**Jason Cummings Hibernian Forward**

20-year-old Jason Cummings grew up a Hearts fan and attended Tynecastle High School playing for local boys team Hutchison Vale. From there he joined SPL club Hearts who have a long history of taking youngsters from this excellent boys club.

After struggling with injuries he was released by Hearts in 2012. After an impressive season with Hutchison Vale he was signed by their Edinburgh rivals Hibernian in the summer of 2013.

Cummings made his debut for Hibernian in an SPL match against Inverness Caledonian Thistle in November 2013. On 21 May 2014, Cummings announced his credentials on Sky TV live, as he scored his first career goals, netting twice as Hibernian won 2–0 against Hamilton in the first leg of the Scottish Premiership Play-offs.

However, Cummings missed in the penalty shootout after Hibs lost the return leg 2–0. That relegated Hibs to the Scottish Championship. And the result saw manager Terry Butcher sacked.

Cummings won the SPFL young player of the month award for September 2014, after his two goals helped Hibs to beat Rangers in Glasgow.

Jason Cummings was the Scottish Championship’s top scorer with 19 league goals. He has now scored 25 Championship goals in 43 games for Hibernian at this level.

However he failed to score in 16 games in the SPL in his breakthrough season and it is notable that at this lower level he has been removed from the action 26 times in 43 matches. Yes, many of those substitutions will have been to save Cummings’ legs late on or for to allow Hibs to refresh their frontline but still the impression remains that Cummings contributes little when he doesn’t score.

He was selected for Scotland’s U21 squad v Hungary during the 2014-15 season and has played twice now at this level.

1.78 cm tall, He is a squat, explosive, physically strong, direct forward with good upper body strength, a powerful early shot and a real eye for goal. He is a confident, sometimes selfish player but he knows where the goals are and his movement of the ball is excellent. He is a dangerous runner in behind when playing in a side that exploit quick transitions and look to play to create chances with throughballs.

Cummings has quick feet and good pace. He is a cool finisher, generally holding his composure to slot the ball under the keeper or by following in teammates’ attempts on goal.

Cummings appears to have no appetite to play on the half-turn or with his back to goal. He wants to be facing the goals at all times either running beyond the defence, shooting from distance (centrally or after cutting in from the right to shoot left-footed). Other goals occur due to his arriving late in the box to convert crosses at the back post.

The striker is a classic number nine and when he is not scoring he offers little to Hibernian’s general play with or without the ball.

He has a record of 25 goals in 45 Hibs appearances. With 14 of those games played from the bench as a substitute that is a very good return in terms of goals.

However, my sense is that he needs to add other attributes to his game unless he is considered to be just an out of fashion bully forward of slow, pushed up back fours.

And of course, being wholly reliant on pace and power and being very left-footed, it remains to be seen whether he could still flourish in a better grade of football. Whether Cummings can or not is probably down to the player, the guidance he receives and his attitude for self-improvement. Does Cummings want to be a star player or just a star at Hibs, the club he supports? That would be my one big question about the player.

He is a confident boy, a bubbly presence and clearly a striker that relishes big games. The main impression though is that his confidence is a reflection of a basic level of stupidity. He has no fear because it doesn’t occur to him to be afraid.

Cummings’ weaknesses primarily relate to his counter-productive mentality. His ability to attract off-field controversy is part of the same situation that sees him make bad onfield decisions in possession where his only interest is scoring goals and personal glory, regardless of the positioning of his teammates around him.

Cummings signed a 3-year deal with Hibs in 2014 as the club looked to fend off interest from Swansea.

Cummings has a lot of raw potential and could be a star in a side that can exploit his pace and power in fast breaks or a direct style of play.

However, the player’s mentality and public persona suggests that any deal involving a significant transfer few and wages would have to be considered to be a bit of a gamble for the buying club. Cummings may be just a talented idiot living off his natural talent and if that’s the case it won’t be enough to succeed at a higher level than Scotland’s SPL.