striker Lawrence Shankland has been given a fifth award.

The 28-year-old is now confirmed as the Scottish Football Writers' Association Player of the Year top add to the cinch Premiership Player of the Year title, the PFA Player of the Year, Players' Player of the Year and the Fans' Player of the Year awards.

Shankland has netted on 30 occasions this year including his cheeky finish with his back to goal which earned The Jambos a draw at St Mirren on their last outing in midweek.

He is the first Hearts player to hit the 30 mark since John Robertson in 1988 and Shankland had strong competition for the award in Rangers' goalkeeper Jack Butland, outstanding Celtic star Matt O'Reilly and Macedonian-born striker Bojan Miovski who has scored 16 goals in 37 games for Aberdeen this term.

Craig Gordon, Hearts' long-serving goalkeeper, has also won the Sports Writers' Award and that was in 2022. On to Saturday and the match against the men from Ibrox kicks-off at 12.30.

Hearts are third in the table with 67 points from 37 games. They have scored 51 goals and let in 39 and have won one and drawn two of their last four and have won 20 games, drawn seven and lost ten this term.

Rangers are runners-up in the cinch Premiership behind Celtic and they have collected 84 points from their 37 outings, scoring 84 goals and letting in 29. The visitors have won 27 games, drawn three and lost seven.

Of course, Rangers beat Hearts in key games this term, winning semi-final ties in both the Viaplay Cup and Scottish Gas Scottish Cup semi-finals at Hampden.

Meanwhile, Tynecastle bosses have confirmed that Peter Haring, Michael McGovern, and Andy Halliday will leave the club when their contracts expire this summer.

Haring has spend six years at Tynecastle, helping the men in maroon to the Scottish Cup Final in 2019, Hearts' promotion campaign in 2021 and third place finishes in 2021/22 and 2023/24.

Bosses have confirmed that at full-time in the game against Rangers, the first team and coaching staff will head into the dressing room before returning shortly after to form a guard of honour for the departing players.

The squad and coaching staff will then do a lap of honour, heading left in the direction of the Main Stand/Gorgie Stand and then making their way around the pitch.

A spokesman said: "This is an opportunity for fans and players to show their appreciation of each other and we encourage supporters to remain inside the stadium at full-time to take part."

PICTURE: Lawrence Shankland celebrates another goal. Picture by **David Mollison**