

David Gray reserves special praise for Clydebank players and supporters

Hibs head coach David Gray reserved special praise the Clydebank players and their supporters after his side ensured safe passage to the fifth round of the Scottish Cup with a comfortable 3-0 victory over the West of Scotland side.

Martin Boyle bagged another brace with Rudi Molotnikov adding a third as Hibs secured a comfortable win over a resolute Clydebank outfit.

Speaking to Hibs TV after the match, Gray said: "We made a really positive start, we scored straight away in the game which was great. We started on the front-foot, but we probably took our foot off the gas a little bit.

"Massive credit to Clydebank – they had 2,500 supporters here to cheer their team and I thought with us scoring so early on, real credit goes to them for keeping going and putting everything into the game.

"We were miles better in the second half, we moved the ball a lot quicker, took a lot less touches and carried much more of a threat. We obviously went on to get the second and third goal in the game which was really important in the game."

Gray made five changes to his starting XI, giving an opportunity to several players returning from injury to get some much-needed minutes.

“The real positive is minutes into the legs of a lot of the lads, which I am delighted with. Rudi (Molotnikov) did really well, it was his first minutes in a while after coming back from injury – he was great, particularly in the second half – he was much more like himself.

“Kieron Bowie has been out for a long time, so it was good to get minutes into his legs and get him back on the pitch – Mykola Kuharevich was the same, he started the game which was great.”

Gray also gave a First Team debut to 16-year-old Lewis Gillie, who came on for the final 20 minutes at Easter Road – and he was impressed with the youngster’s impact.

“It was good to get more minutes for the players who haven’t played as much, then it was fantastic for Lewis Gillie to come on and make his First Team debut.

“He has done really well in the Academy, he has trained with us several times and he has really impressed me.

“I am sure he will remember this day for the rest of his life, I thought he did really well when he came on and he just needs to kick on from here.

“I just told him to go and enjoy himself. There is a reason why he has put himself in this position – he is a good player who works hard. I just told him to enjoy it, play as you do for the U18s and to enjoy himself.

“I think you saw that today, he played with a lot of confidence, he played forward and I am sure he will remember this day for the rest of his life, which is great.”

The victory stretches our unbeaten run to eight matches (all

comps) and Gray is hoping to carry that momentum into the crucial second half of the season.

“We have put ourselves in a really good position for the second half of the season. In terms of today, it was job done and into the next round of the Scottish Cup, we will see who we get in the next round and take it from there.

“The challenge for us was to make sure we build on the momentum we have had in recent weeks, we did that again today and now our attention will switch towards Ross County.”