

# **Hibs leapfrog Hearts at foot of table with best performance of season so far**

**Hibs leapfrogged Hearts and moved off the foot of the table (for at least 24-hours) after a comprehensive victory over Motherwell at Fir Park this afternoon.**

After the late drama on Wednesday the players produced their best performance of the season to secure the three points as well as keeping a rare clean sheet.

David Gray made one change to the starting XI that rescued a late draw against Aberdeen on Tuesday.

Lewis Miller dropped to the bench for Chris Cadden at right-back in the only change.

Stuart Kettlewell made two changes to the Motherwell side that lost at Ross County last weekend.

Midfielders Tawanda Maswanhise and Davor Zdravkovski replaced left-back Steve Seddon and the injured Tom Sparrow.

After a quiet opening quarter during which neither keeper was tested, the first chance fell to the home side when Marvin Kaleta's whipped cross found Kofi Balmer in the box but his volleyed effort flew well over the crossbar.

Moments later Hibs took the lead when Aston Oxborough misjudged a Nicky Cadden cross and Junior Hoilett nicked in at the back post to slot the ball into the empty net.

Hibs should have doubled their lead in the 31<sup>st</sup> minute when Chris Cadden's cross found Ellie Youan unmarked in the box but his header was easily saved by Oxborough.

Oxborough then tipped a Nicky Cadden free-kick round the post and from the resultant corner Hibs added a second.

The corner was flicked on by Youan to the feet of Jack Iredale at the back post. His close-range effort was blocked but Mykola Kuharevich was on hand to bundle the ball into the net.

Hibs started the second-half on the front foot winning two early corners. Kuharevich headed over, then Nectar Triantes had a shot blocked before Youan set up Chris Cadden who struck the side net from an acute angle.

At the other end Jordan Smith did well to tip a Zach Robinson effort over the bar.

In the 68<sup>th</sup> minute Gray made a double substitution with Kuharevich and Hoilett making way for Josh Campbell and Dwight Gayle.

Hibs seemed content to hit on the break and Nicky Cadden was shown a yellow card for kicking the ball away.

Then with 10-minutes remaining Campbell wrapped things up in front of the travelling support.

Smith sent a long clearance upfield and Gayle headed the ball into the path of his fellow substitute who made no mistake from 15-yards.

Kwon replaced Joe Newell and Martin Boyle took over from

Youan.

Motherwell did strike the post in the dying minutes but it was too little too late for the Steelmen.

Miller replaced Chris Cadden in the 88<sup>th</sup> minute and the former Motherwell player left the field to a chorus of boos from the home supporters still inside the stadium.

Hibs almost added a fourth when Triantes's close range effort was blocked by the Motherwell keeper.

Then in the last action, Nicky Cadden tested Oxborough with a low free-kick.

The result sees Hibs move three points clear of Hearts who face Aberdeen at Tynecastle tomorrow.

Motherwell: Oxborough, Kaleta, Casey, Gordon, Balmer, Wilson, Zdravkovski, Halliday, Miller, Maswanhise, Stamatelopoulos.

*Substitutes:* Hegyi, Seddon, Robinson, Paton, Blaney, Koutroumbis, Ebiye, Gillies, Watt.

Hibernian: Smith, Iredale, Bushiri, O'Hora, C Cadden, N Cadden, Triantis, Newell, Youan, Kuharevich, Hoilett.

*Substitutes:* Bursik, Miller, Levitt, Doyle-Hayes, Boyle, Kwon Campbell, Gayle, Molotnikov.