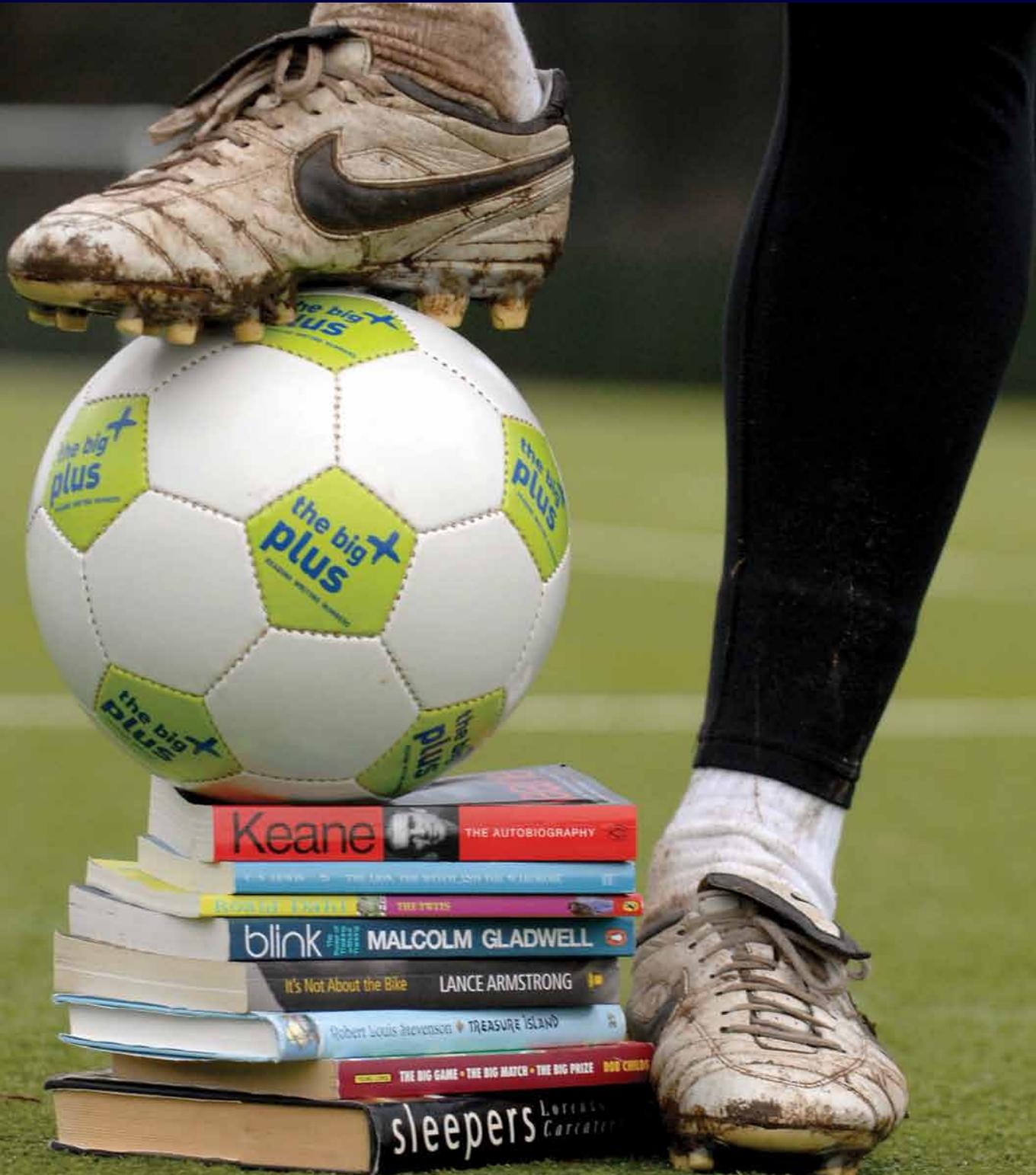
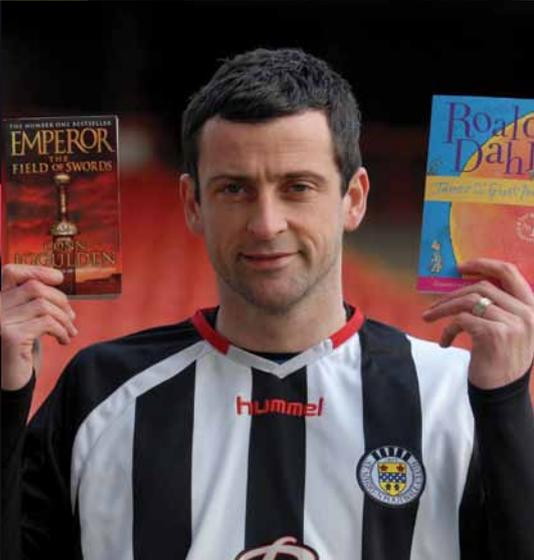
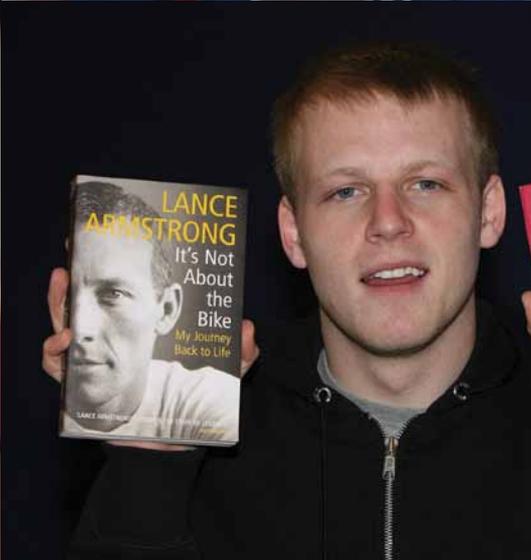
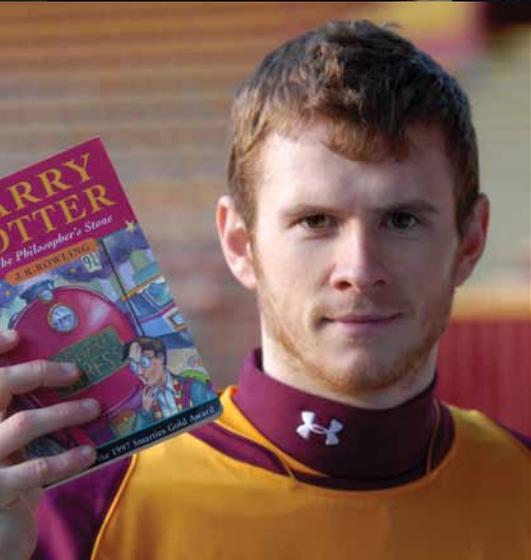
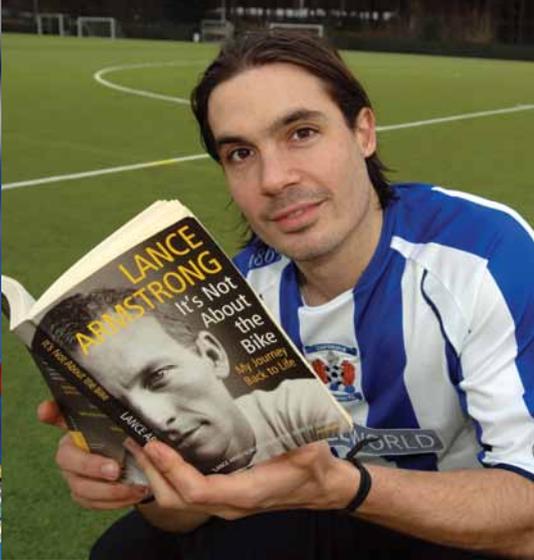
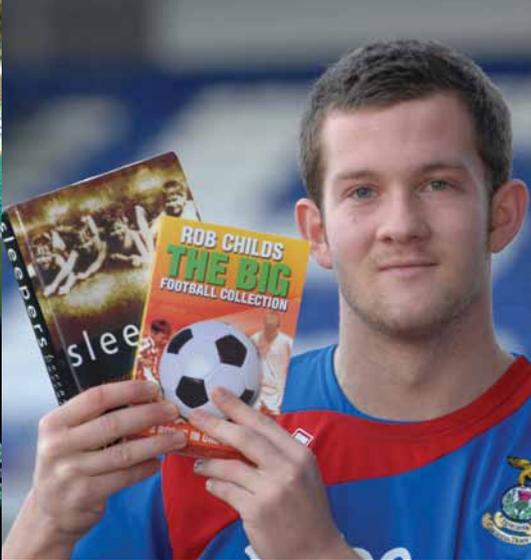
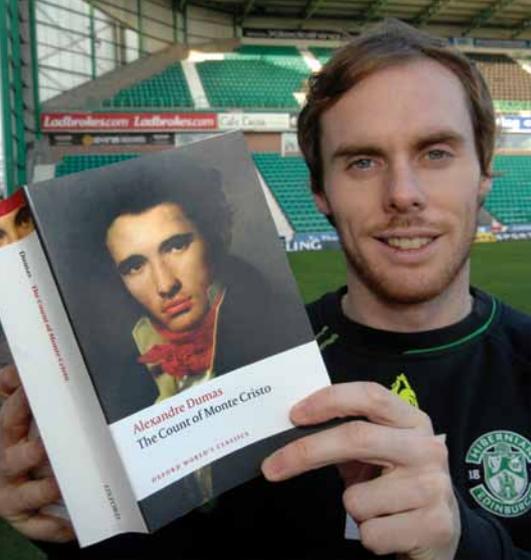
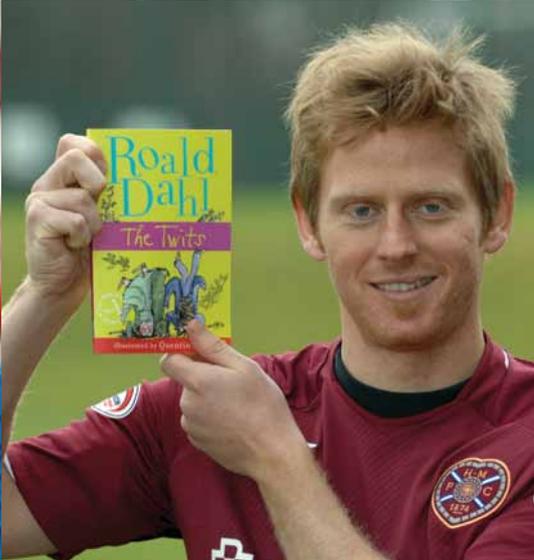
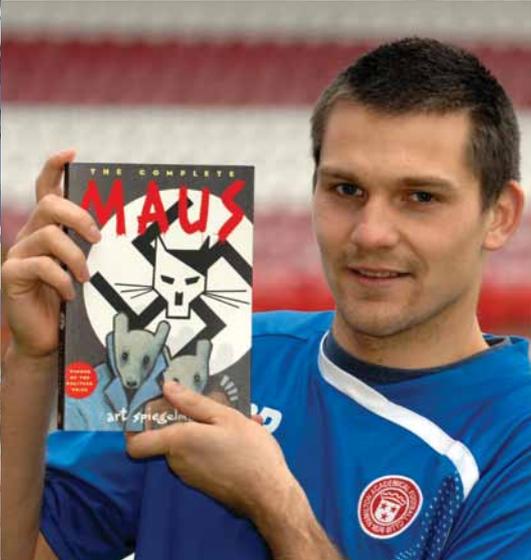
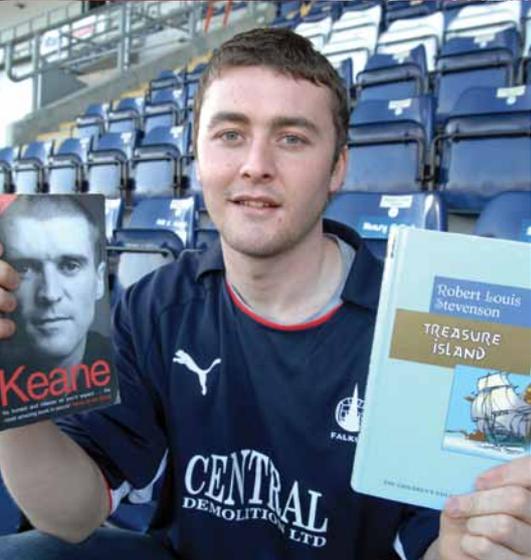
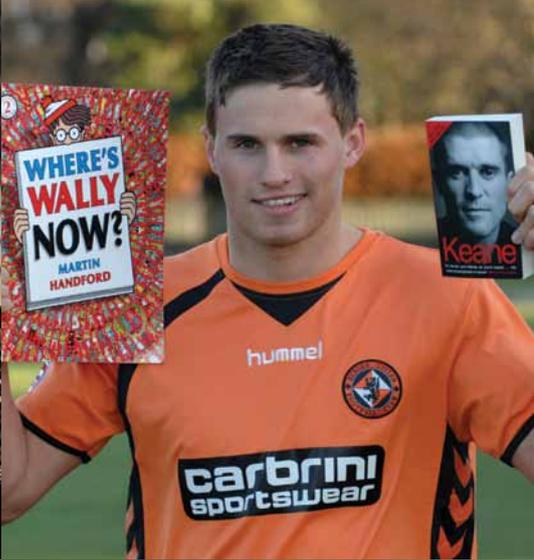
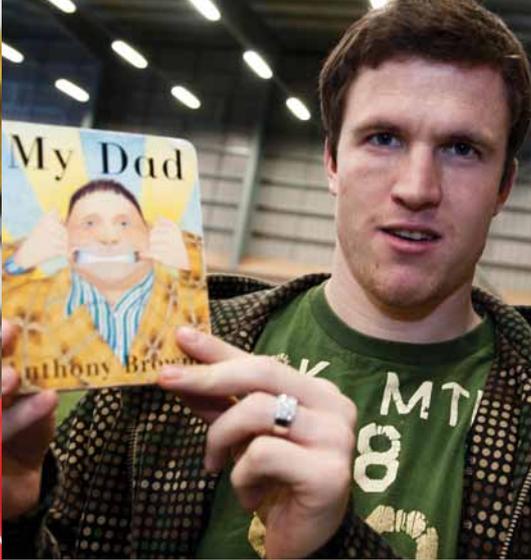
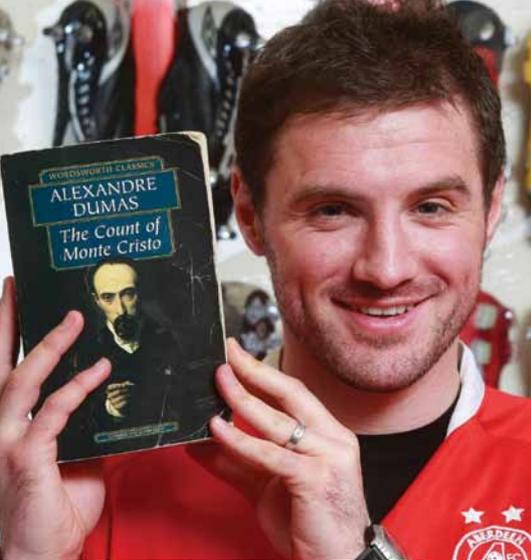


# EVALUATION REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2009





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- 1. Background .....04
- 2. Project activity.....05
- 3. Key results.....08
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# 1.

## BACKGROUND

**Scottish Premier League (SPL) Reading Stars uses the motivational power of football to attract families who need support with literacy into a positive and friendly learning environment.**

It ran for the first time between March and August 2009 and attracted 225 children and 190 adults to take part in a series of inspirational learning sessions in 23 libraries across the country.

SPL Reading Stars has been developed through partnership between Learning Connections; Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Premier League, the National Literacy Trust and the Scottish Library Information Council.

SPL Reading Stars is based on the Premier League Reading Stars project, which has run successfully in England since 2003 and is a partnership between the Premier League, the Football Foundation and the National Literacy Trust.

This report has been compiled by the project partners. It describes and evaluates its first year of operation and gives recommendations for a second year and beyond.

### THE BIG PLUS AND SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT POLICY

SPL Reading Stars is part of The Big Plus campaign, Scotland's national awareness raising campaign on adult literacy and numeracy. It is wholly funded by Learning Connections with marketing managed by Skills Development Scotland.

People who respond to The Big Plus publicity are put in touch with Adult Literacy and Numeracy (ALN) Partnerships. There is a Partnership mechanism within every local authority and they co-ordinate the free support available to help individuals with reading, writing and number skills. The learning can take place in a variety of venues, including public libraries.

The need for such an awareness raising campaign comes from research<sup>1</sup> which shows that 23% of adults in Scotland, approximately 800,000 people, struggle with reading, writing and numbers in every day situations. Poor literacy and numeracy skills affect an individual's opportunity to realise their full potential both in their personal life and also in the world of work.

A major aspect of the Scottish Government's skills strategy is the focus on individual development: literacy and numeracy skills have been identified as the foundations on which to create a skilled population able to make the most of its potential and to drive the economy to prosperity.

Further, widening participation in learning is at the heart of the Scottish Government's commitment to reduce poverty and create a fairer Scotland: The Big Plus campaign supports adults who want to build their literacy and numeracy skills so that they can find a job, move into a better job, undertake further learning or use literacy and numeracy more fully in their personal lives.

SPL Reading Stars uses the motivational power of football to engage people who might be reluctant to engage with learning and is a welcome and complementary addition to the other elements of The Big Plus.

<sup>1</sup> Derived from the International Adult Literacy Study (IALS), 1996.

# 2.

## PROJECT ACTIVITY

### THE TRAINING DAY

Prior to the launch in March, a training day for librarians and ALN staff was held at Hampden to explain the project and foster links between the delivery staff who would not normally work together in their day to day jobs.

The focus of the training day was the project instruction kit, known as the Tactics Book, which explained how to run each session and each section of the project. Delegates met the Project Manager, Jim Sells of the National Literacy Trust, and representatives from the project's partner organisations.

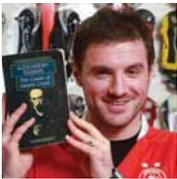


IN SAFE HANDS:  
Hamilton goalkeeper Tomas Cerny  
on a library visit

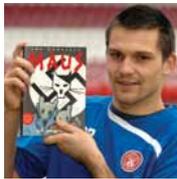
# THE READING STARS

The SPL fully endorsed the project and each one of its member clubs nominated a player, a 'Reading Star', to act as a champion for reading. The Reading Stars chose two books; their favourite adult title and their favourite children's book and gave supportive quotes.

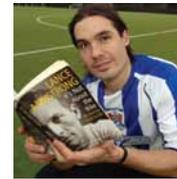
The SPL Reading Stars and their book choices are shown below. All the Stars volunteered to take part in the project and all are genuine readers:



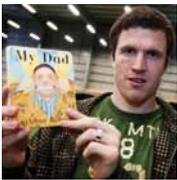
**Jamie Smith, Aberdeen:**  
The Count of Monte Cristo (Alexandre Dumas)  
The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (C.S.Lewis)



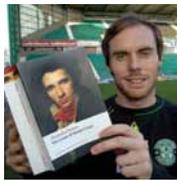
**Tomas Cerny, Hamilton:**  
Maus: My Father Bleeds History (Art Spiegelman)  
Nine Fairy Tales (Karel Capek)



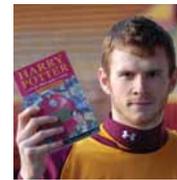
**Danny Invincibile, Kilmarnock:**  
It's Not About the Bike (Lance Armstrong)  
Lord of the Flies (William Golding)



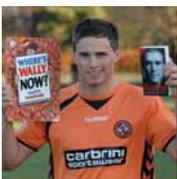
**Gary Caldwell, Celtic:**  
A Lifetime in Race (Matthew Pinsent)  
My Dad (Anthony Browne)



**Joe Keenan, Hibernian:**  
The Count of Monte Cristo (Alexandre Dumas)  
The Hardy Boys (Franklin W Dixon)



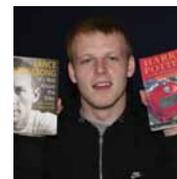
**Mark Reynolds, Motherwell:**  
The Power Of One (Bryce Courtenay)  
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (JK Rowling)



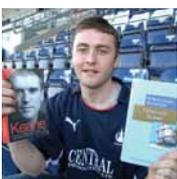
**David Goodwillie, Dundee United:**  
Roy Keane: The Autobiography (Roy Keane)  
Where's Wally (1987) (Martin Handford)



**Michael Stewart, Heart of Midlothian:**  
Blink: The Power of Thinking without Thinking (Malcolm Gladwell)  
The Twits (Roald Dahl)



**Steven Naismith, Rangers:**  
It's Not About the Bike (Lance Armstrong)  
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone (JK Rowling)



**Tam Scobie, Falkirk:**  
Roy Keane: The Autobiography (Roy Keane)  
Treasure Island (Robert Louis Stevenson)



**Jamie Duff, Inverness Caledonian Thistle:**  
Sleepers (Lorenzo Carcaterra)  
The Big Football Collection (Rob Childs)



**Jack Ross, St Mirren:**  
Emperor: The Field of Swords (Conn Iggulden)  
James and the Giant Peach (Roald Dahl)

## RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

Each football club was linked with its local Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership and two libraries, which were chosen through discussions with the Scottish Library and Information Council.

The funding for the six sessions allowed for a maximum number of 10 adults and 10 children per library.

Recruitment of families who were potential literacy and numeracy learners was paramount and deliverers adopted various methods to reach the right people. These ranged from contacting local schools to explain the project and to ask for referrals; to working alongside colleagues in other local authority departments specialising in family learning or parent support.

Her Majesty's Prison Edinburgh also ran a tailored version of the programme in conjunction with Heart of Midlothian FC.

## THE SIX SESSIONS

Every library was sent a set of branded resources plus the players' book choices and supplementary materials.

The individual sessions were designed to last for approximately 1½ - 2 hours and each programme included the chance to meet a Reading Star, a visit from an author, plus lots of fun, football-themed, learning activities.

## AWARENESS RAISING

A further objective of the project was to use the association with the clubs and players to promote the benefits of reading to the wider public and to encourage those who need help to contact The Big Plus helpline or visit the website.

Activity undertaken to achieve this included:

- PR activity, notably around the launch in March;
- distribution of printed materials, such as leaflets and posters featuring the footballers, to libraries, schools and ALN networks;
- a competition for schools in June;
- radio advertising which ran for two weeks in March;
- creation of a microsite within The Big Plus website with full details of the project, resources, and links to surveys to help with this evaluation.



Macastory take over a library in Edinburgh!



Keith Brown MSP, Minister for Schools and Skills and Jack Ross of St Mirren with project participants

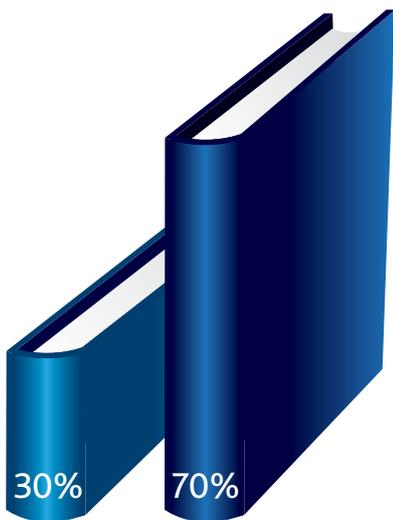
# 3.

## KEY RESULTS

All delivery staff, children, parents and carers involved in SPL Reading Stars were asked to complete online evaluation questionnaires at the end of their six sessions.

24 delivery staff, 179 children and 80 adults responded, giving the following results:

### LIBRARY ACTIVITY



of libraries ran 5 sessions

of libraries ran 6 or more sessions

# 23

libraries affiliated to the scheme, all aiming to run 6 sessions.

# 100

% of libraries ran at least 5 library based sessions.

# 10

For most libraries, the average number of participants per session was 10.

# 57

Participants in 57% of libraries went on a stadium tour.

# 52

% of libraries received free match tickets for a SPL game.

## 2009 PLAYER APPEARANCES

Light blue highlight indicates that the Reading Star attended an event. The dark blue highlight indicates that the club has committed to providing a first team player but this had not taken place at the time of going to print.

Club	Player
Aberdeen	Jamie Smith
Celtic	Gary Caldwell
Dundee United	David Goodwillie
Falkirk	Tam Scobie
Hamilton	Tomas Cerny
Heart of Midlothian	Michael Stewart
Hibernian	Joe Keenan
Inverness Caledonian Thistle	Jamie Duff
Kilmarnock	Danny Invincible
Motherwell	Mark Reynolds
Rangers	Steven Naismith
St Mirren	Jack Ross

### In addition

- Hibs provided match tickets and a tour of the ground for the first library session and Joe Keenan met the group to sign certificates and meet the participants.
- Tomas Cerny visited both Hamilton libraries in his own time, while the club laid on free tickets for both library groups.
- Danny Invincible attended the launch at Motherwell (along with Tomas Cerny and Mark Reynolds) as well as meeting the participants on a match day where everyone received a free ticket.
- St Mirren hosted an event with Reading Star and budding author Jack Ross.
- Falkirk provided tickets, their Reading Star Tam Scobie, and some coaching.

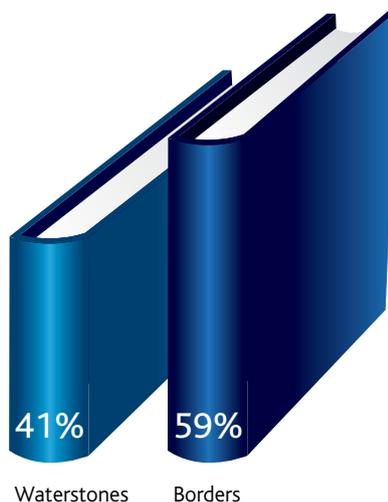
100% of libraries ran an author visit session.

### Authors booked:

Fergus McNicol and Ron Fairwether **8**  
Mark Thomson **11**

100% of libraries ran a trip to a book shop

Bookshops visited:



On average, each library group purchased **36** books between them, an average of **2** books per participant.

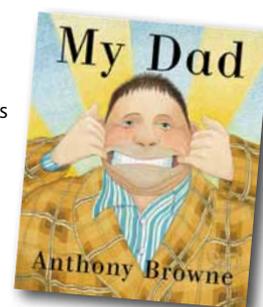
On average, each child borrowed **4** books from their library during the project.

On average, each adult borrowed **2** books from their library during the project.

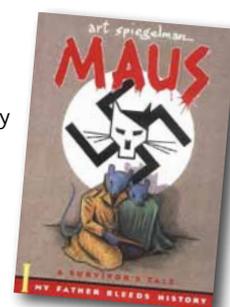
## 2009 MOST POPULAR TITLES

The full list of players and their book choices can be found on the back page of this report.

The most popular children's title from the 2009 SPL Reading Stars list was *My Dad* by Anthony Browne, selected by Gary Caldwell (Celtic).



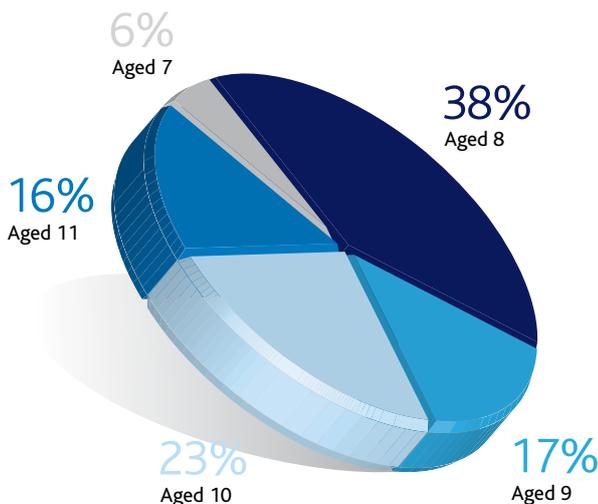
The most popular adult's title from the 2009 SPL Reading Stars list was *Maus: My father bleeds history* by Art Spiegelman, selected by Tomas Cerny (Hamilton).



# THE PARTICIPANTS

## CHILDREN

225 children took part in the project.



**98%** of children **read 4 or more books** during their Reading Stars project.

There was a **30%** rise in the number of children who said they **'liked reading a lot'** between the beginning and the end of the project.

There was a **25%** rise in the number of children who rated themselves as **'a really good reader'** between the beginning and end of the project.

There was a **20%** rise in the number of children who said they read **'every day outside of school'** between the beginning and the end of the project.

**64%** of children reported that they **did not like reading at all**, or only a bit, before they took part in SPL Reading Stars. By the end of the project, this figure had fallen to **24%**.

**77%** of children now feel **more confident in speaking in front of others** as a result of participation.

**78%** of children feel that they now **read more with their family** because of SPL Reading Stars.

**78%** of children also think that they **talk about reading more** with their friends and family since joining SPL Reading Stars.

**73%** of children say they **now read more** because they know that footballers read.

**40%** of children said that **meeting a footballer** was their favourite part of SPL Reading Stars, with **going to the bookshop** a close second with **37%** stating this as their favourite element.

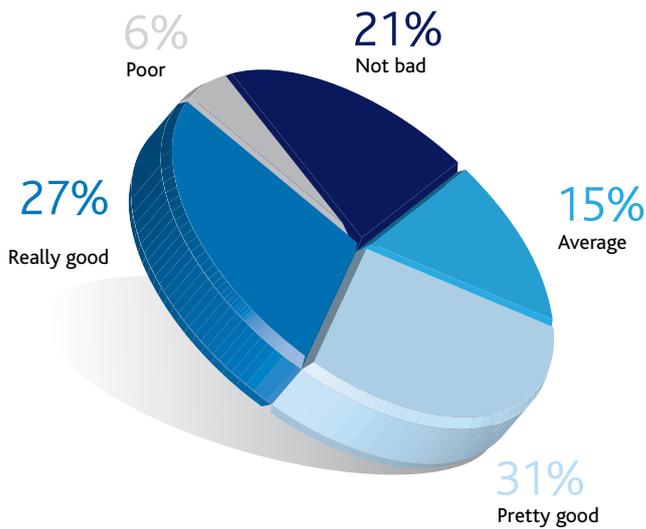
**88%** of children said that they will **go to their library** more because of SPL Reading Stars.

**49%** of children **joined their local library** because of SPL Reading Stars.

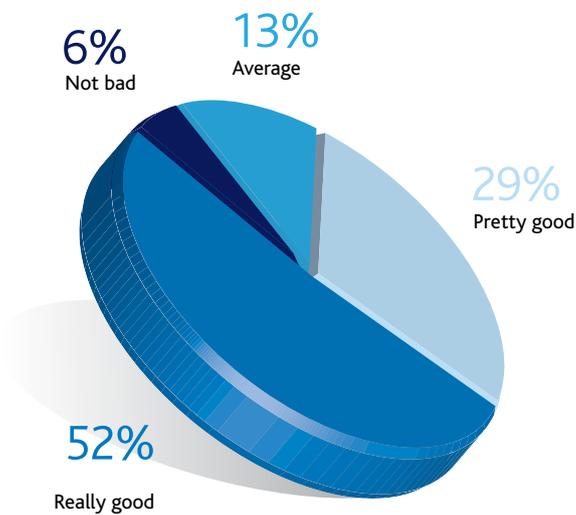
**95%** of children said they will **read more regularly** because of participating in SPL Reading Stars.

Children rated their reading ability before and after taking part in the project.

Before:



After:



## ADULTS

190 adults took part in the project.

74% of adults **read 2 or more books** whilst participating on SPL Reading Stars.

81% of adults say that they **are reading more** because of SPL Reading Stars.

91% of adults feel that **they read more together as a family** since joining SPL Reading Stars.

89% of adults now feel **more confident in speaking in front of others** as a result of participation.

91% of adults think that they **talk about reading more with their friends** and family since joining SPL Reading Stars.

100% of adults feel that **their child is reading more** because of SPL Reading Stars.

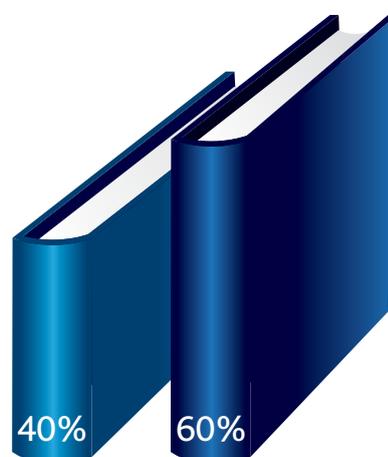
100% of adults feel that **their child's reading confidence has improved** since participating on SPL Reading Stars.

94% of adults feel that they **are reading more with their child** as a result of SPL Reading Stars.

83% of adults feel that **their child's schoolwork has improved** since participating on SPL Reading Stars.

94% of adults think that they **will go to their local library more** because of SPL Reading Stars.

35% of adults **joined their local library** because of SPL Reading Stars.

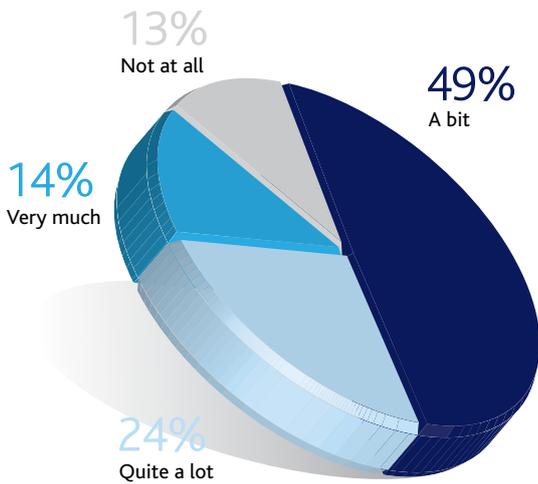


40% of the adults were male

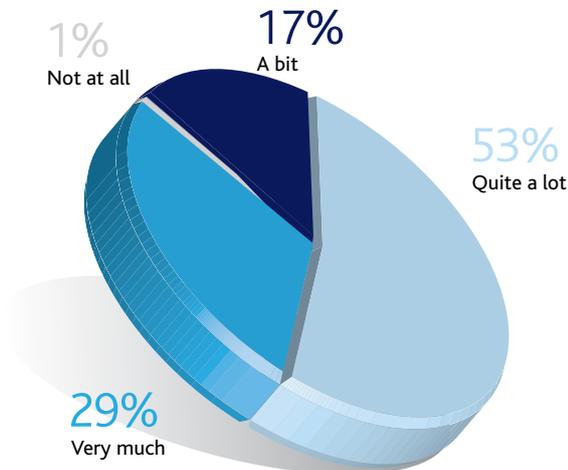
60% of the adults were female

Adults rated how much they enjoyed reading before and after participation in the project.

Before:



After:



## WIDER ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

Skills Development Scotland wrote to every school in the country with an information pack on SPL Reading Stars. This included publicity material and copies of the interactive cd-rom: The Big Plus Football Academy. In addition, head teachers were asked to encourage pupils to enter an online competition to win a prize of books, football games and signed shirts, plus a visit from a Reading Star. Pupils were asked to explain why reading is important to them and write a short paragraph on their favourite book. There was a fantastic response with 2,078 entries in total.

An information pack with posters and leaflets was also sent to every public library in the country.

Number of library information points	<b>623</b>
Number of schools receiving materials	<b>2,800</b>
Number of competition entries	<b>2,078</b>



# MEDIA COVERAGE

SPL Reading Stars was launched at Motherwell's Fir Park in March 2009 by Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Education & Lifelong Learning and Lex Gold, Executive Chairman of the Scottish Premier League. It generated significant, and overwhelmingly positive media interest and was covered by the broadcast media as well as a mix of broadsheet and tabloid newspapers. This coverage, combined with a range of articles on club websites and other sources over the course of the project, had an equivalent advertising value of £276,728<sup>2</sup>.

The positive PR allows the impact of the project to reach a far greater audience than the number of families recruited to the sessions.

<sup>2</sup>Independent evaluation conducted by The Big Partnership.

**Scots footballers reveal favourite books to aid new literacy campaign**  
Stars help promote reading among adults and children

**What the top players like to read**

<b>Blackburn</b> - James Beattie The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe The Hobbit The Catcher in the Rye The Catcher in the Rye The Catcher in the Rye	<b>Blackburn</b> - Tom Huddlestone The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit	<b>Blackburn</b> - Mark Reynolds Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit
<b>Blackburn</b> - Gary McAllister The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit	<b>Blackburn</b> - Scott Carson The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit	<b>Blackburn</b> - Jack Ross The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit The Hobbit

**Football stars kick off new literacy campaign**

**Reynolds, Cerny and Invincible launch the campaign**

**Families urged to tackle books as stars prove it's not only game they can read**

**Readers of the game**

**IN THE BOOK:** From left, Mark Reynolds of Motherwell, Tom Cerny of Hamilton Academical and Danny Invincible of Kilmarnock show off one of their choices

# 4.

## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

### SPL READING STARS EXPENDITURE

Savings on print costs and generous discounts from book suppliers Peters Bookselling Services, and booksellers Waterstone's and Borders, meant that additional project activity, such as the mail out to schools and libraries, could be undertaken within budget.

The in-kind support provided by the SPL and its member clubs in the form of player visits, match tickets, merchandise and project management time was integral to the project and had a value of £30,000.

Removing the additional costs of the schools competition and library promotional materials, the price of the main project was £44,063.38. As there were 415 participants, the cost per participant was £106.18.



Item	Spend
Project manager	4,500.00
Training / meetings (venue hire, expenses)	1,634.71
ALN Staff	913.60
Press briefings / photographer / filming	856.29
Distribution	1,009.70
	<b>8,914.30</b>
Tactics Books	1,280.00
Posters	1,429.45
Leaflets	799.25
Certificates	569.25
Bookmarks	629.05
Bookshop account cards	80.50
Bookplates	362.25
Player cards	1,462.80
Bookstand stickers	290.95
	<b>6,903.50</b>
Display stands	690.00
Pull up stands	621.00
T-shirts	1,196.29
Drawstring bags	564.08
Mini footballs	1,010.85
Pens	193.20
Librarian expenses	3,470.00
Player books	5,112.31
	<b>12,857.72</b>

Item	Spend
Author visit	5,099.80
Bookshop visit	4,158.52
	<b>9,258.32</b>
<b>Additional schools activity</b>	
Schools' distribution	4,370.00
Schools / libraries posters	2,956.65
Schools / libraries bookmarks	2,419.60
Player cards	2,242.50
A5 leaflets	1,216.70
5 sets of books	898.57
	<b>14,104.02</b>
	<b>382.14</b>
<b>Contingency</b>	
	<b>52,420.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	
Contribution to National Literacy Trust central costs	7,863.00
	<b>60,283.00</b>

# 5.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Funding for year 2 has been sourced and a relaunch is proposed for early 2010. The following conclusions have been drawn from the first year of operation with recommendations on how to build upon its success.

### THE CONCEPT

SPL Reading Stars has created a new way for providers to attract learners into learning.

As in England, promoting popular footballers as reading role models has proven to be a significant motivating factor in attracting and retaining participants.

On a relatively small budget of £60,283, SPL Reading Stars has helped providers recruit 225 children and 190 adults to learning sessions in 23 libraries across the country.

In Scotland, football makes the news; almost entirely positive media coverage had an advertising equivalent vale of £276,728.

The project demanded good working relations between library staff and ALN tutors and there were many examples of it working well. In some areas, a clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities will help improve performance in year 2. Sharing of best practice and effective communication and planning between the project delivery staff should be encouraged.

The concept has inherent flexibility and worked very successfully in an adapted format in Her Majesty's Prison Edinburgh.

The Reading Stars concept could also be extended to incorporate role models from other fields, such as music or the arts. It is recommended that this be explored in year 2 of the project.

Funding limits the project to a select group of libraries, 23 in the first year. Many more libraries expressed an interest to be involved and this was partially addressed by the distribution of printed materials. Ways of extending the project in a cost effective way should be explored in year 2.



At the launch with Cabinet Secretary Fiona Hyslop MSP and Lex Gold Executive Chairman of the SPL and Reading Stars Mark Reynolds, Motherwell, (Left) Danny Invincible, Kilmarnock (2nd from Right) and Tomas Cerny from Hamilton (Right)

## COMPATIBILITY WITH THE BIG PLUS

SPL Reading Stars was part of The Big Plus activity plan for 2008/9. The Big Plus targets adults specifically but the emphasis of SPL Reading Stars on children and families allowed the campaign to widen its reach to influence adults indirectly through their children.

The concept of family literacy learning is well established and important as it has been shown that encouraging families to read more and learn together can reduce the likelihood of literacy problems being passed down through generations.

The fact that football is the national sport, together with the prestige of the SPL and the geographic coverage of its member clubs, all combined to provide an excellent fit with the ambitions of The Big Plus campaign to reach all parts of Scotland and to erode the stigma attached to the subject matter of adult literacy.

Exposure of The Big Plus brand was limited in the media coverage as the focus was on the name SPL Reading Stars. The link was most effective when activity was web based, such as the schools competition, as the project micro site was embedded within The Big Plus website. Future SPL Reading Stars should attempt to connect better with the wider awareness raising activity where possible.

## RECRUITMENT

In many cases, the project has increased the ability of individuals to engage with literacy activities; this is especially pronounced, and significant, where previously the individual had little or minimal engagement in this key life skill. These individuals were the target audience of the project, and through evaluation, we can identify that they made up 60% of the total participants.

Funding was available for a maximum of 250 families to take part. The recruitment of 190 adults represents a 75% success rate. More children attended, 225, representing 90% of the maximum.

The mismatch in figures can be attributed to several factors: For example, when a family had two children of similar age and both were within the age target group, both were allowed to join in. Another reason was because of an unwillingness of some parents to attend despite the best efforts of the providers and their wider network of support.

Recruitment of the right families is paramount to the effectiveness of the project and success varied significantly by area and by specific library. Sharing of best practice between deliverers should be encouraged and facilitated by the project partners. More time is available in the run up to the second year of the project and it is hoped that this will help with necessary planning required.

## THE SIX SESSIONS

Feedback from deliverers on the 6 sessions was largely positive. Some felt that six sessions were not enough to make an impact on literacy levels and suggested more for year 2. The budget implications of this will be examined but it would be more sustainable and desirable if participants in SPL Reading Stars were encouraged to join core ALN provision for on-going support.

Reading Stars in England focuses on motivating families to enjoy reading together. In Scotland more emphasis needed to be placed on adult learning and this is why delivery was managed by library and ALN staff working in partnership. Although this subtle change was understood and communicated effectively, a stronger emphasis on the role of adult literacy within the project would be desirable.

Some of the players' book choices were felt to be too high a standard. Whilst the choice of books cannot be influenced by the project partners it is within their control to ensure the additional resources made available are fit for purpose and suitable for all ability levels.

The level of engagement with the clubs and the Reading Stars varied. A standard reward package that all clubs would commit to is desired for year 2.

## PROJECT RESULTS

SPL Reading Stars was well received by all participants. The positive effects of the scheme are both varied and enduring and the results demonstrate overwhelmingly strong evidence to continue the scheme into a second year and beyond.

The project results show that SPL Reading Stars has instant appeal and has succeeded in increasing confidence around literacy for many of the participants.

The fact that 100% of parents feel their child is reading more because of the impact of SPL Reading Stars and that 91.3% of parents feel they are now spending more time reading with their children demonstrates the enduring effects the scheme can have, far beyond the time period of the six project sessions.

The lasting commitment to reading is also demonstrated by the results that 87.5% of children and 94% of parents think they will now visit their local library more regularly.



## PARTNERS' VIEWS

The success of SPL Reading Stars is dependent on good working relations between the project partners. A working group was established and met on a regular basis to ensure effective communication, to monitor progress and to generate ideas. Here are the views of the Scottish Premier League, the National Literacy Trust and the Scottish Library Information Council.

### THE SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

"SPL Reading Stars is an innovative way for SPL players to provide inspiration and support to those who may need some help and encouragement to improve their literacy skills. The project uses a strong mix of activity utilising club brands and players to raise and reach out to individuals. This helps to attract participants to the project and engage them directly in activities to help improve their skills. The outcomes from the first year of activity are heartening and the SPL looks forward to building on this strong foundation going forward."

**Mark Dunlop**

Commercial Executive, The Scottish Premier League

### NATIONAL LITERACY TRUST

"We are thrilled how SPL Reading Stars has built on the proven work of Premier League Reading Stars, managing to strengthen the focus on supporting parents to support their children. The project supports all of the National Literacy Trust's key priorities: supporting literacy in the home; motivating individuals to develop, and acquire new literacy skills; our passionate belief in literacy as a lever for social mobility and social justice. By tapping into the passion for football that many families who have a real need to develop literacy skills have, the project has provided the relevance and the reason to engage and develop literacy skills for an audience who need this the most."

**Jonathan Douglas**

Director, National Literacy Trust

### SCOTTISH LIBRARY INFORMATION COUNCIL

"Libraries have long had a role in encouraging the love of reading for all, in particular with successful events programmes for young people. This programme offered an opportunity for libraries to engage with those who wouldn't normally see the library as a place for them. We are delighted that the programme has offered such a positive experience to young people and their families and look forward to building on this."

**Elaine Fulton**

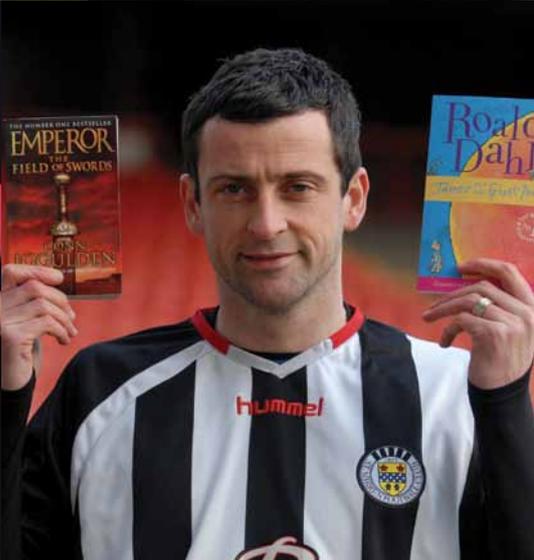
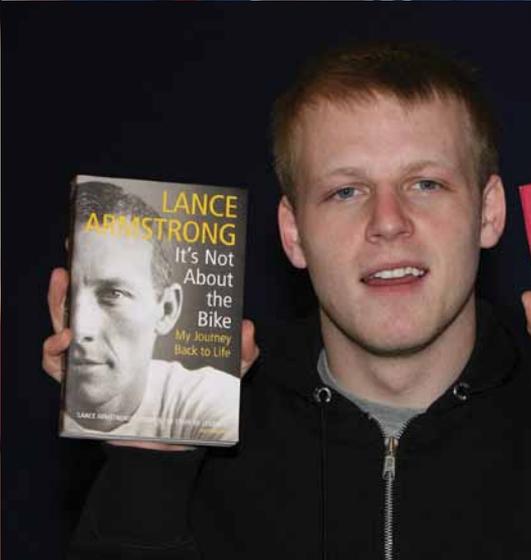
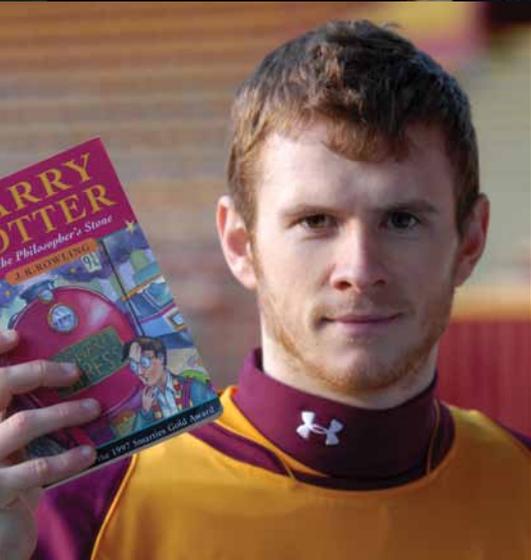
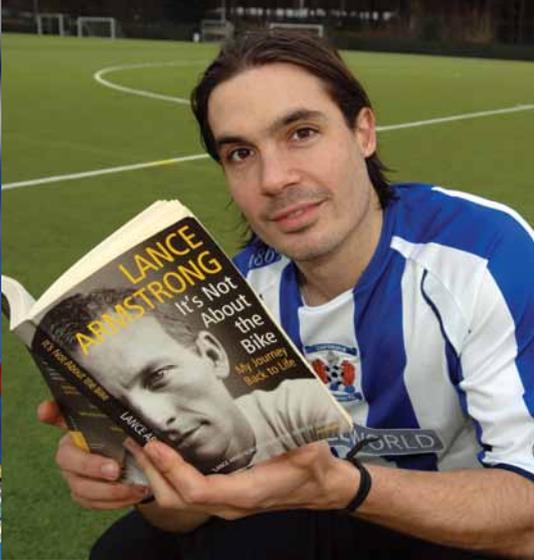
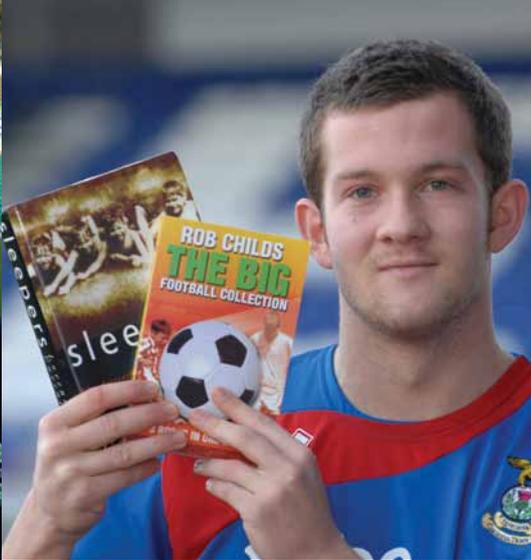
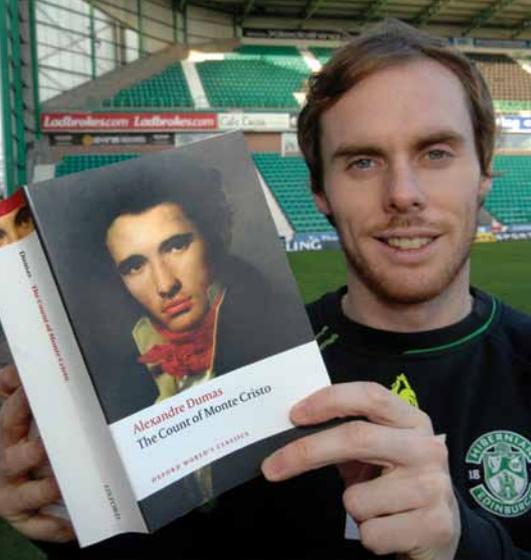
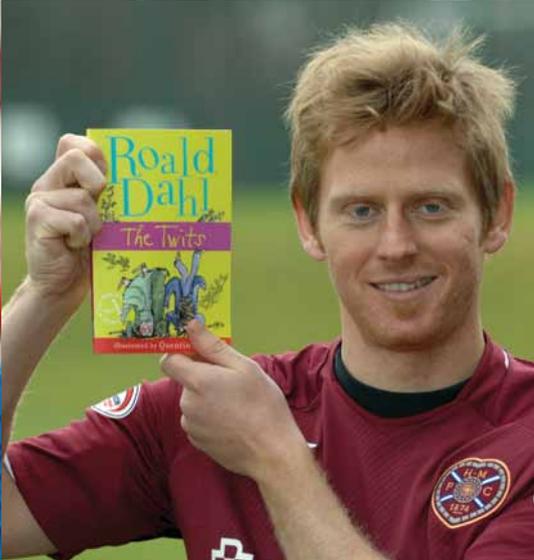
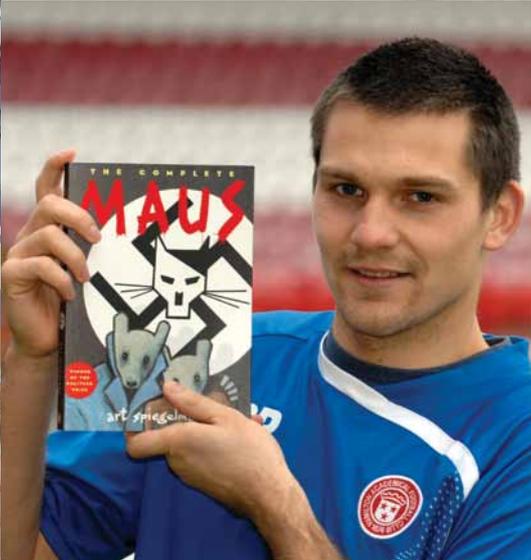
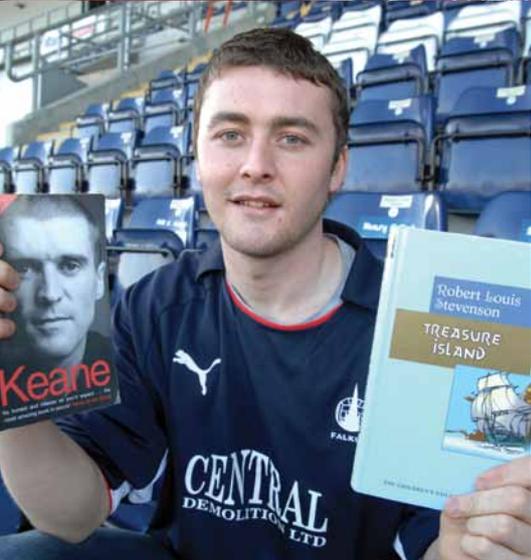
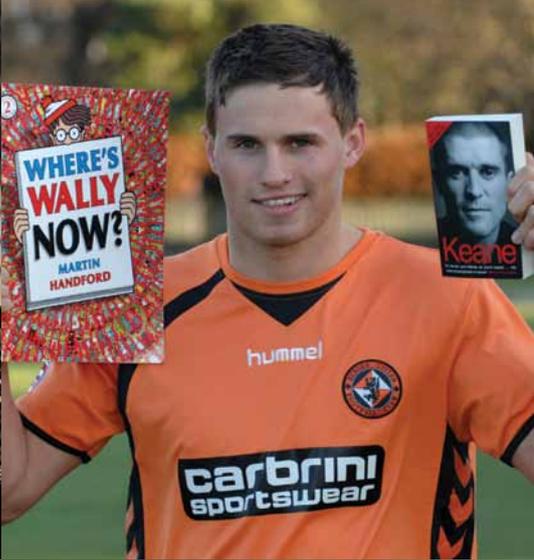
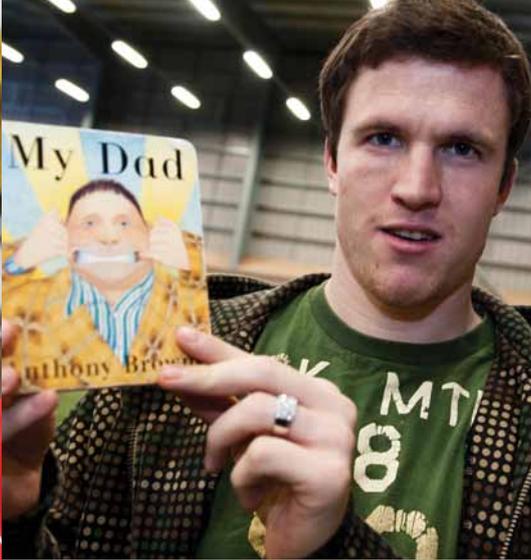
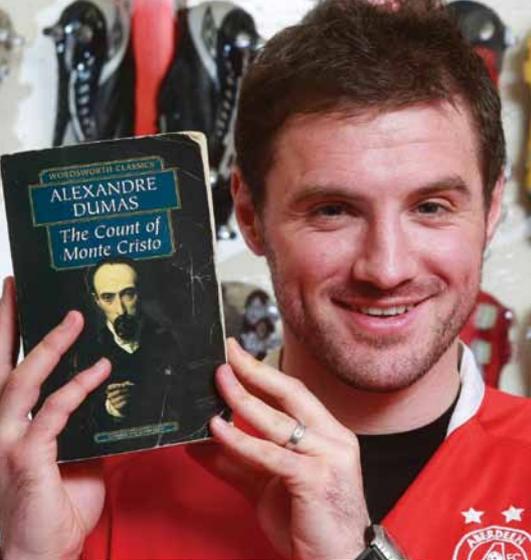
Director, Scottish Library and Information Council/CILIP in Scotland

SPL Reading Stars is based on the Premier League Reading Stars project, which has run successfully in England since 2003 and is a partnership between the Premier League, the Football Foundation and the National Literacy Trust

### PREMIER LEAGUE READING STARS



Founder Partners



This publication is available on line at  
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Published by Learning Connections;  
Scottish Government, September 2009.

