

Vassell strike sends Hearts to bottom of table

Two goals in five nightmare, second-half minutes, saw Hearts skid to a confidence-sapping defeat to a dogged Kilmarnock side in the William Hill Premiership at Tynecastle.

Boos rang out at the final whistle as new head coach, Neil Critchley, suffered his first defeat since taking charge, but it looked good for the home side who dominated possession in the first 45 minutes.

They were rewarded with a goal from Alan Forrest (pictured) after 44 minutes, the lively former Livingston player being fed by Blair Spittal after a quick throw-in on the right side of the pitch by Lawrence Shankland.

The ball was flicked on by Kenneth Vargas to Spittal positioned centrally at the edge of the penalty box and Forrest made no mistake, the ball bulging the back of the net off the post.

Hearts had their scares, however, and Aussie defender Kye Rowles had to use his speed clear near his line when Killie skipper, Kyle Vassell, clipped the ball goalwards from the right hand side of the box over the onrushing Hearts' goalkeeper, Craig Gordon.

Into the second half and Hearts continued to press forward looking to add to their total, but they were caught out after

58 minutes when Vassell challenged Hearts' defender, Frankie Kent, and the ball fell to Matty Kennedy to fired home. VAR checked the strike for a nudge on Kent but the goal stood.

Then, after 63 minutes, defender Joe Wright backheeled the ball to Vassell and the 31-year-old Englishman made no mistake from close range, spinning to send an unstoppable shot into the net. Gordon had no chance.

Critchley rang the changes but Hearts lacked ideas as the clock ticked on and Killie dug in to record a valuable road win leaving the Tynecastle team with much to ponder ahead of Saturday's road trip to Perth to face St Johnstone.

The Jambos slip back to bottom spot with one win in 11 league games. They have six points from 11 games while Kilmarnock move on to 12 after their ten fixtures to take over sixth position.