

# Hibs continue to put their trust in youngsters from the Academy



Head of Academy Coaching Eddie May has explained that Hibs are continuing to put their trust in youngsters rather than supplement the squad with older player more suited to the new SPFL Reserve League and SPFL Reserve Cup this season.

Despite the wholesale change in Scottish football that the club have decided to give the players currently at the top end of the Hibernian Academy the chance to develop to become part of Neil Lennon's first team squad.

This fits into the overall objective of the Scottish Football Association's Project Brave, with Hibs named as one of the elite clubs in November 2017.

The aim of the SFA's project is to improve the overall standard of Scottish footballers, with a view to enhancing the

domestic game as well as helping to produce talent for the Scotland national team.

Hibs were audited and named as one of the top four academies in Scotland and May believes that with players in all age level sides for the national team that the project is functioning well, but admits that he is always looking to improve the Academy.

He told Hibs' TV: "We still regard the Development Squad as part of the Academy. We've not committed to go and sign guys that are older to supplement our first team.

"The players in the squad will be given the opportunity, probably for another year to continue to develop and see if they can grow and be part of the first team squad. This is the main reason it is still being called the Development Squad, rather than the Reserves.

"Maybe in around two years' time we may look to move into a Reserve Squad structure as these players will have come out of the Academy system.

"We're not there. A lot of other clubs have committed and signed players for a Reserve team. We haven't done that because we want to give these boys another opportunity for one more year to become part of the first team squad."

Eddie said: "Hibs are reported to be one of the top four teams in Scotland. We double-passed a team from Belgium who audits clubs from all around the world and they regard Hibs as one of the top four academies in Scotland.

"We are looking continue to invest and to improve to get our players to go on and play at a really good level so we can be the best in Scotland. It's a hard ask as there's a lot of good teams in the league who have good academies and good players within them.

“All we can do is look after our own players, try to get our structure, and try to develop the players to a really high level where they can go and play in our first team.

“Project Brave has focused on the elite clubs and for them to deliver players for international level. We have currently got players at every level playing for Scotland.

“We can only do our best, but the demand here is to play to a level where the Hibernian first team is at – which is currently a very high level.”