

DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY

FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

January 2018



Foundation



Schools' Football

This year the girls' 11-a-side competition was held in five regions across Northern Ireland. There were 27 teams involved in the competitions with over 416 girls participating in the regional heats with the winners advancing to the girls 11-a-side finals in January.

In the first of the regional heats at Ulster University Coleraine, Lisneal College and St Mary's College excelled with St Mary's eventually running out group winners.

Last year's winners St Louise's College Belfast booked their place in the finals winning in a very tight match against St Genevieve's, Belfast in the Belfast/Antrim heat. In the Tyrone and Fermanagh heat Holy Cross showed their strength and numbers with their A team having to play their B team in the final. Holy Cross College will be representing Tyrone and Fermanagh at the finals.

In the Down heat in Londonderry Park St Joseph's proved too strong winning their section and not dropping a point against the likes of Glenlola College and Strangford High School. Clounagh Junior High will be representing Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon in the finals of the school girls' 11-a-side competitions which will be played at Allen Park on the 17th January 2018.

The competition aims to give schoolgirls more opportunities at playing 11-a-side football, growing and learning the laws of the game. This is the first year the Northern Ireland Schools' Football Association has collaborated with the competition and it's hoped that with its support that the competition goes from strength to strength.

School Quality Mark

There are currently 25 primary and post primary schools who have achieved the School Quality Mark accreditation. The accreditation was launched in January 2016 at Laurelhill Community College who have recently been awarded the gold accreditation. Our Lady and St Patrick's College, Knock has become the first school



through the Irish FA School Quality Mark in partnership with Belfast City Council. The school has achieved Gold which is the highest accreditation given by the Irish FA to schools participating in football.

The School Quality Mark accreditation is part of the Irish FA's Let Them Play strategy which strives to improve schools' football in Northern Ireland. The role of the school quality mark is to revamp schools' football, create and improve structures for football in schools and further build capacity for football in schools.

The Irish FA has partnered with Belfast City Council and will engage 12 primary and six post primary schools in Belfast. These schools will receive a six week coaching block focusing on fundamental skills and a six hour mentoring programme for schools to complete the school quality mark accreditation. The mentors will assist teachers in how to create and sustain structures for football in the school and also source documentation and club links.

The schools that have recently achieved the School Quality Mark are:

McClintock Primary School • Templepatrick Primary School • Edenderry Primary School

Greystone Primary School • Mullaglass Primary School • Cookstown Primary School

Laurelhill Community College • Forthill College • Our Lady and St Patrick's Knock • Newry High School

Post Primary Futsal Finals

The Post Primary Futsal National Finals were held for boys and girls at Lisburn LeisurePlex on the 16th and 17th November. Nine regional heats were held across Northern Ireland with 960 girls and 620 boys participating in Year 9, Year 11 and Year 12+ (girls only) tournaments. The winners of each regional heat made their way to Lisburn LeisurePlex to compete for the National Futsal Final trophies.

Girls' Finals

The finals tournament started on Thursday with the girls' competition in three age groups year 8/9, year 10/11 and year 12+. 29 girls teams played in various group games to try to book their place in the final. In the year 8/9 tournament Bloomfield Colligate met Ballymoney High School in the final and after a tight fought contest Ballymoney High School managed to lift the title winning the match 2-1.

Former winners St Louise's College, Belfast met a very strong Enniskillen Royal in the year 10/11 final. In a very tightly contested game Enniskillen Royal Grammar showed their narrowly took the lead and held on for the 1-0 with Linfield Ladies Casey Howie scoring the decisive goal. Belfast Model School for Girls played last years title holders Mercy College and it turned into an exciting match. Mercy won the match 2-1 retaining their title.



Boys' Finals

In the boys' competition there were 16 teams in years nine and 11 from across Northern Ireland. However it was a local Lisburn school that took all the headlines on the day. At year 9 St Patrick's Lisburn won three games to secure a semi final spot along with Abbey Community College, Our Lady & St Patrick's Knock, and Holy Cross Strabane. In two thrilling semi-finals it took penalties to split Our Lady & St Patrick's Knock and St Patricks with the latter going through to the final while Abbey Community overcame Holy Cross. St Patrick's Lisburn ran out deserved winners on the day despite a gutsy performance by Abbey Community College.

In the year 11 tournament last years winners Laurelhill won their group to book a place in the semi final with Our Lady & St Patrick's Knock going through as best runners up. In the second group Boys Model and Enniskillen Royal progressed to the semi finals. In the first semi final Boys Model defeated Laurelhill and shortly after Our Lady & St Patrick's Knock booked their place in the final with a convincing win over Enniskillen Royal. In the final Boys Model took an early lead after 12 seconds and ran out worthy winners.

This year was the first Irish FA College futsal tournament hosted in Ulster University Jordanstown. There were five teams with 38 participants in the pilot project which will continue to be developed next year.



Club and Volunteer Development

In early December the Irish FA CCDO Diarmuid O'Carroll hosted a meeting of the Club Education & Development Working Group following previous requests from the Football Committee and the board. The group was formed a number of years ago but due to personnel changes across committees and within the Irish FA it hasn't been run as often as possible. This group brings together representatives from a number of leagues and committees across the country to ensure all ages and levels of the game have an opportunity to provide input to the Irish FA. The agenda for the meeting covered a wide range of areas such as Clubmark, Volunteer recruitment & retention, CASC/Charitable status and various other discussion points. An action from the meeting was to officially appoint a Chair of the group and also to explore the possibility of conducting a nationwide review of the needs of the amateur/intermediate levels of the game.

The Irish FA CCDO also continues his work with clubs progressing towards achieving Club Mark in early 2018. A major target for early 2018 is the development and implementation of a Clubmark revalidation process to ensure clubs renew and update their information and receive an updated Clubmark accreditation. Over 50 clubs are currently working towards submissions with the support of the Irish FA CCDO, Irish FA VDPO, Irish FA YDCs and the Irish FA RGDOs.

The Irish FA VDPO Michael Carvill continued linking with key stakeholders, Queens University, Ulster University & Volunteer Now alongside local community groups. Through continued consultation the Volunteer Recognition Scheme has been amended to coincide with current volunteer trends. The new recognition scheme will change from the original hour process where volunteers recorded their hours and have now changed to a Volunteer loyalty card, which will be launched in January. Numbers continue to grow and the Volunteer Officer is continuously striving to develop the volunteers to get involved in football and assisting with all Irish FA programmes.

In 2018 the plan is to hold a recognition dinner in conjunction with the McDonalds Awards. Two watches will be presented to volunteers under the banner "Thank you for your time" This is to add a new lease of life to the programme and continue in our campaign to provide more opportunities for our volunteers in conjunction with the Let Them Play strategy.

Education

Education Officers

The programme is up and running in eight schools and colleges throughout the country. We have delivered to 133 students. We are currently in talks with several other schools/colleges and hope to increase this in 2018. The education officers are working alongside the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon council delivering on their Kick Back programme, working with NEETS in the area, helping provide them with employability skills.

To date we have delivered six Grassroots Intro Awards, four Futsal Intro awards, Futsal level 1 and numerous different workshops. 11 students have completed their level 1, and there will be a further 45 students attending a Level 1 course in January with the help of GDOs.

Girls' and Women's Football

In partnership with Belfast City Council and Sport NI (Everybody Active 2020 Programme) a mentor programme was launched in 2016 with Belfast girls' and women's clubs. The initiative involves eight clubs and gives extra provision to coaches working within the female game through coach education and mentor support. The mentors help coaches progress and grow their own coaching ability, as well as developing the female players at each club. This programme has continued throughout 2017 and has been very successful and will remain into 2018. The programme has grown from strength to strength and the female clubs across Belfast have truly benefitted from the mentors' engagement. The Irish FA in conjunction with Sport NI will be running a Building Momentum Workshop on Sunday 28th January at the National Football Stadium, where other sporting organisations will attend and get an insight into our programme.



Female Football Leaders Programme

The immensely popular Female Football Leaders Programme continued in 2017. The aims of the project were to increase the confidence, competence and capacity of women in a range of effective leadership behaviours. It proactively supports women to apply for and progress in leadership roles within football clubs or governing body committees and boards. Consequently, several participants involved have taken up new roles within local football clubs across the country. The 2017 course has been very successful, and 10 individuals will be graduating on Friday 19th January 2018.

Ballynagross Girls awarded new equipment

The girls' section of Ballynagross has been awarded new football equipment by the Irish Football Association in appreciation of their superb work in developing the girls' game. The club's numbers have grown steadily since it formed two years ago.



NI Southern Girls' League

The NI Southern Girls' League had their Cup Final for the Under 15s and a Blitz for the Under 11 section on Saturday 30th December 2017 at the Lurgan Arena. The League was formed in 2017 with the backing of both the IFA and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council and has seen a sharp rise in the amount of girls playing regular football in the area. The NISGL has over 30 teams competing at three age groups (Under 15s, Under 13s and Under 11s) and has clubs represented from Counties Armagh, Down & Tyrone.

The Under 11 Blitz was attended by five teams on a frosty but mostly dry morning at Lurgan Arena. A league format allowed all teams to play each other once with Craigavon City and Lurgan Town eliminated after playing their four games. Banbridge Rangers topped the group with four wins whilst Banbridge Town and Annagh United were level and went into a playoff to get into the Final.

After a penalty shootout Banbridge Town progressed to set up a derby match in the Final. The only goal of the game arrived through Zara Barnes for Banbridge Rangers who sent a high shot past the keeper



after six minutes. Zoe Knox, who had scored 8 goals for Banbridge Rangers in the opening three matches, went close on a number of occasions but was thwarted by some very good goalkeeping and defending from Banbridge Town. Thanks to NISGL Secretary Aaron Nelson from ABC Borough Council for organising the Blitz which ran seamlessly with the trophy being presented by NISGL Vice Chairperson Kelly Whitten.



In the Under 15 NISGL Cup Final there were very few from each side who didn't anticipate a close match. Banbridge Rangers and Killen Rangers played out two draws in the Development League which was won by Killen Rangers in November whilst both teams had to come from behind in their respective Semi Finals to book their place in the showpiece at Lurgan. Killen Rangers were 3-2 winners over fellow Co Tyrone team Mid Ulster whilst Banbridge Rangers recorded a 2-1 victory over Lurgan Town in their Semi Final in what proved to be a very close competition with most players getting their first taste of 11 a side football. A strong wind from one net to the other was going to have a huge impact on the game with Killen Rangers dominating the first half with the proverbial, and literal, wind at their back. After 15 minutes Killen Rangers forward Lauren McCann sent a through ball for teammate Chelsea Scott who had the entire Banbridge half to run into and finished past goalkeeper Robyn McKinstry.



After half time Banbridge Rangers began to come into the game more and equalised ten minutes into the half after some tenacious work by winger Amy Niblock saw a loose ball drop to Hannah Nickels at the edge of the box. Nickels was moved from centre back to midfield for the second half and showed great composure to side foot her shot into the far bottom corner beyond the reaches of Killen keeper Kacey Reid. Killen then had a counter attack to finish the game off with five minutes to go but saw a shot come back off the inside of the post. As the game moved towards the final minute a corner was only partially cleared by Killen Rangers with Hannah Nickels sending the ball back towards goal with a wicked deflection taking the ball up and over the Killen keeper into the far corner.

A very competitive match and a superb advert for girls football in Northern Ireland was finished off with Banbridge Rangers Captain Cara Henry lifting the NISGL Under 15 Cup. Referee Tracy Orr selected Banbridge left back Megan Clyde as player of the match with Chelsea Scott also impressing for Killen Rangers. Thanks to both clubs for bringing such a large support with the entire sideline packed to see the match.

Banbridge Rangers Team: Robyn McKinstry, Kathryn Copes, Hannah Nickels, Laura Gallagher, Megan Clyde, Molly Hoey, Danielle Megaw, Cara Henry (c), Lia Jones, Amy Niblock, Catherine Clark Subs: Rachel Hodgen, Naomi Magill, Amy McKinstry & Abby Niblock.

Killen Rangers Team: Kacey Reid, Sophia Bogle, Abbie Watson, Charlene Campbell, Natalie Watson, Lauren McCann, Amy McFarland, Amy Vennard, Abbie Lecky, Emily Crawford (c), Chelsea Scott

Subs: Brooklyn Baird, Jenna Forsythe, Courtney Stewart, Charlotte Keatley & Nicole Davis.



Northern Ireland Boys' FA

DB Champions Cup

This is the 6th year of the boy's tournament and 1st first year of the girls

Boys – Winners of the SFAI All Ireland against the Winners of the SUBWAY NIBFA National League

Girls – Winners of the MGL League against the IFA Select Development Squad

Kilmore Celtic 1 v 3 IFA Development Girls 2004s

Shelbourne FC 1 v 1 IFA Development Girls 2003s *Shelbourne win 3 - 0 on Pens

St. Kevin's Boys FC 5 v 1 Linfield 2005s

St. Kevin's Boys FC 0 v 2 Glentoran 2004s

St. Kevin's Boys FC KBFC 2 v 1 Linfield FC 2003s

College Corinthians 1 v 2 Linfield 2002s

Recruitment and Retention

The final of The Irish FA Foundation Onecom Business League took place at Playball, Stormont. Last year's winners FinTrU made it two titles in a row with a comprehensive victory on the night against Hughes Hero's. This year's league was a great success with 16 teams and over 160 players taking part.

Futsal Drop-In sessions continue at Olympia LC for U'11's as part of the Stadium Community Benefits Initiative. This continues to be a success with 18-20 young boys and girls taking part each week.

New Walking Football Club based at Olympia LC continues to run with numbers growing week on week.



Disability Football

Disability League

The National Disability League started in December with a record 16 clubs involved. The league involves monthly blitzes in three ability bands for disability football clubs catering for learning and/or physical disabilities. This year we welcome some of our new inclusive clubs for the first time including CSP, St. James Swifts and Sion Swifts.

U19 Learning Disability Squad

Trials concluded in December for the 2018 Squad. The squad will have several coaching and preparation matches Jan – March 2018 and host the 2018 Home Nations Championships in Belfast 2-5 April.

Visual Impairment Awareness Day – Grosvenor Grammar School

In partnership with RNIB, we held a Visual Impairment Awareness Day in the school on 15 December. This involved two workshops and an indoor futsal competition wearing sight loss simulation glasses. 70 pupils participated and we also raised £350 for RNIB.



Cerebral Palsy player recognised in New Year's Honours List

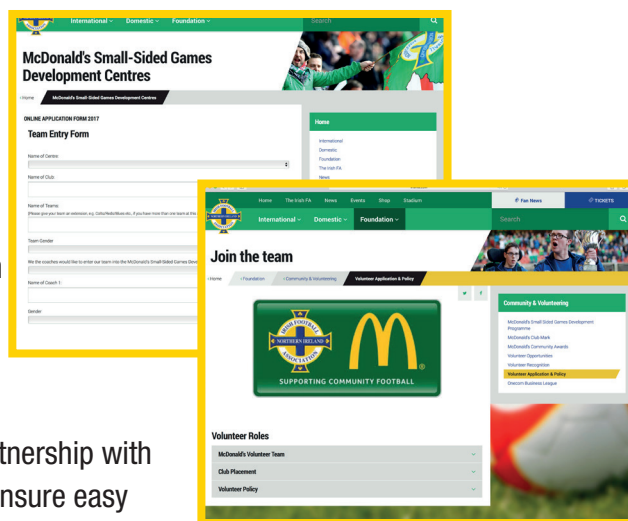
Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy footballer, Charlie Fogarty has been awarded an MBE for services to disability sport. Charlie was a member of the Northern Ireland Squad that finished in a credible 11th place in the recent 2017 World Championships in Argentina. Charlie, based in Birmingham, England, was left with an acquired brain injury after a car accident. He has since set up a disability football section to Solihull Moors and is a motivational speaker with the Premier and English Football Leagues.

Grassroots and Youth Development

Online registration

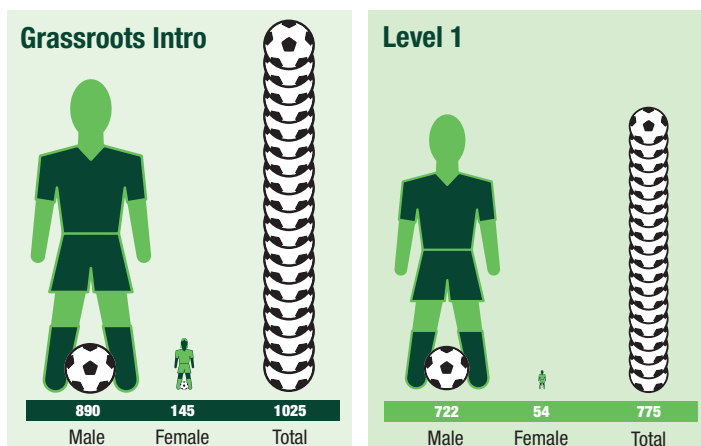
A new element to the McDonald's community programme is the SSG team and player online registration. Conforming with UEFA Gold Award standards, the new system incorporates multiple filters and will handle registration of over 11,500 participations.

Following on from months of consultation and working in partnership with Irish FA Digital Manager Jonny Brown, this new system will ensure easy collation of information on teams, players and coaches.



Grassroots Coach Education

Numbers taking our Grassroots coaching courses continue to rise with 1025 completing the Grassroots Intro course and 775 completing Level 1. To attract more young people into the game we reduced the price of the Grassroots Intro course to £20 and lowered the minimum age from 16 to 14. This led to a near doubling of numbers who took the course compared to the previous year.



Hughes Insurance Irish FA Football Camps

In recent years Irish FA Football Camps have become even more successful. The number of camps has grown from 105 in 2014 to 134 last year, while the number of children participating rose from 5382 to 8120 in the same period.

A key element of the Let Them Play initiative is to increase participation in football among young people, especially girls. As the graph below shows, the numbers of girls taking part in the Irish FA Football Camps has almost doubled since 2014.

