

Critchley: 'Killie will be a real test'

Hearts' head coach Neil Critchley believes there is an element of confidence in his squad ahead of their joust with Kilmarnock at Tynecastle on Saturday (15.00) in the William Hill Premiership.

Critchley, however, insisted there is still much work to do with the team and added: "We're not getting carried away, we're not where we want to be.

"We just want to keep continuing with our good form and moving forward and reinforcing what we have been doing well."

He told a pre-match briefing that Killie will be a tough test and Critchley is aware that Hearts have been unable to get the better of the men from Rugby Park so far this term.

The Englishman added: "They are very tough to play against. You're playing against an extremely well-organised, aggressive team that have a physical threat, some quality in wide areas and up-front.

"Derek (McInnes) is a vastly experienced manager and knows how to get the best out of his players. They were excellent against Celtic in the cup, gave them a real fright and lots of problems."

Meanwhile, Lawrence Shankland (pictured) has returned from injury to be training on grass and could be available for the

game and Gerald Taylor and Calem Nieuwenhof enjoyed valuable minutes in a closed doors match in midweek.

And on the arrival of defender Michael Steinwender and attacking midfielder Sander Kartum, two players Hearts have been tracking for some time, the coach believes they can make an impact.