

David Gray “frustrated” at leaving Parkhead empty handed

Hibs head coach David Gray was frustrated after his side were beaten 3-1 by Celtic at Parkhead in the William Hill Premiership yesterday.

Martin Boyle opened the scoring, but two goals in four minutes at the end of the first half gave the Scottish Champions the lead.

Reo Hatate then scored Celtic's third in the second half to secure the victory.

When speaking to Hibs TV after the game, Gray said: “I’m clearly frustrated because it’s never nice to lose games of football.

“I thought we carried a little bit more threat today, which is important because of how we played last time we were here.

“I thought we started the game positively. The manner of the goals and the timings of the goals were the big sucker blow for the players today.

“To get in-front today was good, I thought the shape was excellent, the effort was there from the players too, but to lose the goals before half-time was a blow. We could’ve gone in 1-0 up, but we went in 2-1 behind and that shows you the level of opposition again because if you switch off for one second, then you’ll be punished.

“Their second goal was a wee bit unfortunate because Boyley slipped just before it. We still have to defend much better in that moment, we know that.

“Second half I got a reaction from the players. We started brightly and had a couple of corners and chances, but that didn’t quite fall for us. The third goal was the killer. Once it goes 3-1 it became very difficult.

“We kept pushing and trying to get back into the game, so I can’t fault the effort of the players, but when you make mistakes in games, you’ll be punished, and we’ve said that a few times this season.”

Hibs will remain third going into the final two games of the William Hill Premiership season, and Gray admits it’s a huge week ahead.

“It’s a massive game. I just said to the players then ‘this is the biggest week of your lives now because of what’s at stake with two games to go’. If we win both games it doesn’t matter what anyone else does, and that has to be in the players’ minds, the staff, and everyone involved with the Football Club.

“When we get back on the pitch on Monday, we have to have full focus on going to Paisley. They’re the only team we haven’t beat and we’re desperate to put that right.

“From where we were to where we are now, we have a huge opportunity still. The players need to give absolute everything so that we see this through.”