

# Hibs and Spartans in Unique Collaboration



Hibernian FC and Spartans FC today announced a unique collaboration aimed at creating the best development pathway for young football players in Scotland.

The two clubs are each renowned in their own right for their work in identifying and developing young footballers.

They have now reached a landmark agreement that will see the best youngsters developed by Spartans progress through a jointly run Transition Academy.

In particular, the Hibernian & Spartans Transition Academy will initially focus on the development of the most promising 8-11 year olds identified by coaches from the two clubs within a joint set-up, administered by a joint Board.

It is the intention to extend the joint arrangement as these youngsters grow older. The Hibernian Academy, within the Scottish FA's Club Academy Scotland programme, is already one of Scotland's leading elite academies and this relationship will help build its reputation further.

The two clubs will work together at coach and director levels, to develop highly skilled, flexible young football players through a structured and consistent approach.

The superb facilities both clubs enjoy at the Hibernian Training Centre near Tranent and at Ainslie Park in Edinburgh will be used to ensure that the clubs are well-placed to work with the best young footballers in Edinburgh, East Lothian and the Lothians.

In addition, the two clubs will also work together on

initiatives to further develop the facilities offered at the Hibernian Training Centre and to promote community football initiatives.

Craig Graham, Chairman of Spartans FC said: “We have been looking to collaborate with an SPFL Club for some time, and Hibernian is an excellent partner for us given the Club’s ethos around youth development, its reputation for developing young players and the quality of its facilities. We were keen to align to the SFA’s strategy for regional academies for the very best young players and this partnership does just that.

This agreement will see us take an holistic approach to creating a player pathway which will enable our young players to enjoy elite football in a supportive environment and graduate from the Transition Academy better equipped for life, education and the appropriate level of football participation.”

Leeann Dempster, Chief Executive of Hibernian FC, added: “Hibernian is delighted to have agreed this collaboration with Spartans which rightly enjoys an unrivalled reputation for the extraordinary success of its community and grass roots football work, and for all that it does to develop young footballers from an early age.

“This collaboration will see both Clubs benefit from working together to provide a player development pathway which will be unrivalled in Scottish football.”

Key points include:

The joint Board will set objectives, create a business plan, and review progress and activity

Coaches will meet monthly, and will adopt a cohesive and consistent approach to develop a Hibernian/Spartans style through a skills-based approach to player development

The new set up will identify and recruit the best young players, attract funding, and create the best possible environment for the development of young players

The best quality coaches will be recruited to the new programme

Leeann added: "This agreement opens the door to further collaboration between the two Clubs across a raft of activity in the future. We see great potential benefits for both Clubs."