

# Hearts fan fined for racist comment

**A Hearts supporter who shouted a shocking racist comment at a rival Hibs player during the Edinburgh Derby has been fined and banned from attending football matches.**

Morris McLean made the racist remark and offensive gestures towards the Easter Road club's defender Jordan Obita in the first half of the Scottish Premiership clash at Tynecastle Park on December 26.

McLean, from Loanhead, Midlothian, was pointed out by fellow Hearts supporters who were left sickened by the comments and he was immediately ejected from the stadium by stewards.

The 46-year-old was subsequently arrested by police officers following the incident during the sold out derby match.

It is believed McLean hurled the comment at the Hibs star who was celebrating his side's opening goal in the ninth minute of the match following a lengthy VAR check.

McLean, 46, pleaded guilty to the "disgraceful" and "unacceptable" offence when he appeared in the dock at Edinburgh Sheriff Court on January 21 this year.

Sheriff John Cook issued McLean with a £740 fine and also imposed a Football Banning Order prohibiting him from attending football matches throughout the UK for the 12 months.

Hibernian won the match 2-1 with an own goal scored by Jambo's defender Kyle Rowles that was cancelled out by a similar goal from the Leith side's Rocky Bushiri in the first half.

The winning strike was scored in the 78th minute by veteran English forward Dwight Gayle in front of 18,726 supporters.

The incident first came to light when Sky Sports presenter Luke Shanley announced live on air that a supporter had been arrested.

Shanley told viewers: "There was an alleged racist comment made towards Hibernian substitutes in the Hibernian dugout.

"A fan has been ejected and Hearts have confirmed this in statement."

A Heart of Midlothian FC spokesperson confirmed "a supporter has been ejected from the stadium and arrested in relation to an alleged incident of racism" and that the club "condemns racism and any abusive behaviour".

Hibernian FC also released a statement at the time stating: "Hibernian FC would like to thank Hearts for the swift action taken against a supporter at Tynecastle during today's Edinburgh Derby.

"A supporter was ejected from the stadium and arrested in relation to an alleged incident of racism in the first half.

"Hibernian FC absolutely condemns any form of racism or abusive behaviour. It has no place in the game or society."

Police Scotland's Assistant Chief Constable Gary Ritchie said: "We should all be able to go to a football match and enjoy the game without fear of violence or disorder.

"We will use all available tools at our disposal to eradicate this unacceptable behaviour."

Calum Beattie, the SPFL's chief operating officer, said: "We warmly applaud the robust approach from the police and courts in dealing with this disgraceful behaviour, as well as the swift action taken by our clubs to identify the individuals involved."

McLean pleaded guilty to "acting in a manner which was racially aggravated and caused, or was intended to cause, Jordan Obita alarm or distress and did utter an offensive remark and make offensive gestures at Tynecastle Stadium, Edinburgh, on December 26 last year".



Hearts 1 Hibs 2 Boxing Day 2024