

Hearts reeling after eighth defeat

Steven Naismith, Hearts' head coach, was in defiant mood after his hand-picked side skidded to their eighth straight defeat when they were edged 2-1 at St Mirren in the William Hill Premiership.

Undoubtedly, the pressure is mounting on the former Scotland international but he still believes he can arrest the depressing slide which leaves the ambitious Tynecastle side rooted at the foot of the 12-strong table.

A Gerald Taylor headed into his own goal to break the deadlock after eight minutes but Craig Halkett, restored to the team recently after a frustrating spell on the sidelines through injury, levelled eight minutes later, heading home a cross from Blair Spittal.

But a strike from Toyosi Olusanya set up by Killian Phillips during a period of St Mirren pressure after 34 minutes proved the game-winner at the SMiSA Stadium in a contest watched by over 7,000 fans, many of them from the East of Scotland.

Sadly, the visitors failed to put St Mirren under real pressure during the second 45 minutes and Hearts have only one point from six fixtures with Kilmarnock second-bottom a point ahead after five games.

St Mirren are tenth with four points from six games and Hibs are ninth with five points from the same number of fixtures.

Naismith lead Hearts to third place in the league last term and he told BBC Sport Scotland that he can snap the bad run. He said: "I wouldn't be here if I didn't. Small parts of the game are costing us, but I'm up for the fight."

PICTURE: Craig Halkett on the mark for Hearts at St Mirren.
Picture ***Nigel Duncan***