

# DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY

FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



Foundation



## Disability Football

### March/April – Main Events

**04/03/17**

TW Braga Frame Football Club participated in the UK Frame Football competition in St. George's Park, England. They also attended the West Brom v Crystal Palace game as guests and met Jonny Evans, Gareth McAuley and Chris Brunt after the game.

**24/03/17 – 26/03/17**

Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Squad participated in the Friendship Cup in Dublin against Republic of Ireland and Denmark. Northern Ireland won the Cup, drawing with Denmark 1-1 and beating Republic of Ireland 2-1.

**29/03/17**

Special School Cup competition at Warrenpoint Town FC. Event won by Tandragee College(Learning Unit)

**01/04/17**

Last Day of Irish FA Disability League at Valley Leisure Centre. 2017 Champions are:  
Premiership – Lisburn 2gether Special Olympics club,  
Championship – Bangor Castle FC

**17/04/17 – 21/04/17**

Under 19 Learning Disability Home Nation Championships, Dublin. Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland finished in third place.

Results: **1.** NI 2 – 1 ROI. **2.** NI 0 – 5 Sco. **3.** NI 1 – 5 Wales.

**22/04/17**

Northern Ireland Powerchair Squad played their first International Fixture v Republic of Ireland in Dublin. They lost 6-0 but it was a great development in this exciting new sport in Northern Ireland.

**23/04/17**

Grassroots Conference held at UUJ. Workshops included mental health and disability Inclusion

**27.04.17**

Moderate Learning Difficulty National Games (Primary) – Nine schools competed in finals day. Harberton from Belfast won beating Brookfield of Moira in the final.

**29.04.17**

Junior Club Cup competition in Mid Ulster Sports Arena, Cookstown. Won by Northern Ireland Junior Cerebral Palsy Squad. Beat Lakeland Special Olympics Club, Enniskillen in the final.



Northern Ireland Junior Cerebral Palsy Squad



Northern Ireland Powerchair Squad

## Volunteer Development

The Volunteer Development & Policy Officer (VDPO) has finalised a revamp to the entire Volunteer team. This consisted of developing a new recognition scheme, resource booklet and linking everyone in with McDonald's as they will be heavily involved in the programme. The launch of the updated team will take place in May. The website is also currently being updated to assist clubs throughout Northern Ireland with volunteer development and innovative ideas to upskill current volunteers within clubs.

The VDPO has also invested a lot of time in the Women's UEFA Under 19 tournament, upskilling volunteers and creating a database to assist with the delivery of the tournament. Currently there 62 volunteers inducted who were not previously involved in volunteering. Specific roles have been created and a resource booklet for the tournament has been issued to assist with any queries for new or potential volunteers. A volunteer steering group to assist with the tournament preparations is also in place to assist the VDPO with the logistics of the tournament. This will consist of a member of staff from Volunteer Now and members from the current volunteer team.

The VDPO, alongside the CCDO has engineered a number of workshops specifically designed to assist local clubs in a range of areas. Some courses include turf management, social media and mental health and will be delivered at different venues across Northern Ireland as we aim to reach out to as many potential clubs as possible.

## Recruitment and Retention

### March/April 2017:

The **Female Football Fitness** programme was completed at two venues, Greenmount and Bracken Centre. 45 females from rural communities took part in a fun football fitness programme which incorporated physical activity as well as educational workshops on topics including mental health.

**Corporate Business League** continues to run with eight teams competing each week to be crowned the first ever winners.



Our first ever joint **football and tennis camp** took place over Easter at Wallace Park Indoor Tennis Centre. We had 40 young people between the ages of 5-13 taking part, learning lots of new skills and having fun in a safe and secure environment. Of the 40 young people, 16 were female.

**Neymar JR 5s** tournament was completed with the national final taking place at the Titanic Slipways. We had 685 players competing over the regional qualifiers with Distillery Elites coming out on top and earn a place in the World Finals in Brazil in July.



## Football and Social Responsibility

### Community Relations - Project: Football For All – A Northern Ireland For All

The Irish FA Foundation through its football and social responsibility strategy has underpinned its commitment to football for all. Outreach is at the forefront of our programmes and we have utilised the brand new National Football Stadium at Windsor Park as the vehicle for uniting communities.

The stadium and its innovative, inspiring and educational Heritage Centre (EHC) tells the story of a nation's sporting history. Northern Ireland, widely regarded as an underdog, represents a true David

and Goliath story in the footballing world. The Irish FA Foundation echoes the story off the pitch as its commitment to fight sectarianism, racism and to promote an inclusive society can be told through its Football For All projects.

Using the stadium to engage with the community in Northern Ireland, The Irish FA Foundation offered stadium tours, Education and Heritage Centre stories and physical activity to deliver cohesion and a welcome hand to schoolchildren from both sides of Northern Ireland's so-called religious divide and to Syrian refugees.

The extended programme offered to Syrian refugees has hopefully provided a sense of inclusion in their new country after a tumultuous period of unrest, uncertainty, and fear. The programme entailed:

- 24 hours of football coaching and a facility to play and enjoy the beautiful game of football
- Nutrition workshops to educate the participants on healthy eating and physical and mental wellbeing
- A tour of the National Football Stadium and Education and Heritage Centre to create a sense of welcome and integration into Northern Irish society
- A welcome place of neutrality and iconic sporting history.

Through the Irish FA Foundation's Football For All strategy it plans to continue to use football as the hook to provide social cohesion, a game for all and a Northern Ireland for all.



## Girls' and Women's Football

### Girls Regional Excellence

The programme continued on with the normal weekly sessions for all four regions and the extra weekly sessions for the various Development squads. Over the Easter break the development squads also came in for extra sessions. For the 04 & 05 Development squads the weekly gymnastics took place on a Monday night at UU. The U15 Bob Docherty squad which is selected from the Regional Excellence programme took part in the annual competition this year hosted in Dublin. The squad did very well beating England 1 - 0 before losing to Wales in the Final 0 - 2 in a very keenly contested game.

### International Women's Football

A very busy month to follow on from the Istra Cup in March where the senior women finished fourth after two draws, a win and a loss. Early April saw the seniors travel to Wales where they lost both games 1 - 3, Rachel Furness and Julie Nelson scoring the goals in two tough games.

The U17s also travelled to Wales over Easter losing one game 1 - 2 and drawing 1 - 1 in the other, Kelsie Burrows and Emily Wilson being the goalscorers. Two players came in for trial games from the USA with both showing that they would be an addition to future squads.

The U19s continued their Euro preparation with games against local NIFL Premier league sides beating Ballymena AS and Newry City. They also went on an Erasmus funded trip to Spain for a seven day camp which was a very worthwhile exercise with a lot of tough training sessions being carried out in great surroundings.

### Girls' Performance Academy

The girls' extra training sessions continued and an added bonus was that three of the players took part in the Inter Varsity in Cork, which was won by UU.

### Coach Education

A match analysis and video recording training session was delivered to the regional excellence and international coaches at UU by Kyle Ferguson. This will help the staff as they enforce their various coaching points to their squads with realistic back up information.



## FOOTBALL CAMPS

### Irish FA Hughes Easter Football Camps 2017

- New sponsor
- 137 camps last year
- Easter 2017 record numbers: 2,177 – 13.33% increase
- The number of girls attending this Easter has increased by 60.47%
- Diversified camps - partnered with NI Athletics and Tennis Ireland
- Introduced club and community camps



### Club and Community Development

The Irish FA Club and Community Development Officer (CCDO) has finalised a revamp to the entire Club Development accreditation with a relaunched planned for early May. This revamp will ensure clubs now have a step by step process by which they can develop and all under the McDonalds Clubmark branding. Clubs continue to work towards submitting folders for assessment with 3 clubs submitting over the last few weeks. The CCDO has set clear targets to be achieved in 2017 across all levels of the game.

The CCDO has also begun touring the country delivering sessions to clubs across all levels of the game with a view to upskilling the coaches and players, as well as offering club development support to the club. This process will ensure clubs are aware of the support on offer and who they should contact for assistance.

The CCDO, with support from the Football Development Manager, the Female Domestic Officer and the Youth Development Co-Ordinators has been working hard to develop NIFL Premier League clubs in the male and female game. This work is ongoing and has already seen huge progress being made both on and off the pitch within some of the IFA's largest and highest profile clubs. Communities.

The Irish FA Foundation are working in partnership with Extern to engage the Syrian community in the local areas using football. This will involve an eight-week programme with specialist coaching and nutritional expertise.

Speaking at the launch, Irish FA Foundation Director of Football Development Michael Boyd highlighted the Foundation's continued dedication to football and 'social responsibility'. "We are delighted to be supporting Extern in this highly beneficial programme, creating new partnerships that will help bring communities together in Northern Ireland. We are also looking to offer more opportunities for participation that will help advance our objectives in The Irish FA Foundation Youth Strategy 'Let Them play'.

Also, speaking at a recent session Extern Syrian Key Worker Gavin Connolly added "This is a fantastic opportunity for Extern and the Irish FA in creating a partnership moving forward, which can only be beneficial for the Syrian families".

The Foundation have donated training kit and continue to offer 2 hours coaching a week at Playball, Stormont. Outreach is very much embedded in the Irish FA Foundation philosophy and we recognise the huge significance football can play in bringing communities together. For further details, please contact Diversity and Outreach Officer Andy Waterworth at [andy.Waterworth@irishfa.com](mailto:andy.Waterworth@irishfa.com).

## Futsal

### Northern Ireland futsalers celebrated at Belfast ceremony

The Irish FA has presented international caps to Northern Ireland's first ever futsal squad.

The players made history back in December when they made their bow at the Futsal Home Nations Championships.

At a caps presentation ceremony held at the National Football Stadium at Windsor Park both the achievements of the team and backroom staff were celebrated. And the event also highlighted the rapid development of the sport here in the past 18 months.

Irish FA President David Martin presented the futsalers with their caps and also spoke about his pleasure observing the growth of the game. He said: "The Irish FA encouraged the creation of a culture of futsal back in 2013 as documented in the association's corporate strategy. Subsequent youth and futsal strategies have served to embed the game of futsal into all future Irish FA development plans. Events like this highlight the progress that has been made and I look forward to the future development of the sport."

Northern Ireland futsal head coach Jonathan Michael said: "It has been wonderful to recognise the achievements of the players. This group of players are pioneers for the sport in Northern Ireland and I hope that their experiences and influence will inspire many more to become involved in the game."

Jonathan added: "I was proud at how well they performed in the Home Nations Championships in Cardiff last December and it has been encouraging to see them develop even further in training sessions over recent months.

"We are continuing to add players to the group and our focus is now on two friendly internationals against San Marino next month."



## Schools' Football

### Fifth successive schools cup win for Holy Cross

This year's girls' schools' senior cup final pitted Holy Cross (Strabane) against St. Louise's (Belfast).

St Louise's started brighter and had a goal ruled out for offside on 15 minutes and hit the post on 22 minutes.

The Belfast school finally got their breakthrough on 30 minutes through a long-range strike from Cara Mervyn.

Holy Cross equalised on 35 minutes after a well-worked short corner saw Teegan Lynch round a defender and slot home.

The Strabane school then went ahead on 39 minutes through a header from Laura McCurdy.

Holy Cross managed the second half well and were rewarded with a third goal on 78 minutes when Teegan Lynch's freekick fell to Billy Jay McMenamin, who slotted home from inside the box.

The 3-1 win secured a fifth successive senior cup victory for Holy Cross.



### St Louise's beat Lurgan Junior High 6-1 in cup decider

St Louise's lifted the girls' schools' junior cup on Friday with a convincing 6-1 win over Lurgan Junior High at Moyola Park.

The Belfast school went 1-0 up within the first five minutes when Carla Devine headed home from inside the box. Devine made it 2-0 on 18 minutes when she outpaced Lurgan's defence and lobbed the goalkeeper before slotting home.



Jessica Rae pulled one back for LJH through a freekick on 22 minutes, but Carla Mervyn restored St Louise's two goal advantage five minutes later through a fantastic freekick into the top corner.

Half-time: St Louise's 3 Lurgan Junior High 1

St Louise's started the second half in similar fashion to the first, scoring within five minutes through an Erin McGreevy strike from outside the box.

It was 5-1 just minutes later, and then 6-1 as Carla Devine secured her hattrick when she rifled a shot into the top corner to secure a convincing victory.



## Northern Ireland Schools' FA

### Holders retain Schools' Cup with 3-1 win at Seaview

A gritty display saw Grosvenor Grammar retain the Danske Bank Northern Ireland Schools' Cup.

The east Belfast school's direct approach proved more effective as they secured a 3-1 victory after extra-time over St Columb's College at Seaview.

Their opponents from Derry-Londonderry enjoyed the bulk of the possession, and produced some scintillating football at times, but the Grosvenor attacking force of Stuart Nelson, Conor Kernohan and Josh Kelly ultimately made the difference.

The Grosvenor back four also played their part in the cup success, especially centre backs Lewis Cunningham and Daniel Larmour, who produced a series of fine tackles to repel the St Columb's attack.

Afterwards Grosvenor head coach Darren Tomkins was full of praise for his side.

"St Columb's were a very good side. We stuck at it well though and had good discipline and a good shape. We worked hard and the boys deserve an awful lot of credit. We are absolutely delighted to have won two in a row," he said.



### St Columbs lift cup after three goals in final minutes

St Columbs College took home the Under 16 cup at the NISFA Boys Finals Day after three goals in the final ten minutes sealed an 3-1 win against St Patricks of Belfast.

It was a good day for St Columbs as they also took home the U12 Minor Cup thanks to a late goal from Eoin Doherty in extra time.

In the big game of the day, it was St Patricks that took the lead with just 15 minutes to go as the ball fell kindly to Thomas Logan inside the six yard box to tap in.



St Columbs College had earlier hit the woodwork twice and must have wondered if it would be their day but with ten minutes to go they got their equaliser as Ryan Tabbitt scored on the rebound after his first shot was saved.

The turnaround was soon completed as Jordan McEneff pounced on a loose ball to tap in past the diving St Patricks defenders and the win was confirmed with a third goal in added on time.

### **U18 Plate: Northern Regional College 1-0 South Eastern Regional College**

Also, in the Under 18 Plate, Northern Regional college overcame a two man deficit to defeat South Eastern Regional College.

Just after the 20 minute mark, NRC took the lead through striker Jamie Coulter who headed in from close range but as the whistle was nearing the referees lips for half time, NRC defender Patrick Gault earned himself a second yellow card and was sent off.

Things got worse though for NRC soon after the restart as they went down to nine.

However, NRC defended well and captain Josh Dunn was called into action firstly to keep out a good low strike from SERC midfielder Jordan Pegg and then in the four minutes of added on time, he dived high to his right to keep out Christian McMaster.

### **Other Results**

**U12 Minor Cup:** Holy Cross 0-1 St Columbs (AET)

**U12 Minor Plate:** Abbey Community College 1-5 Ballyclare Secondary School

**U13 Small Schools Cup:** St Colmans 2-1 St Patricks (AET)

**U14 Intermediate Cup:** OLSPCK 2-1 St Columbs College

**U14 Intermediate Plate:** Dalriada 0-3 Lurgan Junior High School

**U15 Small Schools Cup:** Newry High 0-2 St Joseph's Donaghmore

**U16 Plate:** Abbey Community College 3-1 Dromore High School

## **Referee Development**



During March & April the workshops for the 2017-2018 season started. Over 200 referees have now completed a workshop on report writing/ discipline and taken their fitness tests. It's encouraging despite a new test being brought in the pass rate remains above 80%. All referees who wish to be considered for development groups and intermediate status next season have now completed all fitness test, Laws of the Game test and Workshop requirements.

Domestically, cup final appointments have been completed – Keith Kennedy will officiate the Irish Cup Final, Diarmuid Harrigan the Intermediate Cup final, Mark Irwin in the Junior and Barry Maxwell officiating the Harry Cavan Youth Cup final. Good luck to all those involved and their team of officials.