

**Critchley: 'if we can win when not at our best it is a bonus'**

**Neil Critchley, Hearts' head coach, described the 3-2 win over Kilmarnock at Tynecastle in the William Hill Premiership as "a strange game".**

He told Hearts TV: "Even though there were five goals, there were not loads of chances at either end and I did not think we were at our best, to be honest.

"We were not quite there, our timing was not quite there and technically we turned the ball over a little bit and we did not have control of the game that I would have liked but we always carried a threat.

"Three goals at home is pleasing but we lost two and the goals we conceded were really poor, however, if we can win when we are not at our best then that is a bonus."

The Englishman felt that Hearts did not start the game well and added: "We were a little reactive, our touch was not there, it was a strange sort of a game to start with, we did score from our first attack and that did settle us down.

"We then had some good moments, particularly in transition on the break which we did not make the most of, but we responded well after their equaliser and we saw the game out."

Spanish striker Musa Dremmeh had an opportunity late on when

he hit the post, and Critchley said that had that attempt gone in it would have been a more comfortable scoreline.

The head coach said that his men would be working on not conceding "poor goals" but, from where Hearts were, the response, he added, has been "fantastic" as the Jambos are unbeaten in the New Year and that builds belief and confidence.

Lewis Neilson (pictured in training by **Nigel Duncan**), recalled from a loan spell at St Johnstone, came off the bench to replace injured Craig Halkett and Critchley said that the 21-year-old defender contributed to the win. He added: "We keep moving forward and we come back and look for that to continue."

The Men in Maroon, now ninth in the 12-strong table, travel to Dundee, who are one place ahead of the Jambos, on Saturday, February 1 (kick-off 15.00) on their next league assignment.

Meanwhile, Hearts have confirmed the death of French-born goalkeeper Anthony Basso who made eight appearances for the first team between 2007 and 2009.