

David Gray reserves special praise for 18-year-old Rudi Molotnikov

David Gray was delighted with his side's performance in the comprehensive 5-0 victory over Elgin City at Borough Briggs yesterday.

Dylan Vente grabbed the headlines with his hat-trick, with debutant Marvin Ekpiteta and Martin Boyle also on target.

But Gray reserved special praise for 18-year-old Rudi Molotnikov.

Speaking to Hibs TV after the match, Gray said: "I am delighted. It was a real professional performance from everyone. When you come up here, there is always the potential for it to be a tricky tie.

"All the pressure and expectation is on us to come up and win, so I am delighted with the performance level and the attitude the players showed.

"It was great that we scored a few goals and another clean sheet gives us a good foundation to build on. All in all, I am delighted with the whole day to be honest."

The Hibeers had to work hard for their victory in what was a competitive tie, particularly in the first half. However, in the second 45 we showed our class and a ruthlessness in the final third.

"It was a real competitive game – particularly in the first half." Gray continued.

"Elgin came out and had a go, so credit to them. Once we scored, we had a little sloppy period but once we got a foothold on the game and we started to do things that we had worked on; we were much better value.

"In the second half when the subs came on, we still kept our intensity high which was great to see."

"To single anyone out today would be harsh, but I also think it would be difficult not to mention Rudi Molotnikov.

"He has done really well in pre-season, he had a good opportunity to start the game and he showed what he has been doing in training.

"He looked really bright and he affected the game of football which is what it is all about.

"From another point of view, it was great to see Dylan Vente getting a hat-trick. You always want your striker scoring goals, so for him to score in the first competitive game of the season is great for him, hopefully he can take confidence from that and kick on now.

"Defensively, I am delighted with the fact that we kept a clean sheet.

All in all, it was a good team performance, a professional performance, now we just need to make sure we recover properly, get back down the road and get ready for Queen's Park.

"That'll be another difficult test but we are looking forward to being back at Easter Road, that is for sure."