



# Irish Football Association

## Football Development Department

### Delivering the Youth Strategy

#### Headlines

<b>Northern Ireland Boys Football Association</b>	<p>National Small-Sided-Games Festival involving 1500 children to take place at Mallusk on 27th August.</p> <p>NIBFA National League to commence on 3rd September.</p> <p>New NIBFA Website on the way.</p>
<b>Refereeing</b>	600 referees go through their Laws of the Game update and Safeguarding training.
<b>Club and Volunteer Development</b>	<p>Club Excellence scheme rolled out across Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Five new Volunteer Team members recruited.</p> <p>Volunteer Recruitment training delivered to over 50 volunteers.</p>
<b>Recruitment and Retention</b>	<p>105 teams and 740 players take part in Neymar 5s tournament.</p> <p>First ever Beach Football event takes place in Portrush.</p>
<b>Women's Domestic</b>	<p>Eight women's clubs register for the new South Belfast National Football U15 league.</p> <p>Lisburn win Summer U15 11-a-side league after play-off.</p>
<b>Irish FA Nutty Krust Football Camps</b>	<p>Record numbers for Summer Football Camps.</p> <p>First combined football and athletics camp takes place.</p>
<b>Futsal</b>	<p>Game Changer strategy launched.</p> <p>Futsal League and Cup winners crowned.</p> <p>International squad established.</p>

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### NIBFA

NIBFA activity has commenced in earnest for the new season with affiliation, insurance and NIBFA Cup entries all being submitted, we are attempting to bring the kick off dates for the cup competitions forward by one month to try and minimise weather cancellations and the knock on disruption to league programmes.

Player registration is underway and the NIBFA National League will commence on 3rd September, a calendar of events has been tabled with Club NI and the league will cooperate fully with the planned schedule.

The National Small-Sided-Games Festival will take place at Mallusk on 27th August, a total of 144 teams will take part 10 of those being girls teams. The total number of children involved will be around 1500.

Further development work has been required to the NIBFA Website and it is hoped that will be fully operational and have a much slicker layout by the start of the season.

Funding opportunities are being discussed with the IFA regarding a Peace IV application and further meetings are due to take place in the near future.

### Refereeing

It's been a very busy month in refereeing with over 600 referees going through their Laws of the Game update and Safeguarding training. It's been great to provide structured development for referees from Premier League to Small Sided Games and the response and interaction has been excellent.

We have been working with the Foyle Cup and the Milk Cup to provide pre season development to local officials. We have also welcomed our colleagues from the FA to the Milk Cup where our exchange welcomed 6 referees and 2 coaches from the FA Centre of Excellence – our officials will visit England in 2017 for the second part of the exchange. Pictured are the team from the FA along with National Referee Manager Daniel Meeson.



Our FIFA officials have also received appointments – Andrew Davey travelled to Liechtenstein for Vaduz vs. Midjtelland, Arnold Hunter was appointed to Spartak Trnava in Slovakia and Tim Marshall officiated in the Faroe Islands all in the Europa League.

### Club And Volunteer Development

The Irish FA Club and Community Development Officer (CCDO) has continued to roll out the Club Excellence scheme to clubs throughout the country with a number of clubs submitting folders for assessment recently The CCDO has set clear targets to be achieved in 2016 across all levels of the game.

The CCDO, with support from the Football Development Manager and the Female Domestic Officer, has been managing the recently appointed Youth Development Co-Ordinators with a view to them developing NIFL 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.

### Volunteering

- Management of the Volunteer Team ongoing
- 4 volunteers achieved Volunteer Recognition level awards in July.
- 5 new Irish FA Volunteer Team members recruited
- VDPO delivered Volunteer Recruitment training to 50+ volunteers as part of the McDonalds Masterclass programme begun working on the IFAQ Quality Standard in Volunteer Management.
- VDPO met with Ulster Rugby and began planning for Volunteer School Roadshows as well as representation at a volunteer graduation event in August

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### Recruitment & Retention

#### Neymar 5s

During May 2016 the Irish Football Association in conjunction with our partner Red Bull we ran a highly successful Neymar JR 5's competition. This was a 5 a side completion with a number of unique rules including no goal keepers and losing a player after every goal conceded. Its aim was to promote 'street' football and reward and promote skillful and attacking play.

During May we ran a number of regional qualifiers across a number of venues in Belfast, Cookstown and Coleraine culminating in the Grand National Final which was held at the National Football Stadium after the Northern Ireland v Belarus international challenge match.



Distillery Elites came out on top of a highly entertaining and competitive final and earned their place at the International Finals in Brazil. The boys travelled to Praia Grande in Brazil, hometown of Neymar, from the 6th to the 10th of July to compete against 48 other countries from around the world. They managed to pick up wins against Lebanon and Oman but fell to defeats against Mexico and Portugal. The regional heats attracted 105 teams with 740 players between the ages of 16-24 taking part.

#### Beach Football



On the 26th and 27th August we ran our first ever beach football event on the East Strand Beach in Portrush. This was a free, drop in event for boys and girls of all ages aimed at giving young people a chance to try out and enjoy the beautiful game in a unique, fun filled and family friendly environment. Over the course of the two days, 70 young people enjoyed 5 a side beach football, football tennis, bouncy goalkeeping and 1v1 challenges, with 10% of these being young females.



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### Women's Domestic

- The popular FIFA 'Live Your Goals' Roadshows finished its last event of 2016 visiting the very popular Town of Banbridge who just launched their girls sections (Banbridge Town and Banbridge Rangers)
- Football Female Leadership Programme continues meeting once a month and are currently undergoing an OCN Football Administration
- 8 Women's clubs have had a meeting in June and registered for the new South Belfast National Football U15 league which will start in September
- Mallusk Girls only Games Center has completed 8 weeks of non-competitive football for u9, u11 and u13 with sponsored pitches from the Belfast City Council. Each club that entered the games center has been offered a free Grassroots and Level 1 Award to take place this September.
- The Summer U15 11-a-side league finished in style with Crusaders and Lisburn tied at the top of the table on points. A playoff game at V36 saw Lisburn come from behind to win 2-1

### Irish FA Nutty Krust Summer Football Camps

This year's Irish FA Nutty Krust Summer Football Camps are proving more popular than ever. By the end of August over 82 camps will have taken place across Northern Ireland. Already, the camps have played host to 4200 children; nearly 25% more than the number taking part at the same stage last year.

This year's programme also includes goalkeeping camps as well as a new style camp combining football and athletics. 39 children including 10 girls, registered for this multi-discipline camp that took place at Belfast's Mary Peters Track. The high percentage of girls is particularly encouraging given the Irish FA's ongoing *Let Them Play* strategy which aims to increase participation in football of young people, particularly girls.

The Irish FA and Athletics NI plan to run similar combined camps across Northern Ireland in the coming months.



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### Futsal Gaining Momentum

It has been an extremely busy couple of months for Futsal development in Northern Ireland.

### Game Changer Strategy Launched

The Irish Football Association launched its first ever Futsal Strategy 'Game Changer' at the end of June. The event took place at Lagan Valley Leisureplex, Lisburn.

The Strategy is designed to enhance and assist the current objectives within the current Irish FA Youth strategy 'Let Them Play'. Within the new Futsal strategy, the following areas have been identified as key to fulfilling the strategies objectives. They are Grassroots, Domestic, Performance, Coach and Referee development.

Through the initiative the Irish FA have outlined specific objectives for both boys and girls in an attempt to increase participation and knowledge of Futsal across Northern Ireland. One of the objectives is to have over 2,000 school children, boys and girls, in Primary and Post Primary Schools participating on a regular basis.

Irish FA Chief Executive Patrick Nelson said "Futsal is a game which the Irish FA have researched and identified as an exciting new tool to increase participation, develop elite players alongside the development of coaches and referees through exciting new pathways. Futsal has proven to be of pivotal importance in the development of global football stars. Therefore as an Association with aspirations to enhance our young players we feel Futsal can provide the platform necessary to do so. I would like to thank you for attending the launch of the strategy and at this time we hope with your investment and involvement you can assist in the delivery of Futsal throughout Northern Ireland."

Irish FA President David Martin said "The Irish FA is fully committed to promoting Futsal. It's very encouraging to see such a strong representation here today from key stakeholders who all will play a vital role insuring the strategy is a success and meets its objectives. Although Futsal is a more recent game, already the Football Development team have delivered numerous Futsal taster events and interest in the game is growing rapidly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for attending and supporting the Irish FA with the introduction of this exciting new strategy."

### National Futsal League

Foyle Futsal Club were crowned National Futsal League Champions for 2016 after victory by one goal over Sparta Belfast in a pulsating game at Lagan Valley LeisurePlex. The final game was the culmination of a National Futsal League Regional competition that took place across Northern Ireland this summer with the Regional League winners meeting in a National Final Four competition.

Sparta Belfast booked their place in the final after a 13 vs 8 semi-final victory over FC Tuga of Portadown. Foyle Futsal Club impressed in their 7 vs 1 semi-final victory over Amigos LT of Armagh.

The final was a fantastic advert for the high tempo and end to end nature of Futsal. Sparta Belfast established an early 3 goal lead but Foyle Futsal Club regrouped to make the score 4 vs 4 at half time. The second half was much more open with both teams giving everything to establish a lead and take control of the game. The half was not without incident which included high quality one touch play, tremendous goalkeeping, penalties and a sending off.

With less than 2 minutes remaining on the clock, and a potential penalty shootout looming, Foyle Futsal Club took the lead to make the game 13 vs 12. A strong defensive display enabled them to deny Sparta Belfast a clear cut opportunity and when the final buzzer sounded their celebrations began. The teams had been part of a thoroughly entertaining final which was a great representation of Futsal in Northern Ireland.



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### Futsal International Cup



Wrexham Futsal Club (Wales), the University of Nottingham (England), Saints and Scholars (Republic of Ireland) and Foyle Futsal Club (Northern Ireland) competed in the first ever Futsal International Cup which took place over the final weekend in July. All teams completed their round of matches on 4 points and as a result the final games were selected by goal difference.

The University of Nottingham and Saints and Scholars competed in the 3rd/4th place game with the Republic of Ireland club coming out on top in an enthralling spectacle. Northern Ireland National Futsal Champions, Foyle Futsal Club gave a fantastic account of themselves to make the final against Wrexham but were beaten by an experienced and disciplined display. Wrexham Futsal Club were worthy winners of the inaugural Futsal International Cup but it was pleasing to see the Northern Irish side perform so well against more experienced opposition.

Over 15,000 people across the world viewed the final games via the Irish FA's Facebook page which demonstrates the global popularity of the sport and points towards the continued capacity for growth in Northern Ireland.

### Futsal Coaching Conference

The Irish FA partnership with Futsal Focus also provided a coach development opportunity on the last Sunday in July by offering the first ever free Futsal Coaching Conference in Northern Ireland. Over 80 people attended the event which was delivered by former SL Benfica Head Coach Roger Augusto, current Germany Assistant Manager Wendelin Kemper and current Wales National Goalkeeper Coach Andy Reading.

Speaking about the event, Irish FA Schools and Futsal Manager Jonathan Michael said, "We wanted to offer our coaches the opportunity to enhance their knowledge received from participating on Irish FA Futsal Coach Education courses by welcoming Futsal experts from across Europe. I am pleased that the conference was such a success and we are committed to making this a more regular event. I would like to thank the coaches for accepting the invitation and hope we can continue to work together in the future."

### Futsal International Squad

The Irish FA have now begun establishing a senior male International Futsal squad and are in discussions with the other home nations on potentially launching a home nation's tournament in the near future.

For more information about Futsal projects with the Irish FA log on to [www.irishfa.com/futsal](http://www.irishfa.com/futsal) or email [futsal@irishfa.com](mailto:futsal@irishfa.com)

