

Celtic take the honours at sunny Easter Road

Hibs fell to a 2-0 home defeat to champions Celtic at a sunny Easter Road this afternoon.

Hibs boss David Gray made two changes to the starting XI that fell to a 3-0 defeat at St Mirren last weekend.

Mykola Kuharevich made his first start since returning to the club on loan and Dylan Levitt replaced Dylan Vente and Nathan Moriah-Welsh.

New signing Kieron Bowie was listed among the substitutes, but Junior Hoilett and Nicky Cadden were not in the squad.

The club introduced a safe standing area in the Famous Five Stand and the fans made their presence heard throughout the game.

The champions took an early lead when Josef Bursik pushed Kyogo's shot wide but James Forrest was first to react and he found Nicolas Kuhn who scored from close range.

Kyogo almost made it 2-0 after latching onto a poos pass from Josh Campbell but his effort went just wide.

The Hoops doubled their lead in the 19th minute with a superb 25-yard strike from Callum McGregor.

Celtic took their foot off the gas but continued to look the more likely to score and the fans made their feelings known to the Hibs players at the half time whistle.

Hibs showed some more urgency after the restart then on the hour mark replaced Campbell and Kuharevich with Bowie and Chris Cadden.

Both Martin Boyle and Rudi Molotnikov tried their luck from distance but both missed the target.

With six minutes remaining Hibs almost pulled a goal back when Bowie nutmegged Cameron Carter-Vickers on the touchline and his powerful strike crashed off the bar, earning him the cheers of the Hibs fans.

After the game Hibs head coach David Gray told BBC Scotland: "You can't give a team like Celtic a goal head-start after three minutes.

"When you make individual errors and don't show bravery on the ball, it can be a long afternoon. We were probably fortunate to only go into half-time 2-0 down.

"Second half was better, we carried more of a threat and a bit more composure on the ball. Obviously we're really disappointed to lose the game; we need to learn quickly because we've got it all to do again next weekend away from home.

"We've got a bit of short-term pain at the moment but I'm really positive about where we can take the squad."

Celtic manager Brendan Rodgers: added: "Easter Road is one of the most difficult places to come in Scottish football.

"I thought we were very good for large spells. There were moments in the second half when we went too long, too early.

"We made a great start and showed a real winning attitude and we have quality. We should have had a few more goals."

Hibs: Bursik, Miller, Ekpiteta, O'Hara, Obita, Levitt, Newell, Campbell, Boyle, Kuharevich, Molotnikov.

Substitutes: Smith, Vente, C Cadden, Amos, McKirdy, Bowie, Moriah-Welsh, Megwa, Bushiri.

Celtic: Schmeichel, Johnston, Carter-Vickers, Scales, Taylor, McGregor, Hatate, O'Riley, Forrest, Kyogo, Kuhn.

Substitutes: Sinisalo, Yang, Holm, Tomoki, Bernardo, Maeda, Ralston, Welsh, M Johnston.