

Hibs suffer embarrassing defeat to Kelty Hearts leaving cup progress in balance

Hibs suffered an embarrassing defeat to League One side Kelty Hearts in the Premier Sports Cup at New Central Park yesterday.

After two comfortable victories over Elgin City and Queen's Park, the 1,100 fans travelled to Fife in confident mood packing out the north half of the stadium.

David Gray raised a few eyebrows by making six changes and giving several players their first start of the season.

New signing Jordan Smith made his Hibs debut, whilst Rocky Bushiri and Kanayo Megwa both come into the starting XI, completing a back four alongside Lewis Miller and Warren O'Hora.

In midfield, Luke Amos and Dylan Levitt made their first starts of the season, alongside 18-year-old Rudi Molotnikov.

The final change saw Harry McKirdy return, making his first competitive start since April 2023.

On the bench, Gray had plenty of options to choose from with Joe Newell, Josh Campbell, Nathan Moriah-Welsh and Jordan Obita all among the substitutes.

The visitors dominated the opening stages of the game and McKirdy went close with a fine effort as did Dylan Vente.

At the other end Megwa did brilliantly to get back on his goal-line and clear a looping header off the line.

Liam Brown then bravely blocked Bushiri's volley from point blank range.

Shortly before the break Levitt forced an excellent save from Ryan Adamson and McKirdy rattled the crossbar.

Just before the hour mark. Callum Flatman rose the highest in the penalty area to fire a bullet header into the far corner.

Gray opted to make changes with Moriah-Welsh and Obita coming on for Amos and Megwa.

Hibs continued to press forward and Vente's header rebounded off the post but Kelty held on to secure a memorable victory.

That leaves Hibs top of the table with six points from three games.

They face Peterhead at Easter Road next Saturday needing a win to have any hopes of progressing to the last 16 of the competition.

Kelty Hearts: Adamson, Thomas, Flatman, O'Ware, Paterson, Miller, Allan, Brown, McCarvel, Williamson, Moore Subs: Langlands, B Owens, Johnston, Cunningham, Cole, L Owens, Walsh

Hibs: Smith, Miller, O'Hora, Levitt, Vente, Boyle, Amos, McKirdy, Megwa, Bushiri, Molotnikov, Subs Boruc, Ekpiteta, Newell, Obita, Moriah-Welsh, Tavares, Campbell, McAllister, Whittaker