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Scottish Football Partnership



Scottish Football Partnership Trust

SUPPORTING SCOTTISH FOOTBALL AT THE GRASSROOTS

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Scottish Football Partnership Trust

SUPPORTING SCOTTISH FOOTBALL AT THE GRASSROOTS

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UPDATE ON SPORTS FIRST AID:

A programme to ensure safer sport

SPORTS FIRST AID
IN NUMBERS

SFP INVESTED
IN EXCESS OF
£146,400

1,259
COACHES
UPSKILLED IN
SPORTS FIRST
AID TRAINING

SAFEGUARDING
OVER
55,000
PLAYERS

In October 2012, Owen Coyle helped to launch the SFP's three year National First Aid programme in partnership with The National Stadium Sports Medicine Centre to train coaches working at non-professional level within the Scottish Youth FA, the Scottish Amateur FA, Scottish Women's Football, the Scottish Junior FA and the East of Scotland FA in Sports First Aid. The courses have been delivered at Hampden Park and at various other locations throughout the country from as far north as Orkney to Newton Stewart in the south west, making this a truly pan-Scottish initiative. At the launch, Owen commented that "It is great to see The Scottish Football Partnership taking a lead in such a vital area that will be greatly appreciated by players, coaches and parents across Scotland."

The Scottish Football Partnership has invested in excess of £146,400 in this initiative, which includes the costs associated with facility hire and tutor travel for operating these courses in Scotland. As a direct result, an impressive 1,259 coaches have been upskilled in Sports First Aid over the past three years.

James Clydesdale, SFP Chairman commented "This has been a huge investment from the Partnership but one which we firmly believe will bring enormous benefit to the game."

Project Background provided by Dr. John A. MacLean

Physical activity, including organised sport, is now well recognised as providing a major benefit for health including the prevention and treatment of disease. With the increasing level of inactivity in our population, sport has a key role in trying to reverse this trend especially in young people. However, sports participation is not without risk, with around 20 million sporting injuries reported annually in the UK.

As a result of our overall commitment to help the sporting community, it is vital to make sport safer. We should aim to do this in part through improving the first aid knowledge and skills of people involved in sport and exercise, e.g. athletes, coaches, referees, teachers and even the parents of children engaging in sport.

We should ensure that the end result of this improved sports first aid training will be that the first person present after an incident has occurred will be capable of administering appropriate immediate, perhaps emergency, first aid.

What is the difference between FIRST AID and SPORTS FIRST AID?

Appropriate treatment of sporting injuries can be different from those faced in a normal "accident" environment. A trauma experienced on the field of play is likely to be very different from that found at work or at a road traffic accident. Judgement can be critical in assessing when a player should be removed from the field of play, especially a child, very often against the wishes of a coach/team manager or even a parent.

How is the course taught and what is the content?

The course is administered by The National Stadium Sports Medicine Centre at Hampden Park in Glasgow and delivered by a number of tutors with experience in both sport and education. It is endorsed by a number of Governing Bodies in sport, is 16-hours long (typically over two days) and is fully assessed by a theoretical and practical examination. The course is aimed at teachers, coaches, those who are on the touchline for sporting teams or events, health care professionals, sport and leisure course students, leisure and fitness instructors, parents and sports participants themselves.

The course covers basic first aid with an emphasis on sporting injuries including assessment of the unconscious patient, CPR including the use of an AED (automated external defibrillator) and the treatment of head and spinal injuries, assessment of sports injuries, immediate management – bleeding, shock, fractures, dislocations and soft tissue injuries and when to return to sport. In addition, the course covers a number of medical aspects such as asthma, diabetes and seizures.



"The course organisers have worked closely with the SFP over recent years, teaching the course to hundreds of football players and coaches. This has proven to be an excellent relationship, with hundreds of course participants over the years trying to fulfil our aim of having a trained sports first aider on-site at every sporting event."

Dr. John MacLean, Chief Executive of The National Stadium Sports Medicine Centre



"The Scottish Youth FA was delighted to receive support from the Scottish Football Partnership. The support received has been the single biggest investment in grassroots football volunteers. It has allowed first aid training for 920 volunteers to an agreed standard that safeguards our 55,000 young players."

David Little, Secretary, Scottish Youth FA



"The member clubs of the East of Scotland Football League have benefited in the past year from funding provided by The Scottish Football Partnership for the provision of sports first aid training, such that all of our members now have at least one person, and in many cases two people, with a recognised qualification in this field. This course, delivered by The National Stadium Sports Medicine Centre, has been invaluable in raising the standard of first aid available to our players and spectators throughout the League."

John Greenhorn, Vice Chairman, East of Scotland Football League



"The funding from the Scottish Football Partnership has allowed the Scottish Amateur FA to provide Sports Medical Courses to our member clubs which has provided the players with an improved level of medical support when required."

Thomas McKeown, Secretary, Scottish Amateur FA



"The Scottish Junior FA and its member clubs are delighted with the financial support given by The Scottish Football Partnership for Sports First Aid education courses. This has allowed our clubs to demonstrate not only a duty of care but provide a level of much needed expertise for the treatment of players."

Tom Johnston, Secretary, Scottish Junior F.A.



"The funding which has been made available by the SFP for girls and women's club officials to obtain their First Aid badges is vital to ensuring there is the best possible help on the sidelines for any accidents or injuries which could occur during a match. With over 68 senior and 117 youth female clubs within Scotland, this element of safety is crucial to all concerned within the domestic game and everyone at Scottish Women's Football would like to thank The Scottish Football Partnership for their support."

Gillian Graham, Scottish Women's Football



SFP Trust Award for The Boys' Brigade



Club:
The Boy's Brigade Scotland
Founded: 1883

The SFP Trust was delighted to be able to make an award to The Boys' Brigade Scotland to assist with the installation costs of new floodlights at their new 3G pitch at Carronvale House in Larbert, Stirlingshire. As part of The Boys' Brigade in Scotland's year-long £1 million fundraising appeal for its central residential hub, Carronvale House, Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health, officially opened the new outdoor sports facility on 28th October, 2015. The £20,000 floodlit all-weather 3G pitch, which was funded by Awards For All, The Scottish Football Partnership Trust and The Boys' Brigade with the astro-turf being supplied and fitted by Stenhousemuir FC, will enable local sports groups and Boys' Brigade members to enjoy football, hockey, rugby and tennis throughout the year.

Jamie Hepburn MSP, Minister for Sport, Health Improvement and Mental Health, said:

"Sport plays an important role in people's lives. Not only does it provide health and wellbeing elements, but it also comprises competition, teamwork and leadership – all of which are key aspects of The Boys' Brigade. I'm delighted this new, upgraded facility for the local community and sports groups to enjoy is up and running and would like to thank those organisations and bodies that have made it possible by providing funding and the man hours to bring it to life.

I recall from my own time as a member how important sports and recreation are in The BB programme and it's encouraging to see the organisation continue to invest in sporting programmes and facilities."

For almost 70 years Carronvale House has provided thousands of BB young people and leaders as well as local schools, community groups and overseas visitors with unforgettable experiences. The house works as a centre for a huge range of uses including training courses, evening sports events and residential programmes. The Carronvale Appeal, launched earlier this year, will use funds collected by members and the general public for a refurbishment programme designed to ensure the building maintains its place at the heart of the organisation for generations of BB young people and those throughout the local community, to come.

Bill Stevenson, Director of the Boys' Brigade in Scotland, said:

"The opening of the outdoor all-weather surface and new floodlighting is an exciting step in the renewal of the Carronvale facility and a major achievement for the overall 'Carronvale Appeal'. It marks a major improvement in the recreational facilities which will benefit the many BB groups but also the wider Larbert community."

"Sport plays an important role in people's lives. Not only does it provide health and wellbeing elements, but it also comprises competition, teamwork and leadership"

JAMIE HEPBURN
MSP, MINISTER FOR
SPORT, HEALTH
IMPROVEMENT AND
MENTAL HEALTH



SFP Trust Award for Peebles F.C.



Club: Peebles F.C.
Founded: 2006
Ground: Whitestone Park, Peebles

The SFP Trust has made a funding Award to assist Peebles F.C in purchasing new portable 11v11 goalposts. Colin George from the Scottish FA Quality Mark club which boasts over 400 playing members said "We would like to thank everyone at the SFP Trust for their continued support of grassroots football."



SFP Trust Award – Westerlands L.A.F.C



Club: Westerlands LAFC
Founded: 2015

The Scottish Football Partnership Trust has made an Award to Westerlands L.A.F.C to assist with the cost of purchasing new training kit and equipment. The new Ladies section of Westerlands A.F.C, a club which has been in existence since 1967, has already attracted 31 members and with interest continuing to grow in the club a second ladies team is likely to be established at the end of this year. Club coach Niall Marshall said, "We are very grateful to the SFP Trust for providing the financial assistance required to purchase new training and match day equipment. This equipment will allow us to provide our players with a higher standard of training experience on a weekly basis and we hope this will enable us to retain our large numbers of female participants and also encourage more ladies to join our club."

SFP Trust Award for Carolside Sports Club



Club:
Carolside Sports Club
Founded: 2009

Carolside Sports Club in Clarkston, founded in 2009, recently received an award of portable fun four goals from The SFP Trust. The club's aim is to advance participation in football amongst boys and girls at Carolside Primary School and the surrounding areas, with the object of improving the conditions of life for the club's young players. Crawford Nicolson from the club said "We aim to provide a complete pathway for players at the club, by offering them the opportunity to participate in football from primary age through to adult teams. We approached The Scottish Football Partnership Trust with a view to getting some new goals for our 2009s and 2010s teams. 2009 have 28 players playing on Saturday mornings. The extra funding has allowed us to purchase six goals for this year group. Suddenly 2009 will be able to practice the skills needed for their Saturday development using goals identical to those used by ERSDA. This is a fantastic bonus for club coaches who have been running drills accordingly. More importantly the 2009 kids get the satisfaction of rounding off their passing or dribbling drill with finding the back of the net – cue happy little faces! 2010 are our new primary ones. To create a desire to play

they too have new goals thanks to the SFP Trust's generosity. This means they should be well-prepared for four-a-side next year. However we can hear them already telling their fathers "I scored five goals daddy"! The funding has allowed us to develop the youngest and newest members of the club as they fall in love with football."



Creating new partnerships

The Scottish Football Partnership Trust has been fortunate enough to receive a donation of £2,000 from SMS Technology to support grassroots football clubs in the South Lanarkshire area. The SFPT would like to thank the company for their generous support and already this funding has allowed us to make a recent award to Moorlands F.C., a Scottish FA Quality Mark club based in Uddingston, to help fund the purchase of portable floodlights and portable 7-v-7 goalposts. Tom Jackson, Chairman at the club said "We are grateful to the SFP Trust and SMS Technology for this generous award which will assist us in part-funding vital equipment to allow our 300 young playing members to increase their football activity throughout the full calendar year at our playing facility at St. John The Baptist Primary School."



SFP COMMUNITY INITIATIVE UPDATE

Take a look at what our top professional clubs have been up to in the Community.

Following the successful launch of our SFP Community Initiative in April of this year, an investment of £355,467 has been made available to 36 of Scotland's professional football clubs. During the application process, these clubs were encouraged to add value to their individual programmes and this has increased the overall project value to a staggering £780,000. This sum will be invested in communities throughout Scotland over the next 12 months for initiatives based around the areas of Football Development, Health and

Wellbeing, Disability Inclusion, Community and Social Development and Schools and Education Engagement. Stuart McCaffrey, Chief Operating Officer of the SFP said "It has been encouraging to see such a tremendous uptake in our initiative from so many clubs and to see first-hand the enthusiasm of those involved in the delivery of the various projects. The diverse range of schemes being delivered provides further evidence of the positive power of football and is a great example of the excellent work Scotland's professional clubs are so well placed to deliver to members of the local community". Here's a sample of some of the fantastic projects which our football clubs are delivering across the country.



ST. MIRREN F.C. — FOOTEA PROJECT

Ross Paterson, Football Development Officer said “This project will allow St. Mirren F.C. the opportunity to use football to engage with these young children – they will learn, train, play and eat as a ‘team’ and hopefully the importance and ethos of working together to achieve desired goals will stay with them long after the programme has concluded.”



ALLOA ATHLETIC F.C. — NEW FOOTBALL ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS

Alex Brown, Trustee of the Wasp Community Club commented “These multi-strand initiatives will include exciting projects ranging from the formation of ethnic minorities teams to the operation of a street league programme. The Football Development area will concentrate more on the provision of girls’ football, walking football, coach training and over-35s football.”



KILMARNOCK F.C. — “MATCH FIT” PROJECT FOR LOCAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Paul Di Giacomo, the club’s Community Engagement Manager said “This project is about improving the lives of the individuals involved and aims to support these young people in the transition from childhood to adulthood and hopefully assist them make the correct life choices.”



ANNAN ATHLETIC F.C. — INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES PROJECT

Henry McClelland, the club’s Chairman commented “One of the main objectives of Annan Athletic F.C. is to ensure that, as a community club, the facilities on offer at Galabank are utilised by the community to its full capacity and we are keen to engage with groups such as these young children in nurseries as well as helping more vulnerable people have the opportunity to develop not only new physical skills but those including resilience and motivation to overcome challenges through hard work.”

INVERNESS CALEY THISTLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST — HEALTHY HEART SCHOOL PROGRAMME

“This project will, without a doubt, create an awareness in these children of their individual health and of the opportunities that are available to them to improve their wellbeing. It will help them understand how exercise can affect the body in a positive manner, empowering them to make healthy life choices.”
Craig Masterton, Head of Community



ABERDEEN FC COMMUNITY TRUST — EQUITY FOOTBALL CENTRES

“This project will provide the opportunity for over 130 children, young people and adults to take part in football, many of whom are from an ethnic or religious minority background, allowing them to gain a greater sense of belonging to their local community and to achieve a higher level of confidence.”
Ally Prockter, Chief Executive Officer of AFCCT



CELTIC FC FOUNDATION — EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

Tony Hamilton, Chief Executive of Celtic FC Foundation said: “The lasting benefit of this project to the wider community will be that although many of our young people come from third generation unemployment, we will provide them with the opportunity, experience and skill set to understand employment and help them to become resilient, adaptable and determined to succeed.”



QUEEN OF THE SOUTH F.C. — WALKING FOOTBALL INITIATIVE WITH HEADWAY HOUSE

“It is anticipated that the project will raise awareness and understanding of brain injury and its consequences whilst promoting and assisting in rehabilitation and community reintegration by using football as the medium to bring about positive change in the lives of individuals and communities.”
Jim Thomson, Head of Youth & Community.

RANGERS F.C. — “READY2SUCCEED” EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

Senior Community Coach Alan Boyd said: “Our aim is to encourage participants to take control of their future, to increase their motivation, confidence and give them transferable skills they can take to the workplace”



STRANRAER F.C. — FOOTBALL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT WITH LOCAL NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

David McMillan from the club said “We are delighted to be engaging with the town’s young people and hope the long-term benefits will provide these youngsters with a more active lifestyle and a pathway to playing and enjoying football as they move into adulthood.”

HIBERNIAN F.C. COMMUNITY FOUNDATION — GRASSROOTS FOOTBALL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Wendy MacAdie, Executive Director of the Community Foundation stated “These projects will assist in promoting our commitment to participation in grassroots football, regardless of income, ability or disability and will allow a considerable number of children, young people and adults to access the game and encourage the growth of football in the Edinburgh area.”



COWDENBEATH F.C. — SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

“This new funding will allow the club to expand its existing programme by adding up to 10 breakfast, lunch or after-school football sessions for potentially 150-300 boys and girls over a 36 week programme.” Tom Ewing, Club Director

ROSS COUNTY F.C. — “COUNTY’S CLIMATE CHALLENGE” PROJECT

“The club hope that this project will have a lasting effect on the children by educating them on the values associated with taking care of the environment and the effect of climate change. The physical engagement aspect of the project will see increased activity for these young children which will hopefully encourage them to lead a more active and healthier lifestyle as they grow into adulthood.” Steven Ferguson, Head of Youth & Community



36 PARTICIPATING CLUBS

in The Scottish Football Partnership’s new Community Initiative...

ABERDEEN F.C.
FOOTBALL EQUITY PROJECT
100 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £31,690

AIRDRIEONANS F.C.
“DIAMOND FOR LIFE”
SCHOOL PROJECT
75 PARTICIPANTS
VALUE £13,400

ALBION ROVERS F.C.
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT
195 PARTICIPANTS.
PROJECT VALUE £15,200

ALLOA ATHLETIC F.C.
FOOTBALL ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT
120 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £14,015

ANNAN ATHLETIC F.C.
INSPIRING ACTIVE LIVES
PROGRAMME
420 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,872

ARBROATH F.C.
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT
570 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,338

AYR UNITED FOOTBALL ACADEMY
WALKING FOOTBALL
PROGRAMME
120 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £20,180

BERWICK RANGERS F.C.
MINI-KICKERS PROGRAMME
500 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £14,500

CELTIC F.C. FOUNDATION
EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT
FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
16 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,500

CLYDE F.C. COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT
“GET ONSIDE”
32 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £16,460

COWDENBEATH F.C.
SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT
300 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £23,250

DUNDEE UNITED F.C.
SCHOOLS FOOTBALL
ENGAGEMENT PROJECT
8,640 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £30,785

DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC F.C.
SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT
5,000 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £18,300

EAST FIFE YOUTH ACADEMY
“WEE FIFERS” PROGRAMME
1,200 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £26,780

FALKIRK F.C. COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
“ACTIVATE” PROGRAMME
12 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £14,480

FORFAR ATHLETIC F.C.
OVER 35S FOOTBALL
DEVELOPMENT
80 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,400

GREENOCK MORTON COMMUNITY TRUST
“POSITIVE GOALS”
EMPLOYABILITY
24 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £55,361

HAMILTON ACADEMICAL COMMUNITY TRUST
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT
65 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £18,000

HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN F.C.
WALKING FOOTBALL &
SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT
130 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,333

HIBERNIAN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRASSROOTS ENGAGEMENT
PROJECT
124 PARTICIPANTS.
PROJECT VALUE £13,520

INVERNESS CALEDONIAN THISTLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST
“HEALTHY HEART” SCHOOL
PROJECT
500 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £75,750

KILMARNOCK F.C.
MATCH FIT SCHOOL
PROGRAMME
75 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £17,525

LIVINGSTON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
SCHOOL OF FOOTBALL
PROJECT
32 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £31,690

MONTROSE F.C. (LINKS PARK COMMUNITY TRUST)
COMMUNITY FOOTBALL
LEAGUES
390 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £19,550

MOTHERWELL F.C. COMMUNITY TRUST
“TEAM FOR ME” FAMILY
PROJECT
400 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,400

PARTICK THISTLE F.C.
FEMALE FOOTBALL
DEVELOPMENT
50 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £24,209

QUEEN OF THE SOUTH F.C.
WALKING FOOTBALL/
ALZHEIMER PROJECT
44 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £19,524

QUEEN’S PARK F.C.
COMMUNITY FOOTBALL
PROJECT
40 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £32,470

RAITH ROVERS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
COMMUNITY FOOTBALL
PROJECT
424 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £15,240

RANGERS F.C.
“READY2SUCCEED”
EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT
16 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £14,621.20

ROSS COUNTY F.C. FOUNDATION
“CLIMATE CHALLENGE”
SCHOOL PROJECT
7,560 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £12,880

STENHOUSEMUIR F.C.
“WARRIORS IN THE COMMUNITY”
“TAKE THE LEAD”
EMPLOYABILITY PROJECT
24 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £22,014

STIRLING ALBION F.C.
NURSERY ENGAGEMENT
PROGRAMME
700 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £15,200

ST. JOHNSTONE F.C.
GIRLS FOOTBALL
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
310 PARTICIPANTS.
PROJECT VALUE £12,680

ST. MIRREN F.C.
“FOOTEA”PROJECT FOR
CHILDREN
85 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £13,500

STRANRAER F.C.
FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECT
1,000 PARTICIPANTS
PROJECT VALUE £28,000



TALKING A GOOD GAME

The BIG Interview with St Johnstone star Liam Craig

SFP: Kicking off – You grew up in Chirnside near Berwick. At what age did you start playing football and how did you get into the game?

LC: I started playing organised football when I was 7 years old. Unfortunately my village never had a team so I had to travel 12 miles up the road to play for Coldstream under 11's. Kids today have so many options and choices for spending their spare time, but for me back then it was all about kicking a ball at every opportunity I could get.

SFP: Jumpers for Goalposts – What format of the game did you initially play and what are your views on youngsters today playing 4v4 and 7v7 football prior to going onto full size 11v11 matches?

LC: I played 7v7 to begin with however I was playing against boys who were 3 or 4 years older than me. I think these days we are able to introduce kids to the game at a much younger age and playing on smaller pitches against kids their own age will help them develop more technical skills in a fun and safe environment.

SFP: Big Influence – Thinking about your time as a player at grassroots level is there a particular coach you worked with who stands out and, if so, did he impart any advice on you which has stayed with you throughout your career?

LC: Like most young boys, my dad had a particularly big influence on my development at this time. His advice has always stuck with me and I can still recall him telling me to always keep on doing the right things, work hard and keep a good attitude towards the game even if things are not going well and regardless of the score line. "You never know who is watching" he would say. His advice certainly helped in my first season at Coldstream because we never won very often as I remember. I firmly believe that your attitude and application is something you can control and this is something I continue to focus on in my career even to this day.

SFP: Unsung heroes - With grassroots football currently thriving in Scotland within both the male and female game what are your views on the importance of the volunteer coaches who give up so much of their time to give young people opportunities to play?

LC: It is incredible the level of work and commitment that grassroots volunteers put in when you consider the amount of time being involved in the game takes up, on top of their working and family life. I think it is important that the football authorities continue to find ways to support and upskill grassroots coaches as they have the young players at such an impressionable age and stage in their development both on and off the pitch. Grassroots coaches are helping to mould the next generation of young people in society as well as shaping the future of our game and are an integral part of the football cycle.

SFP: The next generation – You have two young children Calvin (4) and Jessica (2). Will you be encouraging them to play football and if so do you think the game can play an important part in the personal development of young people?

LC: I think it is important we give young people as many options to participate in sport as we can and my wife Laura and I will try to do that for Calvin and Jessica. Calvin has already started regular football activity with Stenhousemuir in the community which he is really enjoying. In a short space of time, I can see great improvements in his confidence and physical development and most importantly he is keeping active, making new friends and having fun. I even think my keen eye for a goal has even rubbed off on him!

SFP: Facilities – What are your views on the importance of having good playing and changing facilities in order to encourage young people to take up the game?

LC: When I was younger, a football pitch was anywhere we could find space to kick a ball around. I realise that times have changed and kids playing football in the street appears to be a thing of the past. I believe modern facilities have a place in terms of encouraging participation and I think if we could have more facilities like Toryglen and Ravenscraig it would definitely help to offset the challenges we have in Scotland with our weather during the winter months. It is particularly difficult to coach kids when it is cold however it is amazing to think that my own son at 4 years old regularly plays football on the FIFA 2 star Stadium 3G pitch at Ochilview. This is a far cry from the pitches I grew up playing on and I think in the long term synthetic surfaces can help improve the technical development of players.

SFP: 3G or Natural Grass -Are you a fan of 3G surfaces both in terms of training and on match days with more and more Scottish Clubs including one of your former teams, Falkirk F.C., moving to a synthetic stadium surface in the last couple of seasons.

LC: Personally I prefer to play and train on natural grass however I do understand the economic benefits 3G surfaces bring to clubs in terms of reducing training costs and generating additional income. The artificial

surfaces are definitely getting better and are beneficial for the development of young players and with so many kids growing up playing on them, I think they will become less controversial and more clubs will look at them as a real option.

SFP: Tractor Boys – You joined your first senior club Ipswich Town in 2002 and spent 3 seasons at Portman Road. Was turning professional always your goal and how did you adapt to the rigours of full-time football and being away from home at such a young age? Trivia, do you know why the club and supporters are sometimes referred to as the 'Tractor Boys'?

LC: I grew up wanting to be a professional footballer and it was really my sole focus, perhaps to the detriment of my studies at school. I can now look back with hindsight and realise that education is very important as only a small percentage of people actually ever get to live out their dream of becoming a player. I have been very fortunate to have made a career in the game however I think it is important for young people to have a plan B and more options. Going full-time and being away from home was very tough however it definitely helped me to grow up in a hurry. Ipswich was a great club which really knew how to look after its young players. I learned a lot at the club in terms of the sacrifices and focus required both on and off the pitch if you want to make it in the game. My time at the club helped shape me into the player I am today. I believe 'Tractor Boys' comes from Ipswich's countryside location in Suffolk.

SFP: The Bairns – At age 18 you moved to Falkirk and between 2005 and 2008 you made 58 first team appearances scoring 4 goals. Was the move to the club about having more opportunities to play first team football and what are your views on the importance of giving young players game time within this environment to aid their development?

LC: Having just won the FA Youth Cup six months earlier, I spoke to the Manager, Joe Royale and in his view my first team opportunities were likely to be scarce and as I was getting closer to 19, his advice was for me to move on. I left Ipswich Town disappointed that I never played for the first team but I did leave the club a better player and the grounding I received in the game has always stood me in good stead. I think more and more young players in Scotland are being given opportunities to play in the first team at the moment and this can only aid their development. Hopefully this is further evidence that our players are being coached better and are ready to take the step up at an earlier age.



"Always believe in yourself and recognise that to get anywhere in life you have to be willing to put in hours of hard work."

Liam Craig
St Johnstone F.C

PLAYER STATS

LIAM CRAIG

Age: 28
Height: 6ft
Weight: 12st 9lb
Squad Number: 26
Position: Midfield
Senior Appearances: 355
Career goals scored: 60

QUICK FIRE SHOOT OUT

Q. Best team in the land – Including yourself, can you pick your best team of 11 players from those you have played with throughout your career and also what's your favoured formation?

3 – 4 – 2 – 1 Formation



Q. Favourite pre-match meal?
Scrambled egg on toast

Q. Toughest opponent?
Barry Ferguson

Q. Best player you have played with?
Russell Latapy

Q. Most memorable goal?
Dunfermline v St Johnstone 35yd strike 2008/2009 Season

Q. Messi or Ronaldo?
Ronaldo

SFP: Perth Saints – Derek McInnes made you one of his first signings when he took over the reins at McDiarmid Park and with the club having been out of the top flight of Scottish football for almost 7 years at that time, how special was the title winning season in 2008/2009? Would it be one of your career highlights to date?

LC: That season was definitely a highlight in my career as winning a league title at senior level is something few get to experience. We had a great mix of youth and experience at the club and a management team who helped install great belief in the players. Going up was, of course, massive for St Johnstone and if you look at our current squad there remains a legacy in what Derek McInnes achieved in his time in charge, in the form of players like Dave McKay, Chris Millar, Murray Davidson, myself and Steven Anderson still being at the club.



SFP: Heading off to Leith – After making 222 appearances and scoring 41 goals for St Johnstone including the goal on the last day of the season in 2013 which cemented the club's 3rd place finish in the league and European football the following season for only the third time in the club's history you moved on to Hibernian F.C. Did you leave Perth with a heavy heart?

LC: Of course it was tough to leave. I had been at the club for over 5 years and in that time we had gone from finishing 3rd in the SFL 1st Division to finishing 3rd in the SPFL and qualifying for Europe. I felt I was going out on a high and I had to take the opportunity to join such a great club like Hibernian.

SFP: Hibeese – During your two seasons at Easter Road the club was relegated and you became the club Captain. Was this a difficult period in your career and how did you deal with the added responsibility of leading the team? Can you take any positives from the experience?

LC: Playing for, let alone captaining a club the size of Hibernian, was an honour and something I will always be proud of. The club being relegated was one of the toughest times in my career however it has made me stronger and more resilient. I could have moved on when Terry Butcher told me I

could leave at the end of that first season but I wanted to come back and help the team win promotion. I'm glad that I did, because getting to work with Alan Stubbs and his staff was a real positive and although we missed out on getting back up through the play-offs, the supporters backed us the whole season and they were terrific.

SFP: Free Agent – For the first time in your career you found yourself without a club during the last close season. This must have been a difficult period of uncertainty for you and one in which many footballers face these days when their contracts come to an end? How did you stay positive and were you ever close to leaving the game?

LC: I never thought at the age of 28 that I would have had to go part-time but that was the reality I faced for most of the summer as it was looking like my only option. Having a young family to support made this a really concerning time and one in which many players live with on an annual basis these days. I did my best to stay focused and worked hard on my own to stay fit in the hope an opportunity would eventually come my way.

SFP: The Gaffer – Tommy Wright showed faith in you to bring you back to St Johnstone F.C. at the tail end of the transfer window. What sets him apart from other Managers you have worked under and do you anticipate further approaches for his services given the fantastic job he has done and continues to do at the club?

LC: I think the Manager knew me well enough to know that I could do a job for him again and that I had not lost my hunger and enthusiasm for the game. St Johnstone is a club built on the principles of hard work and honesty and Tommy Wright sets the bar high on both of these fronts. I am delighted to be back at the club and will be forever grateful to the Gaffer and Callum Davidson for bringing me back to McDiarmid Park. The Manager creates a positive working environment and his management skills help to instil freedom of expression and self-belief amongst the players. With the club winning the Scottish Cup last year and being regular top 6 finishers in the League it is not surprising to see his name linked with other clubs, but I hope we can hang on to him for another couple of seasons.

SFP: Reaching your peak – At 28 you are now moving into the peak of your career and with a League Cup Semi-Final against your old club Hibs to look forward to in the New Year, what are your goals for the rest of this season and the next couple of years?

LC: After last summer I appreciate even more

how lucky I am to be in the game as a full-time professional. On a personal note in the short term if I can continue to help the club's good run of form and pitch in with some goals from midfield hopefully I can earn a new contract for next season. If we can negotiate our very difficult Semi-Final tie and take what chances we get in the Final if we get there then it would be great to bring more success to the club.

SFP: Life after football – Have you any plans in place for the future when it's time to hang up your boots? Would you like to stay in the game? Having played football for your entire working life is moving into another line of work a daunting prospect?

LC: I would love to stay in the game either through coaching or by working in the media. I have always thought coaching would be a natural progression for me and I am currently working towards my UEFA B Licence. It is a great feeling when you work with young players and the coaching and advice you are giving them helps to improve their performance. I think the resilience, professionalism, work ethic and ability to thrive in a pressurised environment are all transferable skills that footballers can take into the next chapter of their working lives whether they remain in the game or move onto something completely different.

SFP: Role Model – In addition to being a full-time professional, you also sit on PFA Scotland's Management Committee and you are also an ambassador for the educational charity "Show Racism the Red Card". Can you explain why you were so keen to be involved with both organisations and do you agree that football players have an important part to play in being positive role models for young people?

LC: As a footballer you are in a privileged position and have opportunities to have a positive influence on young people and this is true whether it's helping a young player out with advice in my role with PFA Scotland or working in schools with the Red Card campaign, teaching kids about the dangers associated with Racism. I have been very fortunate to have had good senior players around me throughout my career and it's amazing how quickly things have gone full circle and now it's my turn to impart my knowledge on other people.

SFP: Words of Wisdom – If you could pass on one piece of advice to our young grassroots readers who are starting out in the game what would it be?

Always believe in yourself and recognise that to get anywhere in life you have to be willing to put in hours of hard work.



East End Thistle awarded new Changing Facilities

The Scottish Football Partnership has made an award of portable changing facilities to East End Thistle. The project which also attracted the support of Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Council will see the club and its 160 players being able to make full use of the grass football pitches within Mount Vernon Park in Glasgow.

David Reid from the club said; "East End Thistle had been granted permission to base ourselves and play our home matches at Mount Vernon Park which houses two full grass pitches. Unfortunately the current changing facilities within the park were in a state of disrepair and were not fit for purpose and it would not have been economically feasible to bring them up to a useable condition. The committee of East End Thistle approached Glasgow Life and The Scottish Football Partnership to see if there was any way in which the situation could be rectified and we were

urged to apply for changing facilities from the Football Partnership. Thankfully we were successful and our new facilities consisting of 2 changing rooms and a storage/referees room were delivered in August, 2015. The units were sited and connected with the help of Glasgow Life and The Scottish Football Partnership and we will be forever grateful for all the help we have received. These facilities mean that we are now able to play games at Mount Vernon Park, able to host other teams and be sure in the knowledge we have excellent and secure changing rooms that would be the envy of lots of teams up and down the country."

"We would like to thank The Scottish Football Partnership, Glasgow Life and Glasgow City Council for all their help and perseverance in securing these facilities for East End Thistle F.C. and the local community."



Club: East End Thistle FC

Founded: 2006

Ground: Mount Vernon Park, Glasgow

"...we have excellent and secure changing rooms that would be the envy of lots of teams up and down the country."

David Reid,
Club Representative

COMING SOON!...

SFP DESIGNED SOLAR POWERED CHANGING ROOMS FOR BLAIRGOWRIE AND RATRAY CSC

Facilities Award for Montrose F.C.



Club: Montrose F.C.
Ground: Links Park, Montrose



Montrose F.C. recently received a Facilities Award from the SFP to assist with the costs of installing a new 3G surface at Links Park. The club's original artificial pitch was installed in July, 2007 and due to the number of senior matches and community use, the surface no longer met FIFA 2* standard. The club's new polytan 3G surface will now enable them to satisfy the requirements for all SPFL matches as well as coping with the weekly demands from their community groups which sees over 450 children accessing the pitch on a weekly basis. Club Chairman, Derek Sim said "Montrose F.C. are delighted with the support from the SFP with a grant of £40,000 for the new artificial carpet at Links Park. This new polytan surface is a fantastic opportunity not only for the football club but also for Links Park Community Trust for the years to come."

Facilities Award for Threave Rovers F.C.



Club: Threave Rovers F.C.
Ground: Meadow Park, Castle Douglas



The Scottish Football Partnership has made a Facilities Award to Threave Rovers F.C. to assist with the cost of replacing the existing roof covering the seated enclosure at Meadow Park. David McMath from the club's Board of Management said "The existing roof structure which was constructed from concrete beams and asbestos cement sheeting was cracked creating a health and safety risk and allowing water through onto the seated area. Obviously, this was creating a poor spectator experience and provided risk of injury and required to be addressed as part of the club's requirements to meet Scottish FA Club Licensing criteria." David commented "That the project

had greatly enhanced the facility and the club now had a better pavilion which would enhance spectator experiences and provide a safer environment for all to enjoy sport and recreation." He went on to say that "The funding process was excellently managed by the SFP and the club would not have been able to deliver the project without the funding and the sound advice given by the SFP staff. The Partnership is vital to Scottish football as it supports clubs of all sizes and enables them to grow and improve their facilities. The club would like to thank most sincerely the Board and staff of the SFP for their sound advice and assistance in delivering this project."

"The Partnership is vital to Scottish football as it supports clubs of all sizes and enables them to grow and improve their facilities."

David McMath
Board Member

Facilities Award for Rangers F.C.



Club: Rangers F.C.
Ground: Ibrox Stadium, Glasgow



Rangers Football Club recently received a Facilities Award from the SFP to assist with the costs of upgrading the club's indoor 3G training surface at Murray Park. The club, which has a 6 star Youth Academy, approached the SFP for support as the existing surface was coming towards the end of its useable lifespan and was starting to become an issue in terms of meeting the requirements under The Scottish FA's Club Academy Scotland guidelines.

Craig Mullholland, Head of Youth at Rangers F.C. said "The facility upgrade has made a big difference to us and I think the new 3G surface is excellent and the players are enjoying training on it. The quality of work we can deliver for the players has vastly improved, thanks to the improved surface which is to the same specification as our outside 3G pitch. This consistency of surface aids the transfer of our players from our

outside synthetic pitch to our indoor synthetic pitch and reduces the chances of injury. During the winter months when a lot of clubs have to stop training when the snow and ice arrive, we will be able to keep on training and working on the technical development of all players as we can schedule activity for our youth squads, our full time players and, of course, the first team. As we continue to improve the infrastructure around Murray Park we will hopefully be able to produce better players as a consequence. The facility is used pretty much every day from 9am to 10pm and is already proving popular with our Sports Science department as well as our other user groups including our young Elite Academy players, Rangers Ladies and the Community Department at the club. Once again, we would like to thank The Scottish Football Partnership for their support."

"The facility upgrade has made a big difference to us and I think the new 3G surface is excellent"

Craig Mullholland,
Head of Youth

Facilities Award for Alloa Athletic F.C.



Club: Alloa Athletic F.C.
Ground: Indodrill Stadium, Alloa



The Scottish Football Partnership has made an award to Alloa Athletic F.C. to assist with the cost of upgrading the floodlights at the Indodrill Stadium. The development of the system involved the existing, aged 8 lighting columns being reduced to 4 columns with 10 heads of LED lighting on each to produce an average of 500 lux and a minimum/maximum uniformity of better than 0.4. The lights can be individually controlled allowing for a variety of settings to meet training and match requirements. An added benefit is that viewing from both home and away stands will be greatly improved due to the siting of these new lights.

"The Scottish Football Partnership support is absolutely essential to allow projects of this kind to go ahead. It benefits everyone, the players at all levels, the fans, and the club's use of its facilities for community involvement. There's not a lot of spare money around in the game but it is essential we keep investing where and when we can to improve facilities for all. It's great we now have the lighting levels required for Championship play, let's hope we need it for a few more seasons to come!"

Mike Mulraney, Club Chairman

Facilities Award for Queen's Park F.C.



Club: Queen's Park F.C.
Ground: Hampden Park, Glasgow



Queen's Park Committee Member Malky Mackay, MBE receiving the club's award from SFP Chairman, James Clydesdale

Queen's Park F.C. recently received a Facilities Award from the SFP to assist with the refurbishment of the former and aged Farmhouse changing rooms at Lesser Hampden. This award has allowed the creation of two new dressing rooms, two officials' rooms and a meeting room at the facility over two floors. The Farmhouse at Lesser Hampden dates back to when the Hampden Park campus was all farmland and whilst not a listed building, it has been reported as being the oldest working football pavilion in the world.

The building has not been usable for the past three years and the exterior had deteriorated to the extent that it was an unsightly part of the National Stadium campus. Christine Wright, Secretary of the club said "On behalf of Queen's Park F.C., I would like to express our sincere thanks to the SFP for the award towards the Farmhouse changing rooms upgrade. This new facility will make a tremendous difference to the National Stadium campus and the many users of the Lesser Hampden facility"

East of Scotland Football League Award



The East of Scotland Football League recently received funding support from The Scottish Football Partnership to be utilised in the purchase of defibrillators for every club in the League and for training of club members in their operation. This will mean that there will be a machine available at every match played in their competitions. In addition, The East of Scotland League will be investing in further coach education so that all clubs will very soon have at least two coaches qualified to SFA Club Licensing standards. League Chairman Tom Allison said "The East of Scotland League is very grateful to The Scottish Football Partnership for this very generous funding and for their continuing support of our efforts to raise the standards of our League."

The SFP Trust is delighted to announce a new partnership with the Clydesdale Bank to support a £30,000 Growing the Game Initiative in 2016.



This initiative will assist Scottish FA Quality Mark grassroots clubs throughout the country to increase their playing membership. The funding will help off-set the burden clubs face in having to raise money internally to cover the basic start-up costs of running a new team including the costs of purchasing football strips, training kit and equipment, and paying registration and insurance fees.

Stuart McCaffrey, Chief Operating Officer of the SFP Trust commented "We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Clydesdale Bank to deliver this programme which will greatly assist the game at grassroots level. We are keen to build on the

success of our 2014/15 Growing the Game initiative which saw 75 new grassroots teams created and increased football activity for 1,025 players who were brought into the game throughout Scotland. With the invaluable assistance from the Clydesdale Bank, we aim to encourage even more young players to take up and enjoy the game within a Quality Mark club structure in 2016."

Andrew Falconer, Regional Director-Business & Private Bank at the Clydesdale Bank said "We are delighted to continue our support of the Scottish Football Partnership Trust and recognise the valuable contribution it makes to grassroots football across the country."



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