

# **Hibernian Women claim SWPL title with victory at Ibrox**

**Hibernian Women claimed their first SWPL title in 18-years thanks to a superb victory over Rangers at Ibrox this afternoon.**

Linzi Taylor scored the decisive goal which means Champions League football next year.

Head coach Grant Scott insisted that Hibs were heading along the M8 looking for a win even though a draw would have been enough. And his players did just that.

Rangers started on the front foot winning multiple corners, but Noa Schumacher managed to clear each one.

In a feisty encounter Hibs Caley-Gibb and Rangers Nicola Docherty were both shown early yellow cards for separate offences.

Gibb's was for a shirt pull on Mia McAulay and Docherty's for her challenge on Kathleen McGovern.

Katie Wilkinson then set up McAulay but Schumacher did well to save.

At the other end McGovern sent a teasing ball into the Rangers box but Ciara Grant shot straight at Jenna Fife.

McAulay was lucky not to see a yellow card for a petulant push on Gibb after a free-kick was awarded against her.

Rangers continued to press forward and McAulay went close with

a curled effort from 15-yards and that was the last clear chance of the first-half.

Stacey Papadopoulos replaced Gibb, at half time.

Eight minutes after the restart Kirsten Reilly's long-range strike struck the crossbar with the Rangers keeper helpless.

Eilidh Adams was next to try her luck, but her effort was blocked.

In the 57<sup>th</sup> minute Michaela McAlonie was replaced by Rosie Livingstone.

Reilly tried another long-range effort, but Fife saved easily.

At the other end Wilkinson fired straight at Schumacher.

Chelsea Cornett was shown a yellow card for a late challenge in midfield and from the resultant free-kick the ball fell to Adams who fired over the bar.

Ciara Grant was then booked for a late challenge.

Brogan Hay and Laura Berry replaced Jodie McLeary and Kirsty Howat with 20-minutes remaining.

Two minutes later Hibs took the lead in dramatic fashion, Linzi Taylor collected the ball in midfield, strode forward and slid the ball to McGovern.

The Hibs striker kept the ball in before crossing it into the path of Taylor who volleyed the ball past Fife to the delight of the large travelling support.

McGovern tried to lob Fife from 25-yards, but the effort was off target.

In the 80<sup>th</sup> minute Adams was replaced by Abbie Ferguson.

Hunter then did well to tackle Hardy in the box as the Rangers player was about to pull the trigger from 10-yards.

Rangers piled on the pressure and Hunter produced a vital block to deny McAulay.

Jane Ross and Lizzie Arnot came on for the last five minutes as a last throw of the dice.

Hunter was shown a yellow card for a foul on Hay.

In the last action of the game McGovern broke clear on the half-way line and Laura Rafferty deliberately tripped her, earning a red card.

As soon as the free-kick was taken the referee blew his whistle sparking wild celebrations.

After the final whistle goal scorer Taylor told Sky Sports when asked to sum up her feelings: "Honestly a bit emotional. I don't think it's set in yet.

"But I am absolutely delighted for that group of players and the fans that have followed us near and far,

"I'm honestly made up." On her goal she said: "I remember getting the ball and getting tackled on the edge of the box. I just saw the space and thought I'd take it and luckily my legs had a wee bit left in them.

"I can't believe it. It's the stuff you dream of when you were a wee girl. For anyone watching today, young girls and boys, this is the stuff of dreams.

"I am absolutely delighted. We knew a draw would have got us the win, but we came here for three points and that's exactly what we done.

"A lot of people wrote us off, especially when you look back to the 4-0 game at Easter Road but you look how far we have

come as a team. Working together. Everybody's in it for each other. That's from the coaching staff down to the medical team.

"They've kept everyone going throughout the season the sports psychologists.

"This isn't about us as a group of players it's about everybody. As a club they have given us their backing and thankfully we have showed them what we can do.

"For me it's unbelievable. The fans have showed up in their numbers every single week and always made a noise and for us it's probably what has got us over the line most of the time. This is for them as well."

## **Rangers 0 Hibernian 1**

Rangers: Fife, Rafferty, Middag, Docherty, McLeary, Cornet, Maclean, McAulay, Hardy, Howat, Wilkinson.

*Substitutes:* Esson, Hill, Hay, Ross, Arnot, Berry, Lafaix.

Hibernian: Schumacher, Doran-Barr, Hunter, L Taylor, Gibb, Reilly, Grant, McAlonie, Adams, McGovern, Morrison.

*Substitutes:* Armitage, Papadopoulos, Ferguson, Tweedie, Notley, Livingstone, Boyle, Ramsay, I Taylor.