

# PEIL

MAGAZINE

THE SPORT FOR FEMALES + THE GAME FOR FUN + THE PLACE FOR COMMUNITY

**FEMALE LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE LGFA**

## ROYAL RUMBLE

**Meath Burst through to  
TG4 All Ireland Senior Glory**

Player interviews  
from Westmeath  
and Wicklow

*Stats from the  
Meath v Dublin  
Battle*



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**LGFA**  
PEIL na mBAN

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## Carlow's Clíodhna Ní Shé collects inaugural ZuCar Golden Boot award

**C**arlow forward Clíodhna Ní Shé is the inaugural winner of the ZuCar Golden Boot award, the prize for finishing as the leading scorer in the 2021 TG4 All-Ireland Championships.

Ní Shé, 21, from the Bennekerry/Tinryland club, finished the campaign on top of the pile after collecting 9-19 during Carlow's Championship season.

Carlow may have exited the TG4 All-Ireland Junior Championship at the semi-final stage, after extra-time against Antrim, but Ní Shé was in brilliant form and scorer of 3-5 in that game. Earlier in the campaign, Ní Shé also collected a hat-trick of goals (3-2) in defeat to Wicklow, who would go on to be crowned Junior champions.

Ní Shé's total was six points clear of Armagh's

Aimee Mackin, and eight points ahead of TG4 All-Ireland winners Sarah Dillon (Westmeath) and Marie Kealy (Wicklow).

Commenting on the award, Clíodhna said: "It's such a huge honour for me. Carlow haven't had the chance to play at Croke Park yet and unfortunately we didn't make it this year but it's still recognition from a Junior team across the three grades.

"It was great to be at Croke Park on such a big day and also to witness such a great match between Dublin and Meath.

"I'd like to thank Golden Boot

sponsors ZuCar for this award – and thanks also to my Carlow teammates for their efforts this year."

### ZUCAR GOLDEN BOOT 2021

#### TOP 10

1. **Clíodhna Ní She**  
(Carlow) 9-19 (46)
2. **Aimee Mackin**  
(Armagh) 4-28 (40)
3. **Sarah Dillon**  
(Westmeath) 5-23 (38)
4. **Marie Kealy**  
(Wicklow) 0-38
5. **Niamh O'Neill**  
(Tyrone) 1-33 (36)
6. **Anna Jones**  
(Westmeath) 3-24 (33)
7. **Gráinne McLaughlin**  
(Antrim) 3-23 (32)
8. **Louise Ní Mhuircheartaigh**  
(Kerry) 3-20 (29)
9. **Geraldine McLaughlin**  
(Donegal) 2-22 (28)
10. **Emma Duggan**  
(Meath) 3-19 (28)







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# RESEARCH REVEALS COMPELLING INSIGHTS BEHIND WHY WOMEN PLAY **GAELIC4MOTHERS&OTHERS**

**I**n September, Sports Direct were unveiled as the proud new sponsors of the LGFA's Gaelic4Mothers&Others initiative. The programme introduces mothers and other women to Ladies Gaelic Football, in a fun, non-competitive and social environment. The recreational programme is immensely popular, with over 227 clubs from all 32 counties currently involved, with the aim to grow this further throughout 2021.

As part of the launch, Sports Direct and the Ladies Gaelic Football Association carried out a survey with over 1,200 Gaelic4Mothers&Others participants, which provided some really compelling insights into women's motivations for playing sport, barriers they faced that stopped them getting out on the pitch, and the mental and physical benefits of playing Gaelic4Mothers&Others.

Well-known broadcaster with Today FM, Alison Curtis, is the Gaelic4Mothers&Others Ambassador for the new sponsorship, having recently signed up to play with the St. Vincent's Gaelic4Mothers&Others team in Dublin, where she is documenting her Gaelic Games journey on her Instagram page, and encouraging others to follow suit.

## Motivations & Constraints

Much of the research suggested that those who play Gaelic4Mothers&Others did so as a way of finding some well-needed "me time", having struggled in the past to find time for themselves due to family and work commitments. Exercise was the number one motivation for those involved with the programme at 84%, while friendship ranked second at 64%. Confidence (23%) and time (41%) ranked highest in terms of barriers to playing sport, while when asked how they had previously spent their time

before playing Ladies Gaelic Football with their Gaelic4Mothers&Others club, just over half of respondents said that they had spent their time putting others' priorities first.

## Benefits to both mind and body

The research also uncovered a host of physical and mental benefits associated with regular exercising and socialising within the team environment. Over 90% of respondents felt that the initiative had improved their mental health, and 97% agreed that playing Gaelic4Mothers&Others helped to relieve stress – particularly important given events of the last 18 months. Meanwhile, 87% of participants felt that the programme had helped them to reconnect with friends that they wouldn't have reconnected with otherwise, truly showcasing what Gaelic4Mothers&Others is all about.

## Sporting Role Models

Despite over 48% of Gaelic4Mothers&Others players having never played Ladies Football before joining the programme, with 34% not playing in over 10 years, 89% of the women surveyed agreed that it had empowered them to be a sporting role model within their family. Sports Direct ambassador and broadcaster, Alison Curtis, signed up to try out Gaelic football for the first time as part of the launch, signing up to her local Gaelic4Mothers&Others club at St Vincent's in Dublin. Since joining, she has found that her involvement with the team has meant that she could now be a sporting role model for her young daughter, Joan.

Over the coming months, Sports Direct will show women everywhere that while visibility and role modelling may start at home, with

Gaelic4Mothers&Others and Sports Direct, role modelling has never been so fun. The new Sports Direct video series, '#MyReasonWhy' showcases ambassadors across the four provinces of Ireland who have shared their reason why – why they're involved in Gaelic4Mothers&Others, and why it means so much to them. You can view these videos now on Sports Direct Ireland's Instagram page.



**For more information on the Gaelic4Mothers&Others programme, please visit:**  
[ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/games-development/gaelic4mothersothers/](https://ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/games-development/gaelic4mothersothers/)



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# MEATH VS DUBLIN

TG4 SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL 2021

5<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER

STATS AND ANALYSIS

TADHG DORNAN @ROCKSOLIDANALYTICS





KPI	DUBLIN LADIES					MEATH LADIES				
GAME PERIOD	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total
<b>Kickout</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>
Break lost									1	1
Break won	1				1		1	1		2
Lost clean	1				1					
Short lost	1	1			2					
Short won	2	2	1	5	9	5	3	2	4	14
Won clean	1	2			3		1	1		2
<b>Turnover</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>14</b>
Block							1			1
Break		1			1	1		1	2	4
In contact	1	1	2	1	5			1		1
Interception	5	1	2	2	10	3	1	2	2	8
<b>Unforced errors</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>
Handling			1	2	3	1	1	1	1	4
Shot Short				1	1					
Pass	4	3	3		10	4	2	2	2	10
Turnover	1				1	1		3		4
<b>Free conceded</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>
Attacking third			1		1	1		3	1	5
Defensive third	1	1		1	3	2	1	2	2	7
Middle third	3	1	5	3	12		1	3	1	5
<b>Placed ball</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
Point	1	1		1	3	1	1			2
Wide						1			1	2
<b>Shot from play</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>
Goal						1				1
Point	3	1	2	3	9	4	2	1	2	9
Save		1			1					
Short				2	2					
Wide	1	3	2	1	7				1	1
Woodwork				1	1					
<b>Attacks</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>
Central	7	2	4	1	14	6	1	5	2	14
Left Down Sideline	1	1	2	6	10	1	2	1	2	6
Right Down Sideline	2	5	3	2	12		2	3	2	7

Game period 1.1 = 1st half before the water break, same for period 2.1



## INTERVIEW



GAME PERIOD	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total
<b>Kickout % won</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>86.75%</b>
No. of shots	4	5	4	7	20
Shot efficiency %	75%	20%	50%	43%	45%
Attack efficiency %	40%	63%	44%	78%	56%
Turnovers	6	3	4	3	16
Unforced errors	5	3	4	3	15

GAME PERIOD	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total
<b>Kickout % won</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>95%</b>
No. of shots	5	2	1	3	11
Shot efficiency %	100%	100%	100%	67%	91%
Attack efficiency %	71%	40%	11%	50%	41%
Turnovers	4	2	4	4	14
Unforced errors	6	3	6	3	18

### Meath's Key Players: What did they do with the ball?

PLAYER	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total
<b>Emma Duggan</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>
Fouled in possession		1			1
Pass lost			1		1
Pass retained	2	5	6	4	17
Shot on goal	2	1		1	4

PLAYER	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	Total
<b>Vikki Wall</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>
Fouled in possession	2	1	1	3	7
Lost in contact		1	3		4
Pass lost	2	1			3
Pass retained	1	1	2	5	9

## ANALYSIS OF THE GAME

### Kickouts

Croke Park is a big pitch, yet Meath managed to press and disrupt Dublin's kickout superbly in the first 15 minutes of play. This led to Emma Duggan's long-range goal, but it also set the tone for the work-rate Meath continued throughout the game.

To put this in context, in the 2020 final versus Cork, Dublin didn't lose a single kickout and achieved a 100 per cent kickout win percentage. In the 2021 Final, within the first 15 minutes they had already lost two kickouts in dangerous areas, both leading to scores. As a result, Dublin entered the water break with a kickout won percentage of just 67 per cent.

In contrast, Monica McGuirk had plenty of options for short kickouts throughout the game and only lost one kickout on the break in the final quarter of the game, when Dublin finally forced her to go long. This gave Meath a 95 per cent kickout win percentage and a solid platform to develop their running style of play.

### Shots from play and attacks

To look back at the 2020 final for context, Dublin had more shots (20 in 2021 vs 15 in 2020), a similar shot efficiency (45% in 2021 vs 47% in 2020) and similar number of attacks (36 in 2021 vs 25 in 2020). As a

result, they achieved a similar number of points in each final (12 in 2021 vs 13 in 2020). So, what changed? Well, the obvious answer is the opposition and how Meath attacked versus how Cork attacked in 2020. Meath had more attacks than Cork (27 vs 24), had more shots (11 vs 8) and, most importantly, had a significantly greater shot efficiency percentage (91 per cent vs 37.5 per cent).

Dublin's style of attack didn't change all that much from 2020, they retained possession and remained patient in front of goal. Looking at the pitch maps, you can see how they target high percentage shooting areas. However, Meath understood this and allowed Dublin's lower percentage shooters to run with the ball until they eventually swarmed the player in possession, causing turnovers and unforced errors in the Dublin attack.

Meath, on the other hand, kept their width brilliantly and although the stats may look like they only attacked down either sideline or centrally, they gave a masterclass at keeping their width and switching the play once they entered the 45m zone. This usually left an open runner on the far side of field for a high percentage shooting opportunity. In most instances, Emma Troy was on the end of most of these moves and the corner back took each opportunity to keep the scoreboard ticking over.





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**Player Interview:**

**Meath's 2021 TG4**

**All-Ireland winner,**

**Emma Troy**



## INTERVIEW

By DARAGH SMALL

**M**eath rushed towards Hill 16 after their history-making win over the five-in-a-row chasing Dublin at Croke Park.

It was start of their lap of honour and emotions were high, with the huge Meath contingent basking in a fairytale story.

No one could have believed that Meath, who were on the wrong side of a 40-point hammering at the hands of Cork in 2015, could possibly traverse the steps of the Hogan Stand, victorious in a TG4 All-Ireland Senior Championship final six years later.

But the players and management always knew they were capable, while Meath defender Emma Troy's students had their fingers crossed too! "It's been absolutely amazing," said the primary school teacher.

"We are all just so proud of how we have inspired young girls who are either playing football or not playing, because we are getting them interested in playing and showing them they can compete at the top levels and be winners.

"It's been fantastic, so many of the kids in my school attended the game. And as I was doing the lap at the end after, the amount of their faces I was seeing, getting photos with them, and it's just lovely. They are so into it.

"Beforehand one of the boys told me, he goes: "I really hope ye win that match so that you will be in a good mood for the rest of the year."

And it was probably homework off for the week after a seismic shock that left Dublin reeling, changing the landscape of the senior ranks.

The 1994 junior champions were intermediate winners last year but that was only part of their fabulous journey.

It got jolted into life at St Tiernach's Park in Clones on 4 May 2019 when a youthful looking Meath outfit beat Sligo, 4-11 to 1-7, in the Lidl National Football League Division 3 final.

At just 16-years-old, Emma Duggan, scored 1-2 that day and she would be the difference at Croke Park two years later.

**"WE'RE ALL JUST SO PROUD OF HOW WE'VE INSPIRED YOUNG GIRLS WHO ARE EITHER PLAYING FOOTBALL OR NOT, BECAUSE WE ARE GETTING THEM INTERESTED IN PLAYING AND SHOWING THEM THEY CAN COMPETE AT THE TOP LEVELS AN BE WINNERS".**

But in the meantime, Meath also claimed the Division 2 crown in a remarkable rise, they beat Kerry earlier this year.

And they did that as the reigning intermediate champions following last December's brilliant win over Westmeath at Croke Park.

The curve kept pointing upwards until they landed the Brendan Martin Cup, becoming the 13th county to put their name on the trophy.

"We have made history. It's a remarkable occasion for us. Just really can't put it into words how delighted we are," said Troy.

**Left Hand Page:** Emma Troy, Meath in action during the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Senior Football Championship Final

**Bottom Left:** Carla Rowe of Dublin celebrates scoring a point as Emma Troy of Meath looks on **Bottom Middle:** Meath manager Eamonn Murray celebrates with Emma Troy, left, and Niamh O'Sullivan **Bottom Right:** Meath supporters celebrate on Hill 16



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"I think it'll take a while to settle in. We are just in La La land at the minute. It's fantastic.

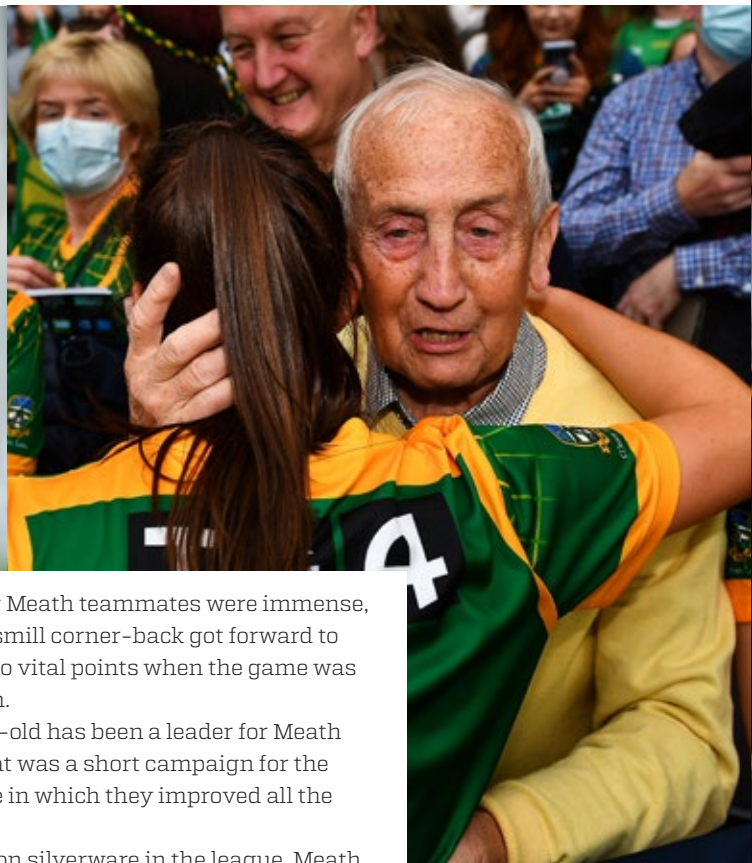
"We could see on the clock and there was 45 seconds and we had possession of the ball. All we wanted to do was to hold onto it. Just to make sure we kept the ball until the end. There was three seconds left and one of them had thrown up the ball, we were that excited. It's just amazing.

**"WE COULD SEE ON THE CLOCK AND THERE WAS 45 SECONDS AND WE HAD POSSESSION OF THE BALL. ALL WE WANTED TO DO WAS TO HOLD ONTO IT. JUST TO MAKE SURE WE KEPT THE BALL UNTIL THE END".**

"It's been a huge progression for us over the years and we have to thank our management for that. They have put in amazing work for us and the girls have really bought into everything they have done for us. They have just put a huge work ethic into it and just built a great environment for us to work in.

"The management, I don't know how they do it. They just seem to make it work, make everything click."

But despite her humility, this success extended beyond the great tutelage of Eamonn Murray and his team on the sidelines.



Troy and her Meath teammates were immense, and the Boardsmill corner-back got forward to chip in with two vital points when the game was there to be won.

The 26-year-old has been a leader for Meath all year, in what was a short campaign for the county but one in which they improved all the way through.

Once they won silverware in the league, Meath actually lost their championship opener against Cork but it was only a two-point deficit and the signs were bright.

Meath hammered Tipperary 1-18 to 0-7 to qualify for the quarter-finals and then they produced another fine display to dislodge Armagh, 3-15 to 1-14.

But they left it late to shock Cork and a couple of late goals earned a final slot against Dublin. Still, not many outside the camp gave Meath much hope of picking apart Mick Bohan's all-conquering side.

"The team, we make each other look good. You know who's great at kick-passing, who's good at shooting. You know when to take the shot, when not to and you just play to each other's strengths," said Troy.

"A lot of us have been together since U-14 and built the whole way up. There's a bond there that really develops over the years. That's really helped and stood to us during the campaign.

"Dublin had been favourites but it's all about who really wants it the most. They say it's about hard work at the end of the day, the team that's hungriest for it, they're the team. And I think we were the hungrier team.

"Next year, we will just try and compete again to the top level. We build on what we've done. There is stuff we still could have worked on. For next year, that will be something we will target. "We want to get back to where we are."

**Above Left:** Emma Troy, Meath is tackled by Lyndsey Davey, Dublin. **Above Right:** Emma Troy, Meath with Sean Boylan

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## Verdict

# BIG MATCH VERDICT:

## ORLAGH FARMER (CORK) ON THE TG4 SENIOR FINAL



**Q: Orlagh, thanks for chatting to us. You tuned in to watch the 2021 TG4 All-Ireland Senior Final between Dublin and Meath. What were your thoughts on the game?**

**A:** What a fantastic Final! Both teams showed class and showcased what the ever-increasing standard of Ladies Football is all about! Hats off to Meath, the stars of the show. They believed they could and they did. What an incredible journey and story, winning their first ever Senior title. Their intent, drive, industrious work-rate and sheer heart was admirable to watch. Credit to Dublin for their constant never-give up determination to close the gap. What a magical moment for Meath when that final whistle went! It just goes to show that if you combine intent, desire and utter belief in a common goal, you can achieve anything.

**Q: Having played against Meath at the semi-final stage, did you think they were in with a chance in the Final, or did you feel that Dublin would win it?**

**A:** To be honest, it was always at the back of my mind that Meath would put it up to the Dubs. I think they had more momentum than Dublin coming into the Final, and beating the Rebels in the semi-final definitely gave them a pep in their step. As favourites, I did think Dublin would win by two-three points but it makes the win all the sweeter for Meath as underdogs!

**Q: Where did you think the Final was won and lost?**

**A:** From the get go, it's fair to say that the Royals ruled the roost, commanding possession and upsetting Dublin's flow. Emma Duggan's goal was a pivotal moment for Meath. This, along with Monika McGuirk's save to deny Hannah Tyrrell's rocket, deflated the Dublin determination. It gave Meath a heightened sense of belief that now was the time to push on. The icing on the cake was Niamh O'Sullivan's sensational left leg score with six minutes to go, which sealed the deal for the Royals.

**Q: Who were the stand-out performers on the day?**

**A:** **Dublin: Hannah Tyrrell:** her intelligent movement and accurate shooting caused problems for the Meath defence. **Martha Byrne:** her ability to get a hand in, and exuberance coming out of defence, was admirable to watch.

**Meath: Vikki Wall:** her speed, determination, and ability to read the game was top class. Unstoppable.

**Emma Duggan:** showed great courage, skill and composure for such a young player. A bright future ahead, for sure. Aoibhín Cleary, Aoibheann Leahy and Emma Troy showed outstanding work-rate throughout and they were involved in some key moments for Meath.

**Q: As a player who's experienced so many Finals, how did it feel sitting back and watching it without that direct involvement?**

**A:** As a player, you always strive to be in Croke Park on All-Ireland Final day. Meath beating us in extra time in the semi-final was hard to take. Nobody likes losing. It goes without saying that that the older you get, the more you appreciate playing in an All-Ireland Final.



Those days should never be taken for granted. Meath's journey and story are incredible and seeing

the sheer joy and emotion on their faces when the final whistle went shows how much sport can lift the spirits of people from all walks of life.

**Q: How do you reflect back on Cork's 2021 season, and how confident are you that the team can regroup ahead of the 2022 campaign?**

**A:** All in all, I think we had a good season. It was very disappointing to lose the way we did in the semi-final. That hurt will drive us on for next year. We're a young team, too, and often times you learn more from defeat. We will regroup now over the coming weeks and reflect upon the year as a group. There are always lessons to be learned and aspects of our play to be improved. I think 2022 will be an exciting season of Ladies Football for all.

**Clockwise from Top Left:**

**1** Orlagh Farmer, Cork during the Lidl Ladies NFL Division 1 Round 3 match between Dublin and Cork at Croke Park 2020. **2** Vikki Wall, Meath in action against Martha Byrne, Dublin. **3** Emma Duggan, Meath. **4** Hannah Tyrrell, Dublin



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# AN ETERNAL OPTIMIST



**T**here were no sore losers on the Wexford side at Croke Park this September when they shipped a heavy defeat in the TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship final but the blueprint is there for their successful return.

All three winners on the day; Wicklow, Westmeath and Meath, lost major finals in recent seasons but they managed to compose themselves and bounce back in impressive fashion.

Meath are perhaps the most obvious example, having lost two intermediate finals in 2018 and 2019 before a remarkable rise that culminated in their famous Senior Final win over the five-in-a-row chasing Dublin.

**OKAY, LOSING THE FINAL IS DISAPPOINTING ... AT THE SAME TIME WHAT THESE GIRLS HAVE ACHIEVED, THE APPLICATION HAS BEEN INCREDIBLE”.**

Wexford came out on the wrong side of a 4-19 to 0-6 hammering but they can bounce back if they keep their heads.

“There are always positives to take, I am the glass half-full type of person,” said manager Lizzy Kent.

“We brought a number of young players off the bench and on reflection, to be playing Division 3 football and senior football would be a big challenge. But I think there is lots of optimism there to build.

“Just speaking to them afterwards, they have been on an S&C plan for a number of years. That is an element of our game that needs to be looked at and probably added to a little bit. I think it’s a learning curve but you have got to bottle it and learn from it.

“In relation to anything else, we are just going to reflect. It has been a whirlwind experience for the last two and a half months. We enjoyed the night of the

**Clockwise from**

**Top Left:**

1 Wexford

manager

Lizzy Kent. 2

Kellie Kearney,

Wexford in

action against

Sarah Dillon,

Westmeath. 3

Ciara Blundell,

Westmeath in

action against

Aisling Halligan,

Wexford. 4

Catriona Murray

Wexford

Final because we have enjoyed the last two and a half months.

“It’s been a brilliant journey.

Okay, losing the Final is disappointing and there is no dressing that up or saying anything different. At the same time, what these girls have achieved, the application has been incredible. I couldn’t be prouder of them after the last two and a half months that we have put in together.

“And Meath were beaten in two intermediate finals before they won their third. Westmeath were beaten last year. Again, I am the eternal optimist as well but I know there are great footballers in Wexford, I know there is a great tradition of football in Wexford.

“But we need to build and be consistent. I think this could nearly be

a watershed that we build on and go forward from here.”

It’s been a season full of ups and downs for this Wexford team, and it began with





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## Focus

relegation from Division 2 of the Lidl National Football League.

Wexford were dumped into a relegation play-off against Tyrone in Dunleer on 20 June and that was a devastating outing.

Tyrone scored 11-7 in their win and after relegation, Lizzy Kent was tasked with returning Wexford to past glories.

Wexford were one of the dominant forces in Ladies football during the 1980s, when they reached three All-Ireland finals, while they were Junior champions in 2014.

And even though this is a long-term project for Kent, the players upped their levels immediately and upset the odds to reach the TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate final. But that didn't add any gloss to the scoreline against Westmeath.

"We were disappointed with the first half, we were all disappointed," said Kent.

"We said that wasn't Wexford, that performance wasn't Wexford. Yes, Westmeath came and enforced their game on us but we were making mistakes that weren't Wexford mistakes.

"We were starting to revert and hide a little bit. That was what we talked about at half-time. We want to go out and put in a performance for our families and our clubs, and for ourselves because the girls are better than what they showed in the first half.

"That was one part of it, to go and perform in the second half, to cut out the mistakes and tidy up a few things and show what we can do. We did that in parts in the second half. Westmeath were still superior in elements of the game, but I would be a lot happier with our effort and application.

**"THAT WAS ONE PART OF IT, TO GO AND PERFORM IN THE SECOND HALF, TO CUT OUT THE MISTAKES AND TIDY UP A FEW THINGS AND SHOW WHAT WE CAN DO. WE DID THAT IN PARTS IN THE SECOND HALF."**

"There will be days like this, I have been on the end of numerous beatings over the years. A defeat is just a defeat. At the end of the day, of course we are hugely disappointed about it but at the end of the day that's what it is."

Kent loves being busy, the Newbawn native is a marketing and communications manager with WIT Novus while she also doubles up as the acting head of sporting societies in WIT.

When you add in the fact she is involved with a National League



Clockwise from

Top Right:

1 Jo-hanna

Maher,

Westmeath in

action against

Aisling Halligan,

Wexford. 2

Clara Donnelly,

Wexford 3 Róisín

Murphy, Wexford

in action against

Anna Jones,

Westmeath 4

Aoife Connolly,

Westmeath

is tackled

by Wexford

goalkeeper

Sarah Merrigan.

5 Shauna

Murphy, Wexford

in action against

Lucy McCartan,

Westmeath

U-17 soccer team, an Irish U-19 soccer team, a local junior football club and a camogie team, it means for a lot of juggling.

But she still finds time to devote to her new found joy, the Wexford Ladies footballers, and she will look to get them back into Division 2 at the first time of asking next year.

Watching the three winners at Croke Park on 5 September

will give her hope that Wexford can follow suit in the not too distant future.

"I thoroughly enjoy my day job and my time on the field," said Kent.

"There are occasions where it is every night of the week but I love it and I am really passionate about it. It doesn't overwhelm me but I think it overwhelms those around me."





# BIG MATCH VERDICT:

## GRACE CLIFFORD (KILDARE) ON THE TG4 INTERMEDIATE FINAL

**Q: Grace, thanks for chatting to us. You tuned in to watch the 2021 TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate Final between Westmeath and Wexford. What were your thoughts on the game?**

**A:** Overall I thought the quality of football played by Westmeath was outstanding. Even close to the final whistle, they were so efficient in their shot selection, that's the sign of a well-tuned team. As a spectator, we all love watching close games as they are exciting but even though this wasn't close, Westmeath's ability to keep their standards high throughout was brilliant to watch.

**Q: Having played against Westmeath at the semi-final stage, did you think they would finish the job, or did you feel that Wexford would win it?**

**A:** I hate writing off other teams, I don't think it is right because anything can happen in 60 minutes of football but I did feel Westmeath would come out on top, simply down to their grit to get a win over the line. Throughout the year, even in games they may have not performed in, they got crucial goals against the run of play which saw them over the line.

**Q: Where did you think the Final was won and lost?**

**A:** Westmeath had a complete performance from their defence to attack. When that happens, it's hard for any team to counteract that. Wexford struggled to get to grips with the Westmeath full-forward line and perhaps if they were to do it all again, they may have gone for a slightly more defensive system to negate some of the scoring threat from those players.



**Q: Who were the stand-out performers on the day?**

**A:** I felt the entire Westmeath team, including the girls who came on, all played really well but the stand-out for me was Sarah Dillion, who deservedly won the Player of the Match Award. Lucy McCartan was excellent too, not just going forward but her work-rate was unbelievable and Fiona Claffey, who covered every blade of grass and was involved in everything. Wexford's Clara Donnelly showed resilience and never gave up also.

**Q: Having lost out in a nail-biting semi-final, what was it like sitting back and watching the Final without the direct involvement?**

**A:** To be completely honest, it was very tough to watch on this year as we were so close to making the Final. The entire day was a complete spectacle and watching on just makes you want to get back on the field training and working hard to try and be a part of that day in 2022.

Clockwise from Top Left:

- 1 Westmeath players celebrate.
- 2 Aoife Connolly, Westmeath.
- 3 The Mary Quinn Memorial Cup.
- 4 Grace Clifford, Kildare.

**Q: How do you reflect back on Kildare's 2021 season, and how confident are you that the team can regroup ahead of the 2022 campaign?**

**A:** Reflecting on the year has been a very positive. We just missed out on a TG4 All-Ireland Final spot in a close encounter with Westmeath and narrowly lost out to Laois in the Lidl National League Division 3 Final. We have built a great foundation so the key for us is all to stick together, get a good pre-season under our belt, and focus on getting over the line in 2022.





### Player Interview: Lucy McCartan reflects on TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate success

By DARAGH SMALL

**I**t will be Christmas before Lucy McCartan finally gets time to sit back and truly appreciate Westmeath's latest success.

It was just after the first half water break when the St Loman's full forward burst through the Wexford cover and rocketed her shot past goalkeeper Sarah Merrigan.

Westmeath went on to claim the TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship and Mary Quinn Memorial Cup for the first time since 2011.

But crucially, they bounced back to the senior ranks after their harrowing defeat to Meath in last year's decider.

"When we came down three years ago, we just knew that the intermediate championship is so competitive," said McCartan.

"There are so many teams gunning for that trophy. I am glad after the disappointment of last year we got back to Croke Park through the tough games that we had through the group and knockout stages. We got a performance on the day which we were delighted about because we were scraping a couple of matches before this.

"The preparation, we were just a bit more organised, we knew what was coming. The crowd obviously was a huge difference. Last year playing in Croke Park with a big empty stadium was different, it was eerie nearly compared to what it was this year. This year, it was just fantastic, everything went right for us. The management got the preparation down to a tee and everyone was just buzzing for it.

"We have had some years with Westmeath where we had very tough results, we have gotten a few hammerings. We have had some good days as well against bigger teams but they are few and far between

**"...WHEN WE CAME DOWN THREE YEARS AGO WE JUST KNEW THAT THE INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIP IS SO COMPETITIVE. THERE ARE SO MANY TEAMS GUNNING FOR THAT TROPHY. I AM GLAD AFTER THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF LAST YEAR WE GOT BACK TO CROKE PARK..."**

**Above:** Lucy McCartan, Westmeath in action against Aisling Halligan, Wexford  
**Below Left:** Referee Shane Curley with Wexford captain Aisling Murphy and Westmeath captain Fiona Claffey **Below Right:** Westmeath captain Fiona Claffey lifts the Mary Quinn Memorial Cup





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## INTERVIEW



especially when you are playing Division 1 and when we had been playing senior. But the intermediate I think has given us another boost.

**“EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE TOUGH WINS, WE ARE STILL GETTING THE RESULT ON THE DAY WHICH HAS JUST DONE WONDERS FOR OUR CONFIDENCE. OVER THE YEARS WE WERE HOPING FOR THAT BIT OF A REWARD FOR ALL OF THE SLOGGING THAT WE DO”.**

“We had got a couple of wins and even though they are tough wins, we are still getting the result on the day which has just done wonders for our confidence. Over the years, we were hoping for that bit of a reward for all of the slogging that we do and the tough games that we have gone through. But getting the result on the day now was just huge.”

Westmeath actually lost their championship opener at home to Longford this year.

That came after a battling display in the Lidl National Football League where Westmeath kept themselves up following a 2-16 to 2-10 relegation play-off victory over Tipperary.

But they suffered defeat in their championship opener before turning it around with crucial wins against Sligo and Wexford, when they needed them most.

Westmeath went on to beat Clare in the quarter-finals before a narrow 3-6 to 1-9 success against Kildare in the final four.

And 5 September was a glorious day for McCartan and her teammates, who pulverised Wexford and won on a 4-19 to 0-6 scoreline.

“Especially when last year we weren’t allowed to have anybody at the match. Everyone was just like, ‘oh

my God this is a great day out in Croke Park, to support our county”, said McCartan.

“We get to watch three great matches really, with the junior and senior as well. It’s just huge.

“During Covid, having football was huge. It was so nice to be able to meet up with people and train and have some sort of routine. Football was the saviour in so many ways.”

The 22-year-old has a hectic schedule but she returned to the Mater Hospital in Dublin recently with a pep in her step.

McCartan is on placement, she studies Medicine in UCD where she is in her penultimate and fifth year.

“We are there for up until Christmas time and then we get a couple of weeks off and then we go back to UCD,” said McCartan.

“It’s serious, it’s so nice to have something to look forward to sometimes. We are now back in placement.

**Above Left:** Westmeath supporter Maisie Heduan, age 2, from Mullingar. **Above**

**Middle:** Lucy Power of Westmeath celebrates at the final whistle. **Above Right:** Lucy McCartan of Westmeath shoots to score her side’s second goal. **Below:** Jo-hanna Maher, Westmeath in action against Aisling Halligan, Wexford.







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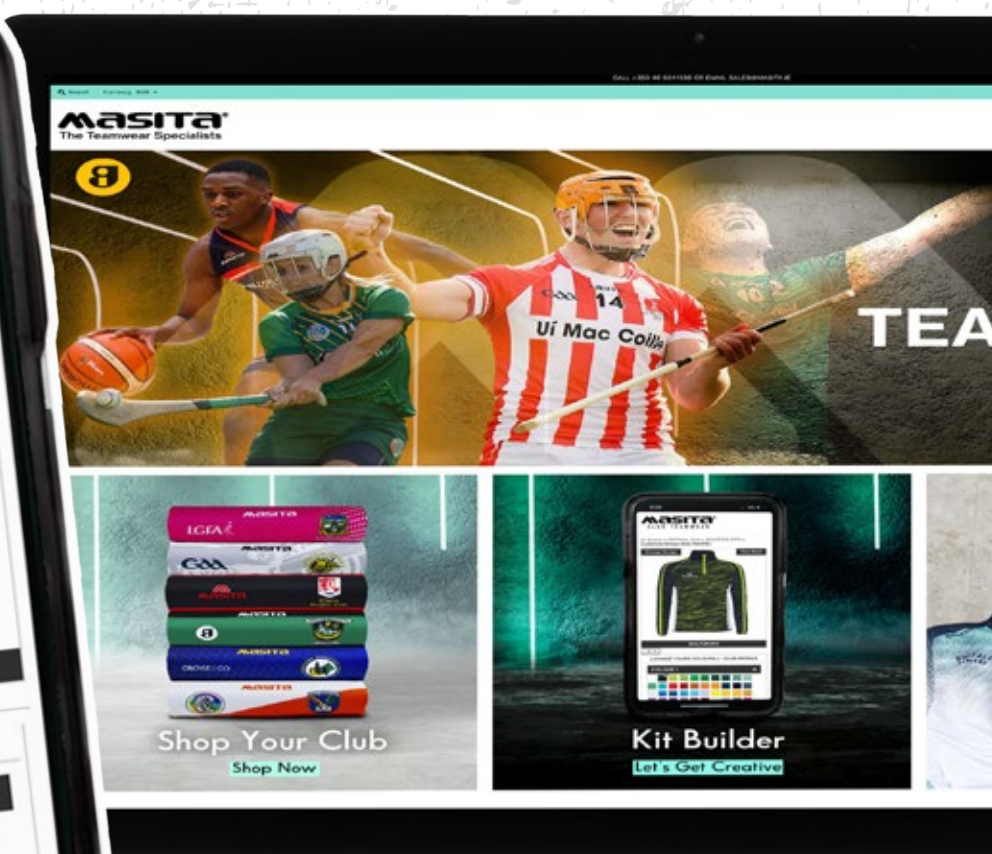
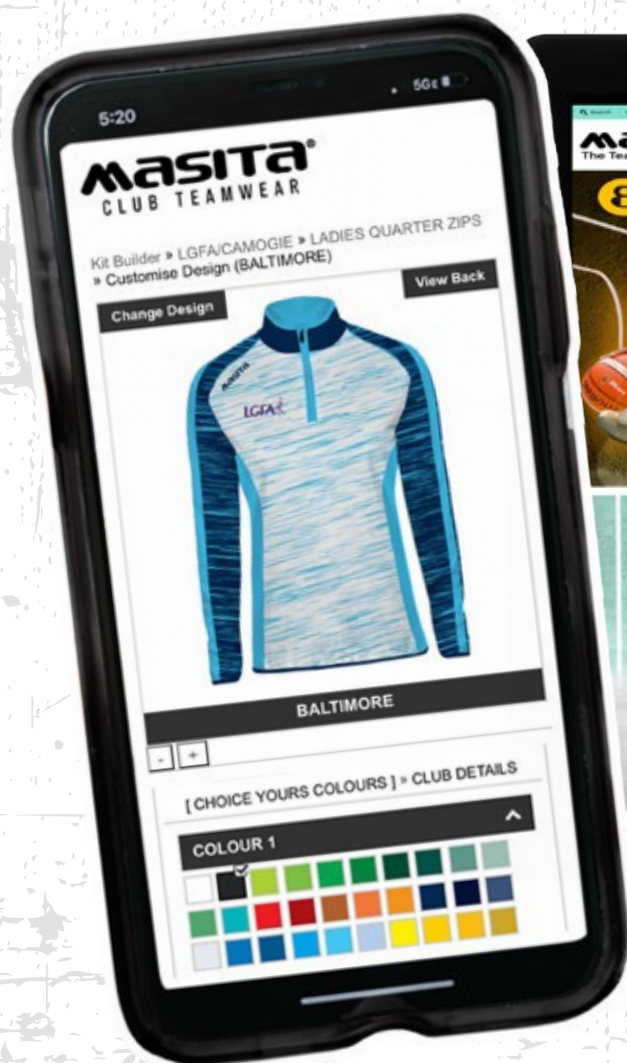


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"I was trying as much as I could to be learning and stuff but I was just so excited for the weekend that I was just nearly trying to get through the week so I could look forward to this then."

And considering Westmeath were fancied by many when they lost out to Meath in the 2020 TG4 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship final, next year will provide its own possibilities.

Meath are now the reigning senior champions, while their neighbours will have every right to believe they can emulate that success.

However, McCartan has plenty to focus on outside of Ladies football right now, and her Peamount United career will take precedence on the sporting fields before she returns to Lidl National Football League action with her beloved Westmeath.

"It's hard at times, especially since the soccer has gone to a summer league," said McCartan.

"They are both overlapping all the way through but I have two brilliant managers, they look after me very well. It's not just the managers, the teams are very good too.

"It's obviously very difficult for both teams, to have me take a day off for one match or for training just to rest in between. But the girls are always so understanding, they are so supportive.

"The Peamount girls were wishing me luck all the way up on the day of the final, even though they had their own match against Limerick."

**Above Left:** Aoife Connolly, Westmeath **Above Right:** Leona Archibold of Westmeath celebrates at the final whistle  
**Below Left:** Shauna Murphy of Wexford **Below Right:** Lucy Power and her Westmeath team-mates celebrate

**WESTMEATH WERE FANCIED BY MANY WHEN THEY LOST OUT TO MEATH IN THE 2020 TG4 ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL, NEXT YEAR WILL PROVIDE ITS OWN POSSIBILITIES. MEATH ARE NOW THE REIGNING SENIOR CHAMPIONS, WHILE THEIR NEIGHBOURS WILL HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BELIEVE THEY CAN EMULATE THAT SUCCESS**



# MOULDING THE YOUTH

## Antrim manager Emma Kelly looks to the future

By DARAGH SMALL

**E**mma Kelly is looking for her Antrim players to find their voices again. The once great full-back now roams the sidelines and, from there, she looks to lead a young group back to the Promised Land.

Despite bringing a big support and plenty of hopes and dreams to Croke Park this year, it just didn't happen for the Saffrons on the big day.

Wicklow had been beaten in the 2020 TG4 All-Ireland Junior Championship final and Antrim were unable to prevent them going one step further this time around.

"In the first half we didn't perform at all. We went in, and we basically went through them because it just seemed like they hadn't woken up," said Kelly.

"Second half, they came out, they put a bit of heart and pride into the jersey. If we had scored that penalty, maybe it would have turned around.

"But again, we were putting on 16 and 17-year-olds as our subs. That just shows the youth that we have.

"Ciara Brown killed herself going up and down that pitch. We stepped in six months ago to transition and progress and to get here was a bonus so we'll take the pain and hurt away and hopefully get back next year.

"Wicklow were in the same boat, they'd come down and were expecting to go straight up. And Fermanagh hit them, so they were righting their wrongs.

Hopefully we'll do the same."

But there are plenty of reasons for optimism, Antrim are a young side with the potential to make a mark again in next year's Junior championship.

Thirteen of the squad that travelled to Croke Park this September were 20 or younger, while the work going on in the underage ranks in recent years is finally reaping rewards.

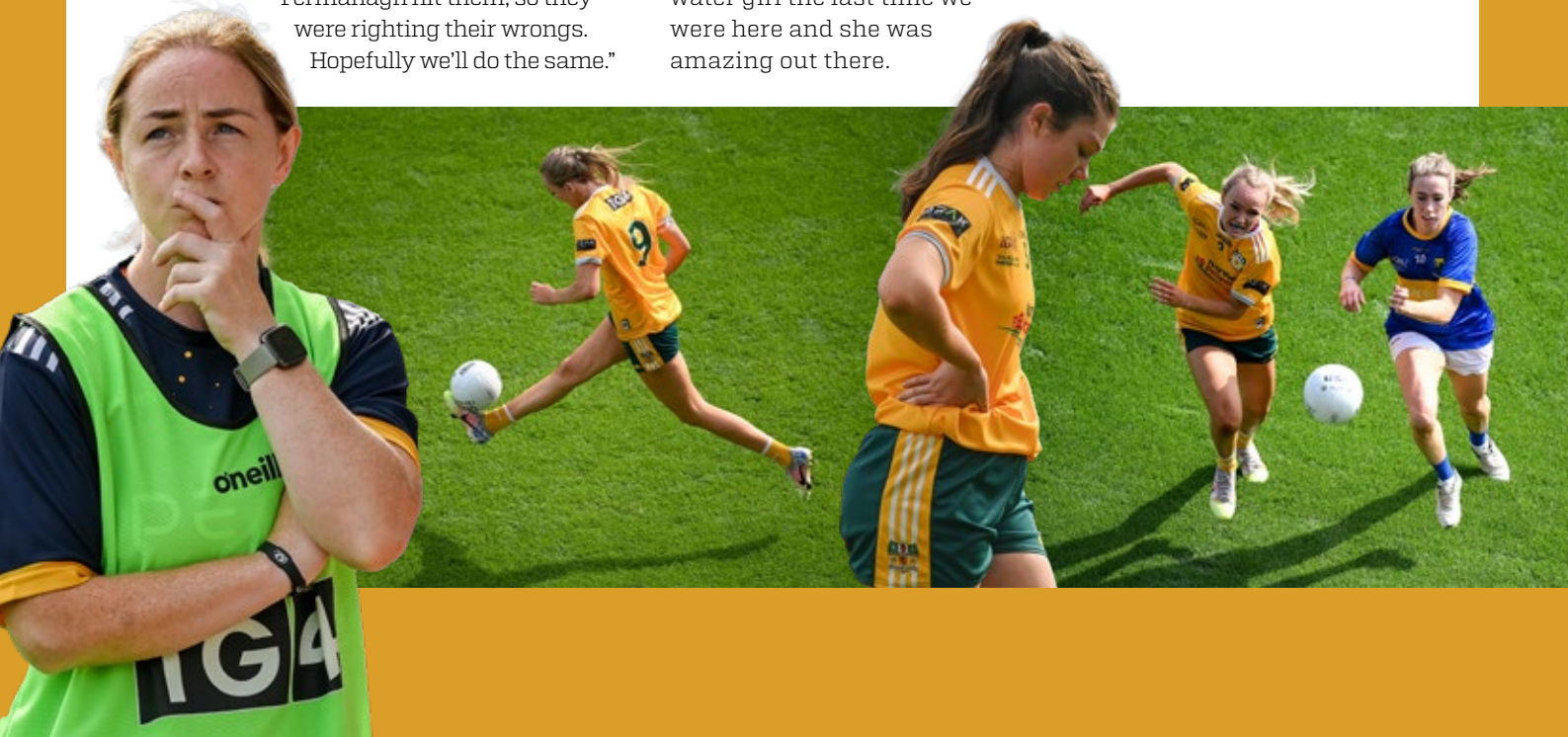
**"SECOND HALF, THEY CAME OUT, THEY PUT A BIT OF HEART AND PRIDE INTO THE JERSEY. IF WE HAD SCORED THAT PENALTY, MAYBE IT WOULD HAVE TURNED AROUND."**

"There are U14, U16 and minor county squads and the club scene is growing a lot too. It's just buzzing," said Kelly.

"It's not often that everybody in Antrim is behind the Ladies footballers. It's something we can be proud of. We have actually done that for the county. The clubs have been sending messages, they have been coming to our training sessions and it's fantastic to see.

"If we have inspired a couple of them girls to want to play county or not to give up... from 16 on there is a drop-out. If we can keep some of them playing and say to them you can be the next Ciara Brown, she was water girl the last time we were here and she was amazing out there.

**Bottom From Left: 1** Antrim manager Emma Kelly during the TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Junior Football Championship Final. **2** Ciara Brown, Antrim. **3** Antrim captain Aislinn McFarland. **4** Laurie Ahern, Wicklow in action against Ciara Brown, Antrim.







"There are people that walked away that are capable of coming back in and fighting for their place again. I am looking forward to trials and then we'll pick a squad for next year."

Kelly is a former rock of the Antrim defence, having lined out at full-back as recently as last year.

The Cooperstown native still plays club football for St Paul's but she refused to combine playing with management at inter-county level when she took over the reins.

"I don't think it would have been fair. At the same time, it would have been different if I was five or six years younger," said Kelly.

"Next year, then, you are searching for a full-back. You might as well make a fresh start. For the past eight or nine years, it was me doing the organising and communicating from full-back. Now I am trying to get the rest to take over.

"It's just getting them to communicate themselves. They all have a mouth and when they come to a game, they seem to go quiet."

Kelly got into football when former Derry star, Tony Scullion, visited her primary school, where he was a coach.

And years later, she would link up with him again when she did work experience with him. Coming from Derry, it was always likely that an Oak Leaf All-Ireland winner would leave an impression.

"Tony was out at my primary school. It was around the time Derry were doing well in 1993. Just from the buzz of that I was in the school yard and the boys were playing and I would get stuck in," said Kelly.

"I was captain of the school team, it was all boys and there were only two girls. I had no fear, the girls at St Paul's will tell you I would

put my head where you wouldn't park your car.

"I think that was just the country and farmer bit in me. Back then, you just didn't care. You got the ball and if there was a wall in front of you, you didn't care, you took the wall too."

Kelly went on to represent Derry until 2012, when she transferred over to Antrim, while she also lined out for Ballinascreen in camogie, and Cliftonville in soccer.

**"I HAD NO FEAR, THE GIRLS AT ST PAUL'S WILL TELL YOU I WOULD PUT MY HEAD WHERE YOU WOULDN'T PARK YOUR CARS."**

She has also travelled to Australia three times representing Ireland in International Rules, and even started refereeing GAA games in recent years.

But she was so determined to follow up with her former Antrim team-mates, and next season should get them even closer to silverware.

"Competition for places is class. It's not class when you are trying to pick a 30 or a 15 but that's something you should be envious of," said Kelly.

"Before, you would try to keep your 15 on if their legs were hanging on because we didn't have the depth. But we have that and that's something that we can be proud of.

"Hopefully we can keep building and progressing."



**Clockwise From Top Left:**  
**1** Antrim manager Emma Kelly speaks to her players. **2** Gráinne McLaughlin of Antrim celebrates after scoring her side's first goal. **3** Theresa Mellon of Antrim. **4** Laurie Ahern of Wicklow in action against Aine Tubridy of Antrim.

# THE IMPACT OF GAELIC4GIRLS

**A**s Gaelic4Girls 2021 wraps up, we spoke to Val Herbert, programme coordinator from the Kilcock club in Co. Kildare, to get her thoughts on the programme, its lead up and the lasting impact on the club.

**Val, thanks for taking the time to speak to us after such a busy 8 weeks delivering the programme in your club. Can you talk a bit about the preparation and lead up to the commencement of the programme and also some key messages from both coaches and participants?**

The preparation to delivering the programme within the club was key. We advertised throughout the community and also on social media. All of the tools were there for us on the E-Learning portal so once we got up and running we were able to access the session content both before and during the sessions. The coaches really



loved the experience of having the session plans and videos at their fingertips.

Not only was it accessible but it was also fun to coach on the evenings. Coaches and participants really enjoyed the variation that the station-based format facilitated. They got such a wide-ranging experience where they would move from a fun game station to an FMS station and then on to a skills station.

The weekly themes allowed us to implement some very relevant ideas for our sessions going forward whilst being able to hand-pick which ones we felt were most relevant to the group.

**Bringing new participants to the club is one of the main goals of the programme. Has the programme achieved this for Kilcock?**

It absolutely has. We have 55 new players coming to the club and this also meant 55 new sets of parents or guardians, so it has achieved the goal to grow the club from a solid foundation. The girls were spread over the different age groups so all teams in the 8-12 years bracket benefited hugely from the programme.

We also had a number of new coaches who came on board. They had been looking

to get involved for a while and this was the perfect opportunity. They will continue to coach the girls and are now looking into going down the route of becoming referees. So we've seen growth throughout the different areas of the club.

**What do you see as the lasting impact of the programme in Kilcock?**

The programme has definitely raised the profile of the club within the community as a whole. Over the past number of weeks the G4G posts got the most hits on our social media pages. We are now looking forward to a community event in partnership with Glenveagh, who have just completed a new development adjacent to the club, that will take place in the coming weeks.

We also met as a club over the last few weeks and have decided to take the learnings and tools of the G4G programme and implement them in our own recruitment drives in years to come. Having this sustainable growth model will no doubt benefit Kilcock's participation levels going forward.

**Would you recommend Gaelic4Girls to other clubs?**

Absolutely. Go for it!!!







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# PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL **REFEREE ACCELERATE** PROGRAMMES COMMENCE

**A**ll four provinces are involved in this year's Provincial Referee Accelerate Programme. This initiative provides a development pathway for ambitious future provincial referees. The National Referee Accelerate Programme has also started and

successful participants on that initiative will progress to the National Referee panel for 2022.

The Provincial programme commenced in July and will run to June 2022 with all participants completing six modules, gaining practical experience and engaging

in assessments. The National Programme runs from August to July 2022, with referees attending seven modules, officiating at National League games and completing all assessments.

Take this opportunity to meet some of the participants involved.



**NAME:** AARON CLOGHER

**COUNTY:** ROSCOMMON (PÁDRAIG PEARSES)

## **Describe your refereeing journey?**

I got into refereeing (GAA initially) in my late teens, and I really enjoyed it. At the time I was also the LGFA Coaching Officer in my club (Pádraig Pearses, Roscommon) and was involved with a few of our underage teams, so I took up refereeing Ladies Football on the back of that and pretty quickly got asked to do some County Finals, which was nice and a sign that you're doing something right. I was put forward for the Provincial Accelerate in 2014, but unfortunately was unable to complete all the modules as I was involved with a number of teams at the time. Over the next few years, I was very fortunate to be asked to referee all of the various adult championship finals in Roscommon and was again put forward to do the Provincial Accelerate in 2019. Since progressing to the Provincial panel, I have got a couple of games in the Connacht club and underage Intercounty championships, which have been a great experience.

## **What made you sign up for the National Referee Accelerate programme?**

I did the Connacht Accelerate Programme in 2019 and got a lot from it. It was great to meet a group of other referees all trying to improve themselves and also good to get a lot of useful information at the seminars and workshops which were put on for us.

## **What do you think is the toughest part of refereeing?**

The number of people who expect the referee to have a perfect game. No team has ever played an entire game without making a mistake, and while the referee and teams of officials try our best, there (unfortunately) won't be a game played where there are no mistakes made by the officials too, just like the players. It's an unreasonable expectation, all we can expect of any player or referee is to do the best job they can on any given day.

## **What is your favourite aspect of refereeing?**

I really enjoy being part of the games, getting to meet lots of great people and also working with my team of umpires, who are a fantastic support to me. Journeys are made significantly shorter by the slagging and craic in the car and the dressing room. After a year with very few games, it has been great to get back on the road with them again this year.

## **If there was one rule you would like managers/players to be more aware of, what would it be?**

It has come into focus lately, but the most obvious rule that is misunderstood is the tackle. "A player holding the ball into her body cannot be legally dispossessed. Any attempt to do so will result in a free for her and her team." There is a lot of talk about physicality in the game, but the playing rules are clear in that there is no deliberate contact with another player.

## **What would you like to achieve from completing the National Referee Accelerate programme?**

I hope to be able to officiate at adult Inter County level over the next few seasons, so I am hoping that the Accelerate Programme can help me to develop further towards that standard. Like the provincial accelerate, I think it will be great to meet with another group of officials from around the country and learn from each other over the course of the next few months.





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## REFEREE DEVELOPMENT



**NAME:** MARION HAYDEN

**COUNTY:** CARLOW

### **Describe your refereeing journey?**

I completed the GAA Refereeing programme and then moved onto the LGFA Grab Your Whistle Academy a short time after. I refereed both codes from there on in.

### **What made you sign up for the Provincial Referee Accelerate programme?**

I had completed the Grab Your Whistle Academy and was really enjoying all the challenges that brought. I was getting a great number of games all throughout as well after completion of the academy. I had a great mentor throughout the programme in Johnny Murphy

and the structure and opportunities it presented gave me the confidence to apply and to move onto the next level, when the opportunity of the accelerate course came up.

### **What do you think is the toughest part of refereeing?**

I think it can be tough accepting that you're only as good as your last game. As with playing, the preparation never stops. You will never please everyone and it can be tough listening to the opinions of others when they are not in your favour. It can be extremely frustrating when you are implementing the rules but getting a hard time from people on the side-line who don't have a knowledge of the ladies game and think the rules are the same as the GAA.

### **What is your favourite aspect of refereeing?**

I love the feeling of involvement within the LGFA as an official. For example, doing the line is a great way to gain experience and you get to see the game from the sideline as well as the officials' point of view. There is always something to learn from every game that you attend. You can always do better. Mostly, though, it is a lovely way to stay involved and connected with players when you retire from playing.

### **If there was one rule you would like managers/players to be more aware of, what would it be?**

You cannot tackle when the ball is in at the body and shouldering isn't allowed in Ladies Football. I know that's two!

### **What would you like to achieve from completing the Provincial Referee Accelerate programme?**

I would like to continue to improve my experience to help make me a better referee every day I to the field.





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# LEARN TO LEAD



**A**s the second year of the LGFA **Learn to Lead** programme gets underway, former Armagh Inter-county star Caoimhe Morgan discusses her motivation to apply for the PR/Media strand of the programme.

**Q: Caoimhe, you have obviously been heavily**

**involved in the sport for such a long time – what made you sign up for the LGFA Learn to Lead Programme?**

I had just retired from inter-county football and feel such a strong connection with the LGFA. I thought the Learn to Lead Programme would be the perfect challenge, helping to develop different skills but still keep me connected to an organisation I love and owe so much to.

**Q: What is your current involvement in LGFA?**

I coach my children Cadhla (8) and Dáire (5) at our local club Ballyhegan. I play my club football with Lissummon. I have been co-commentating with Jerome Quinn over the last couple of seasons on many LGFA games.

**Q: What is it about the PR/Media strand that attracted your attention?**

I've always wanted to try commentary and feel there needs to be more of a female presence across both men's and Ladies Football. I feel I owe it to the LGFA to continue to raise the profile of our great organisation.



**Q: When it comes to the coverage of Ladies Football, what pundit or journalist do you enjoy listening to or reading the most?**

Michelle Ryan and Denise Masterson are two of the best pundits I have listened to. They are experts of the game!

Aisling O'Reilly is so passionate about sport, she is current and very relatable. Aisling is very knowledgeable and isn't afraid to give her opinion.

Richard Bullick - a local journalist who put Armagh Ladies on the map in terms of media coverage. He is an honest journalist who has taught me so much.

Jerome Quinn - I enjoy listening to his commentary and I have learned a lot from him.

**Q: If you could improve one thing about the PR and media around LGFA what would that be?**

I would like to see more coverage given to a wider variety of players instead of one or two predictable girls from each county.

**Q: What do you hope to achieve from your participation in the programme?**

I hope to make more friendships with like-minded LGFA enthusiasts. I would like to learn more about myself, my strengths and weaknesses. I hope to gain a greater understanding of the inner workings of PR/Media and help to promote our games.

**Q: What did you make of the 2021 TG4 All Ireland Finals?**

Wexford compounded their unbeaten championship run by becoming deserved Junior winners while Westmeath showed their experience and composure to take the Intermediate title.

The senior game stole the show and in one word was - 'Amazing'! I have been so impressed with Meath and their buy-in to a system of play. I have huge respect for Dublin and all they have achieved but Meath have given everyone hope and that has to be admired!





# BIG MATCH VERDICT:

## NIAMH McCARTHY (LIMERICK) ON THE TG4 JUNIOR FINAL



from the sideline was actually enjoyable. I just hope we're back on the Croke Park pitch next year!

**Q: How do you reflect back on Limerick's 2021 season, and how confident are you that the team can regroup ahead of the 2022 campaign?**

**A:** I've reflected on it myself, as I have mentioned, but as a group, we do need to sit down and set our own standards for the 2022 season.

**Q: Niamh, thanks for chatting to us. You tuned in to watch the 2021 TG4 All-Ireland Junior Final between Antrim and Wicklow. What were your thoughts on the game?**

**A:** I really just thought 'wow'. Wicklow brought their A game to Croke Park. I thought they produced a phenomenal performance against a good Antrim side. It was clear to me that Wicklow really did hurt after last year's Final loss and you could see the experience of the squad on the pitch, which really stood to them. I think Antrim may have got caught up in the occasion, unfortunately, and probably lack the experience of playing in Croke.

**Q: Having played against Wicklow at the semi-final stage, did you think they would finish the job, or did you feel that Antrim could win it?**

**A:** To be honest, Antrim gave us a really tough game a few weeks back, too. I really did expect a much closer game but the Wicklow girls drove it on from the start.

**Q: Where did you think the Final was won and lost?**

**A:** I think Wicklow, from the get go, just put the pressure on Antrim. In the first quarter of the game, Antrim

couldn't win a kick-out and that set the tone for the entire match.

**Q: Who were the stand-out performers on the day?**

**A:** I would have to pick out the Wicklow full-forward line, Clodagh Fox, Meadhbh Deeney and Marie Kealy – they are so dangerous. Clodagh, of course, collected her player of the match award and it was very much deserved. That inside line kept Antrim's hands full! A particular shout-out to the captain, Sarah Jane Winders, and the girls in the half-back line, Alanna Conroy and Lorna Fuscuardi – they were the backbone of so many attacks and fair play to them. I do have to mention Gráinne McLaughlin for Antrim, she worked her socks off all day long and picked up an impressive personal tally.

**Q: Having lost out in the semi-final, what was it like sitting back and watching the Final without the direct involvement?**

**A:** Obviously we were disappointed to not make the Final this year but I have reflected on the year and I've accepted the fact that we did not cross the line – we simply didn't perform to what we could have. Take our last ten minutes against Derry, that was us. So, watching the game

**Clockwise From**

**Top Left: 1**

Niamh McCarthy,

Limerick.

**2** Wicklow

players run out.

**3** Catherine

Dempsey,

Wicklow in

action against

Áine Tubridy,

Antrim. **4**

Clodagh Fox,

Wicklow.

**5** Wicklow

supporters

celebrate a

score. **6** Wicklow

captain Sarah

Jane Winders

lifts the West

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# BOWING OUT IN STYLE



## Player Interview: Wicklow's TG4 All-Ireland Junior Championship winner, Lorna Fusciardi



By DARAGH SMALL

**L**orna Fusciardi couldn't have picked a more apt setting to call time on her inter-county career.

The 31-year-old Wicklow defender was part of the team that claimed the TG4 All-Ireland Junior Championship with victory over Antrim at Croke Park.

And Fusciardi, who was pregnant when they were defeated by Fermanagh in last year's decider, said it was time to put a full stop on her Wicklow career.

"Oh my God, it's just amazing, I'm just so chuffed," said Fusciardi.

"I've been playing for 13 or 14 years but we were here in 2011 and actually got to play twice.

"I stopped to have two kids in between but other than that I kept going and I am just so chuffed to get back.

"I'm done, I was here ten years ago and now I am just happy to go."

Wicklow were fantastic en route to their third West County Hotel Cup success, with a 2-17 to 1-9 success on this occasion.

Meadhbh Deeney scored 1-4 while Clodagh Fox chipped in with 1-3, and they were able to withstand a late Antrim comeback when Gráinne McLaughlin found the net for the Ulster county.

But the foundations were built upon Wicklow's fast start, they were 0-6 to 0-0 ahead after 11 minutes and Antrim were left chasing the game.

"That's obviously what any team could hope for, a really good start from the get-go," said Fusciardi.

"Work-rate off the ball, our forwards were on form. A good supply of ball in. Just overall, I thought everyone was amazing.

"I suppose when Antrim got that goal, the legs were

**Clockwise From  
Top Left: 1**

Lorna Fusciardi of Wicklow celebrates at the final whistle.

**2** Clodagh Fox of Wicklow celebrates scoring her side's first goal. **3** Sarah Delahunt, Wicklow.

probably going a little bit. There was a bit of 'oh God, what's going to happen now?'

"But I think we did keep calm and collected and I thought our defence as a unit did really well to keep them out. It was never not going to be a tough game.

"We did put in a good shift and I am just so glad it came out in our favour."

The final victory had been ten years in the making for this Wicklow team, ever since their brilliant triumph over New York in 2011.

Fusciardi was involved that day too, and the Foxrock-Cabinteely star, just like the team, has been on a journey ever since.

In recent years, Wicklow were relegated from the intermediate ranks in 2019 before they returned to the junior final last year.

However, in a Covid-19 disrupted year, where the



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Junior final had to be played at Parnell Park instead, Wicklow were shocked by Fermanagh on 5 December.

Eimear Smyth and Róisín McDonald scored the goals for Fermanagh and it was heartbreak for Mark Murnaghan's side.

"I was pregnant at the time so I missed out last year but even going and being on the panel with the girls and no supporters, and the game being played in Parnell Park, they didn't get the big day out which we all long for," said Fuscuardi.

"That's why we all play football, it's to try and get to Croke Park on All-Ireland final day."

But Wicklow were transformed this year as losing last year's decider proved a catalyst for this group to go one step further.

And after welcoming her son Frankie into this world, Fuscuardi was back in action too.

Wicklow only just survived in Division 3 of the Lidl National Football League after a one-point win against Fermanagh in the relegation play-off.

They kicked things off in the TG4 Junior Championship with a comprehensive 1-13 to 1-6 win against Limerick in Round 1. Wicklow then had eight points to spare against Carlow next time out.

Their 1-17 to 1-12 Round 3 victory over Antrim at Mullahoran on 8 August provided plenty of confidence heading into the All-Ireland final.

Then Derry and Limerick were put to the sword, with Wicklow rocking up to Croke Park backed by massive momentum. There was only one result in their minds.

"I was pregnant last year and I just had my baby so I just wanted to get back for the championship so I'm so happy," said Fuscuardi.

"It was just the build-up throughout the whole championship. It just made it so worthwhile because we knew the end result was to get a chance of playing in Croke Park and obviously, hopefully, win the game.

"I think workrate, hard work, the pre-season through Covid, the girls really put an overall massive effort. Everything just gelled, the vibe was really really good.

"I honestly put it down to workrate. As a team we gelled and we gelled on the days we needed the performance, for it to come out in our favour."

And with a second All-Ireland Junior medal in her back pocket, the ecstatic Fuscuardi can now focus on her family after another heroic day at Croke Park.

"I am literally like hyper. I felt pressure playing the game. I am one of the more senior girls, one of the older girls on the team," said Fuscuardi.

"I wanted to end on a high. I more than likely won't be playing county football anymore just with my family and stuff. I was just so delighted to get a win under the belt.

"And I got to play my last game in Croke Park so it's just unbelievable. What a way to go, I'm just so chuffed for my team.

"I am just delighted."

**Clockwise**  
**From Top Left:**  
**1** Wicklow manager Mark Murnaghan speaks to his player. **2** Meabhbh Deeney of Wicklow celebrates scoring her side's second goal. **3** Lorna Fuscuardi, Wicklow. **4** Wicklow players celebrate



# ASK ANYBODY INVOLVED IN TERMON LGFA ABOUT THE SECRET OF THE CLUB'S SUCCESS, AND YOU GET A LOT OF THE SAME ANSWERS

By KEVIN EGAN

**D**evoted volunteers and coaches, including those who brought the Termon club into existence in Donegal nearly 30 years ago, have been succeeded by a new generation of people that are determined to see the club thrive into the future.

There's a huge level of support for the club from the wider community in the area, passionate football people who love nothing more than to see those who represent their parish succeed on the field. Of course, there is the quite significant factor that this is a golden generation of players, stars of the club and county scene that have left an incredible legacy on the sport, not just in Donegal but all across Ireland. Geraldine, Nicole and Shannon McLaughlin, Róisín Friel, Olive, Therese and Roisin McCafferty, Emer and Bridget Gallagher and

Evelyn McGinley are just some of the players that went on to represent Donegal, having learned their trade in the maroon and white colours of their home club.

Yet there's one other hidden ingredient that can't be forgotten either.

"Madness," is how Róisín Friel describes it. Friel, who made her debut for the Termon adult team in the county junior final of 2003 as a 12-year-old, is currently laid up with Achilles tendon injuries in both feet, but that doesn't stop her from continuing to contribute as part of the club coaching group, and as Donegal fixtures secretary.

"When I started playing, it was a world away from county finals, Ulster titles, and all the rest of it. I remember playing Ardara in a match at one stage and losing by something like 9-12 to 0-2, and there were plenty of hammerings like that," she recalls. "But we loved it. The girls would all tell you about the bond that was formed in 2014 when we won the All-Ireland club title and that's true certainly, but it was

there long before that. We love playing, and even when the club was playing junior and intermediate, we always believed that we'd get there, even if there was no sign of it happening at the time!

"We kept going, girls kept travelling from Dublin, from Galway, even flying in from abroad for games, and when you see where we are, up the corner of the country, it makes no sense. It was incredible though, and you'd never think twice about it, this club means so much to us," she says.

Winning the club's first ever senior Donegal championship in 2010 by a single point seemed like an historic breakthrough in its own right, but by then another teenage star was rising in the club – Geraldine McLaughlin. She grabbed a goal in the dying moments of their Ulster final against Donaghmoyne to secure a famous 3-6 to 0-13 victory, and that result was enough to ensure that the sights of the club and the players were set even higher from then on.

They failed to defend their county title the following year, but went on



a run of four-in-a-row from 2012. While the 2012 and 2013 provincial campaigns were to end in heartbreak against Donaghmoynce, they got across the line in the 2014 final and eventually qualified for what was to become the club's greatest ever day – the All-Ireland club final in Tuam Stadium against Mourneabbey.

McLaughlin, who scored 3-8 in the final and a ludicrous 25-35 (yes, 25 goals!) across seven championship games, says that even though they trailed by 0-10 to 1-3 at half-time, that opening 30 minutes made them realise that they were very much at home on this stage.

"With the team we had, we'd got to an All-Ireland semi in 2010, but we treated it like bonus territory, saying if we lose, we lose. That year was great for the team as a bonding and as a year of development and learning, but looking back we didn't appreciate it as much at the time.

"In 2014 it was different, we had finally beaten Donaghmoynce again, and even against a club like Mourneabbey, we felt we were ready for it. We knew we hadn't played and we were only behind by four points, which can turn around in an instant. We knew if we play at all, we've a great chance."

And so it proved. That victory stands alone in the record books as the only All-Ireland senior club title for any Donegal club, and now the challenge has turned to trying to ensure that when that "golden generation" moves on for good, that there is another group waiting in the wings to take over.

Emer Gallagher, who teaches just down the road in Letterkenny, is another player who is currently dealing with injury, having recently undergone surgery on an ACL injury. She remembers her early days with the club, and now wants to give the same experience to the younger players in the club today.

"In Termon, we nearly all have the same back-story. The majority of us would have went to Termon N.S., which is just up the road from the pitch. Our principal, Christy Gillespie, loved Gaelic and he bred that in to every student. At lunch time we would be out training, after school he would

have us down at the pitch for Cumann na mBunscol. We would have been successful at Cumann na mBunscol in national school.

"We definitely got our competitiveness from that. We brought that in to our club football as well. We had a really good management structure with Harry McGlynn, Maire McGlynn and Teresa McGlynn, all one family. They took us for years at underage, from age six or seven to the Féile competitions, through to U16 and U18 levels. They've been with us a long time. That's so important, that you have that sense of family and community," she explained.

"We were 15, 16-year-olds stepping up to senior level and we had so much to learn. There was such an important group there who took us under their wing and showed us how to be senior players. Only for those players, the likes of Maureen O'Donnell, Grainne McCafferty, Shannon McLaughlin, there were so many of them that were so important.

"Therese McCafferty, who was a few years older than me, was such a tenacious defender. She taught our defenders so much about what they should be doing".

Remembering that support is what inspired Emer to get involved as a coach herself.

"I'm so positive about the future of Termon. A few of us coach the underage girls, I take the U-16 girls. We are taking what we were taught and just passing it on.

"As a group, we all try to give back.

I'm the Irish Officer. Everyone does take on all these different roles. The club have been so good to us for so many years. The men would be the exact same in that regard. I think that's why we are such a close club."

"We didn't want to be a one-hit wonder that never did anything after their success."

And so, with the intercounty season just completed, it's time to start it all over again. The memory of All-Ireland glory might be getting a touch more distant as time passes, and a handful of players have moved on to carry on with different chapters of their lives. Others might have been tempted to do the same, but then there's that madness that Róisín Friel referred to, and even as she talks with two damaged ankles, it bubbles up to the surface once more.

"The last proper game I played, Glenfin beat us well (referring to the 2020 county final). Sure how could you go out on a note like that? Over time the rivalry with ourselves and Moville has cooled a little bit, but there'd still be something there between ourselves and Glenfin. Whatever bit of life I have left in me, I'll be sure to use it to get back out on the field for them, and then some day down the road, we can think about stepping away. There's another few pages of the story to be written yet though!"

Another few pages, another few chapters, maybe even another few volumes.



Geraldine McLaughlin of Donegal during the TG4 All-Ireland Senior Ladies Football Championship Group 4 Round 3 match between Donegal and Kerry at Tuam Stadium in Galway.





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# GAELIC4TEENS...

## FROM THE AMBASSADORS' POINT OF VIEW





### WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED AS AN AMBASSADOR WITH THE GAELIC4TEENS PROGRAMME?

**Emily Martin (Down)**

'Firstly, it was lovely to be asked. I am passionate about the game! Having played Gaelic since underage, I am totally aware of the commitment, the trials, and the joys of being involved. Having completed my Sports degree, I became even more aware of the drop-out rates among teenage girls in sport, including Gaelic. It is good to be able to give something back and to try and encourage younger players to commit to the game and enjoy the sport.'

**Jackie Kinch (Wicklow)**

'I got involved in the Gaelic4Teens programme because I had previously been a coach that took part in the Gaelic4Girls programme, and I learned so much from that from a coaching perspective. I thought it was hugely beneficial to coaches. Once I read what the Gaelic4Teens involved, I thought it was a great programme to get involved in as there was such a high drop-out rate at these ages. Trying to upskill coaches in retaining these players is rewarding. If we can help coaches in any way to get girls to enjoy the game more, and stay involved, it's a bonus.'

**Laura Fleming (Roscommon)**

'I got involved as an ambassador with the Gaelic4Teens programme because I am passionate about retaining teenage girls in Gaelic football. As a PE teacher, I can see that the teenage years for girls can be a vulnerable time, when drop-out rate in sport increases dramatically. I want to instil the positive impacts that the sport has had on my life in other teenage girls so they too can experience these positive impacts rather than dropping out. It also provides opportunities for coaches to learn from one another, to provide the best experience for the teenage girl.'

### WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS OF THE GAELIC4TEENS PROGRAMME?

**Emily Martin (Down)**

'It is a super initiative as it incorporates all aspects. The programme focuses on the person, not just their Gaelic skills. Like any sport, the psychology and well-being of each player should be paramount. Gaelic4Teens has a great balance, including developing skills in a fun environment.'

**Jackie Kinch (Wicklow)**

'Excellent programme that opens the coaches' eyes to get to know the players and understand why girls play sport.'

**Laura Fleming (Roscommon)**

'I personally think that the Gaelic4Teens programme is a wonderful programme that has the teenage girl right at the centre. It aims to keep the teenage girl involved in sport rather than dropping out, with fun and enjoyment being key parts of the programme. We want the girls to have a fun and positive experience, which will in turn keep them active and involved in the sport. The programme also provides numerous opportunities to educate club coaches on the interests and needs of the teenage girl in sport. This is a massive benefit of the programme to the clubs, so they have the correct structures in place to provide the best experiences for its teenage girls.'

### WHY DO YOU THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR TEENAGE GIRLS STAY ACTIVE OR INVOLVED IN SPORT?

**Emily Martin (Down)**

'Staying active for as long as possible benefits us all. Getting involved in any sport, in particular Gaelic, is a great way to make lifelong friends and the social aspect is an added bonus!. Being part of a team reinforces the importance of support, encouragement, teamwork, commitment and handling success and failure, all of which are great life skills. Keeping active and playing a sport is a great stress-buster, especially around the times of exams or other challenges life may bring. I would highly recommend any young person to give it a go and get involved.'

**Jackie Kinch (Wicklow)**

'I think it is extremely important for teenage girls to stay active and involved in sport, for their own wellbeing. It has been proven that being active helps mental health issues and also it's great for the girls to be out and about having fun with their friends while being active.'

**Laura Fleming (Roscommon)**

'There are endless reasons why it is so important for the teenage girl to stay involved in sport. Firstly, the health benefits of getting out and being active are huge. Secondly, the friendships that one can make in sport are friends for life. Thirdly, the lifelong skills that one learns in sport are invaluable - leadership, communication, working together as a team, learning how to win and accepting how to lose, problem solving etc. It is a healthy break away from school and homework, where one can have fun with friends in a safe environment. The benefits are endless!!'

### IF THERE WAS ONE TIP YOU WOULD GIVE A COACH WHO COACHES THE TEENAGE COHORT IN THEIR CLUB, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

**Emily Martin (Down)**

'To date, the one tip I would share is for coaches to remember that all the teenagers that make the commitment to turn up will all have different levels of ability. Not all will want to play at senior level for their county, so it is about getting the balance right. To ensure that, through encouragement, that all players, no matter what their ability will get the chance to improve their skills and reach their full potential, that no one is singled out for having less ability, that it is the team effort that counts and ultimately wins games.'

**Jackie Kinch (Wicklow)**

'Try not take it too seriously and to not have a win at all costs mentality. By doing this, having enjoyable sessions with the girls and building rapport with them will retain the players and make it more enjoyable not only for the girls, but also for the coaches.'

**Laura Fleming (Roscommon)**

'Make it fun. When training is fun, the girls enjoy it and, they will keep returning and stay involved. This will lower drop-out rates. Be mindful of the many different aspects in the teenager's life outside of sport (school, homework, peer pressure, social media, etc.)'





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# Guess What I Do...

NAME: LAURA FITZGERALD

COUNTY: KERRY

FOOTBALL CLUB: NA GAEIL

AGE: 28

JOB: AERONAUTICAL ENGINEER

DOING A PHD IN AIRCRAFT  
STABILITY.



### TELL ME A BIT ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I'm doing a PhD and that's my job at the moment. I'm on an Irish Research Council Postgraduate of Ireland Scholarship. The PhD is full-time and it's probably going to take about four and a half years to complete. The area of focus is a lot of wind tunnel testing.

The research topic is basically using maths on a computer to prove aerodynamics and determine aircraft stability. Aircraft stability is how stable an aircraft handles itself in flight. If you are flying along in a plane and a gust of wind comes, that is what it's all about. Stability is that aircraft's likelihood to return to a normal position without any pilot input. Naturally, all aircrafts are stable or their computer systems make them stable.

What I am trying to do is show you that you can do all this testing; wind tunnel testing and flight testing, on a computer. It makes a lot more financial sense in the long run too, the wind tunnel and flight testing is really, really expensive, and a lot of the time, the answers aren't even actually correct.

It's kind of an emerging area. We are trying to show that it's possible but it's probably still a few years off, so as

I said, it's emerging. I am doing wind tunnel testing at university right now and I have been for this year.

That should be wrapping up in the next six weeks. Once I have that finished, then it will be moving on to the computer and using code to try and replicate the wind tunnel data and also take it on further to say it is possible. It's a long process but it's worth it in the end.

### HOW DID YOU GET INTO THE JOB?

My parents are both engineers so realistically, I always knew I wanted to do engineering. I always loved flying too, even though I am actually afraid of flying. The irony of it! I used to sit in the aeroplane and watch the wings to try and distract myself from the flight. I got fascinated by that then and I would actually love to become a pilot down the road too. Maybe after the PhD is finished.

### WHERE ARE YOU BASED WITH WORK?

I'm full-time in the University of Limerick but because of Covid-19, most of my time is at home in Kerry, and then I would be up at UL sporadically.

### WHAT ARE THE BEST THINGS ABOUT YOUR JOB?

I love learning! I did my undergrad and then I did my Masters but that just wasn't enough for me. I wanted to learn more and more and this was the avenue for me. The area I am researching is one that I am absolutely fascinated by, that helps too. I can sit up until midnight and read papers, not because I have to but because I love doing it. I love reading things and I still have those, 'oh wow, that's really cool', moments about it. As the saying goes, when you love what you do, it doesn't feel like a job at all. It's also flexible as well. You can suit your life around it and that's great for football too.

### WOULD YOU RECOMMEND YOUR CAREER TO BUDDING FOOTBALLERS?

If you find something you love doing, I would recommend doing a PhD in it, so yes of course. But if you don't like what you are doing, or you are doing a PhD for the sake of it, I would definitely stay away from it. You have to love it, wholeheartedly, if you're thinking of going down the PhD route.

## APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR CLUB2GETHER

### NOW IN ITS FIFTH YEAR, CLUB2GETHER IS AN LGFA CLUB DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE AIMED AT STRENGTHENING CLUB STRUCTURES.

This initiative focuses on developing areas such as volunteer recruitment and retention, governance & officer training, sponsorship and fundraising and games development, as well as planning for the future to ensure sustainable structures are in place going forward.

We spoke with Eamonn Murphy, Secretary of the Douglas Ladies Football Club in Cork, who had the following to say on their involvement in the programme;

"We very much enjoyed the course. There was a lot of information to take in, some of which we will put to use now. However, I believe the programme will be highly valuable in the medium to long term. It provided our club with the perfect medium to discuss where we are at and what improvements we will aim for in the future".

All participating clubs have the opportunity to take part in the LGFA club development initiative aimed at strengthening club structures. Each participating club can avail of free training for their club officers and coaches. Resources are also provided to each club to assist with building sustainable structures, and



following the programme's end, participating clubs can follow up if they wish, with a basic two-year plan to be put in place with the aim of increasing the retention rates of volunteers, with the overall effect being that clubs can become a more vibrant and active part of the local community. Applications are now open for the Club2Gether programme at [www.ladiesgaelic.ie](http://www.ladiesgaelic.ie) or contact Niall Mulrine, National Development Officer at: [niall.mulrine@lgfa.ie](mailto:niall.mulrine@lgfa.ie)

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# NEW 'LEADING PROVINCIAL FEMALES' PROGRAMME LAUNCHED

**THE LEADING PROVINCIAL FEMALES PROGRAMME IS A NEW AND EXCITING INITIATIVE DEVELOPED BY THE LGFA, IN CO-OPERATION WITH THE GAA.**

**THE PROGRAMME IS OPEN TO ANY FEMALE AGED 18+ WHO IS INTERESTED IN THEIR OWN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS, AS THEY APPLY TO THEIR ROLES WITHIN THE GAA OR LGFA.**

During the programme, there will be three collective engagement opportunities, which focus specifically on leadership skills. Two full-day events will open and close the programme, with an evening gathering half way through

the programme to help people to keep focused on their leadership development journey. In addition to leadership skills, participants are also given the opportunity to complete at least two modules from across the four strands of coaching, officiating, administration and PR/Media.

## Core Benefits of the Programme:

- Opportunities to engage with like-minded future leaders in Gaelic Games
- Gain insight into and understanding of your own leadership style
- Receive training and advice from experienced leadership trainers

See below the list of successful applicants for the very first leading provincial females programme in each of the provinces.

LEADING CONNACHT FEMALES		
NAME	CLUB	COUNTY
Aaliyah Clohessy	St James' LGFA	Galway
Amy Hopkins	The Neale	Mayo
Anne Gilleran	N/a	Roscommon
Carol Boyle	Bohola Moy Davitts	Mayo
Caroline Walsh	Knockmore	Mayo
Claire Burke	Naomh Mhuire	Galway
Claire Cunningham	Neale	Mayo
Dervila Hurley	Glinsk	Galway
Edel de Paor	Naomh Anna Leitir Móir	Galway
Ellis Caslin	Kilmore	Roscommon
Eimile Gavin	Claregalway	Galway
Leah Malone	St Croans LGFA	Roscommon
Leona Ruane	Raheny GAA	Mayo
Lisa Corish	Balla	Mayo
Lisa Flanagan	Western Gaels	Roscommon
Lorna McNicholas	Claregalway	Galway
Marian Mc Namara	Islandeedy LGFA	Mayo
Olivia Flannery	St. John's	Sligo
Rose Davis	St. Patrick's GAA	Sligo
Saoirse Towey	Kilmovee Shamrocks	Mayo
Sarah O'Toole	Cumann Peile Seamus O'Maille Uachtar Árd/ Oughterard GAA club	Galway
Siobhán Ní Fhlatharta	C.L.G An Spidéal	Galway
Therese McIntyre	St. Michael's LGFA	Galway

LEADING LEINSTER FEMALES		
NAME	CLUB	COUNTY
Allison Hickey	Cuala GAA	Dublin
Ann Marie Gibbons	Thomastown	Kilkenny
Anne Roche	Old Leighlin	Carlow
Bridget Corrigan	Killoe Ladies/Killoe Óg	Longford
Christine Flynn	Kildangan/Nurney	Kildare
Claire Byrne	Hunterstown Rovers	Louth
Deirdre Farry	Man O'War GFC	Dublin
Emily Jacob Harris	Na Fianna Ladies	Kildare
Fiona Donovan	Kilmacud Crokes	Dublin
Leanne Doyle	Cuala GAA	Dublin
Louise Keane	N/A	Meath
Martina Harding	Portlaoise	Carlow
Niamh Dobbs O' Reilly	Fenagh	Carlow
Niamh Kirby Sullivan	O'Dwyers GAA Club	Dublin
Nicole Leonard	Shandonagh	Westmeath
Órla Casserly	St Ultan's Ladies	Meath
Orla Cunningham	Na Gaeil Óga/Our Ladys Island	Dublin/Wexford
Orla Keeling	Fingallians	Dublin
Orla Whelan	Edenderry	Offaly
Patricia Monahan	St Monica's	Dublin
Paula Finan	Cill Oige Ladies	Westmeath
Susan Ward	Trinity Gaels	Dublin
Valerie Herbert	Kilcock LGFA	Kildare
Yvonne Hennessy	Timahoe Ladies	Laois
Yvonne Quigley	Kilkerley Emmets	Louth



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LEADING MUNSTER FEMALES		
NAME	CLUB	COUNTY
Adele Gallagher	Bishopstown GAA	Cork
Anna-Marie McCarthy	Ballycastle Gaels	Cork
Anne Shine	Carrigtwohill	Cork
Chloe McGrath	St. Annes	Waterford
Clíodhna McCarthy	Bishopstown	Cork
Clodagh Quinlan	Southern Gaels	Kerry
Eimear Coffey	Youghal	Cork
Fiona Kelly	Kinsale	Cork
Hazel Davern	St. Ailbes	Limerick
Helen Mckenna	Ballinhassig	Cork
Janelle O'Callaghan	Carrigtwohill	Cork
Karen Casey	Banteer LGFA	Cork
Kate McGrath	Kilrossanty/Brickies LFC	Waterford
Laura Daly	Carrigtwohill	Cork
Laura Fennell	West Clare Gaels	Clare
Laura Nagle	Ardfinnan	Tipperary
Liadh Carroll	Fermoy LGFA	Cork
Lorraine Royle	Clashmore/ Kinsalebeg	Waterford
Lynda Breen	Oola	Limerick
Margaret Hannan	Newcastle West GAA	Limerick
Mary Bowen	Erins Own	Cork
Olivia Fitzgerald	St Senans	Limerick
Sharon Hegarty	Listowel Emmetts	Kerry
Sheila O Connell	Listowel Emmets	Kerry
Treasa Ryan	Oola	Limerick

LEADING ULSTER FEMALES		
NAME	CLUB	COUNTY
Aoibhin Kiernan	Ballymachugh	Cavan
Aoife McDonnell	Naomh Conaill	Donegal
Bronagh King	St. Brigid's GAC	Antrim
Caoimhe Megraw	Lámh Dhearg	Antrim
Catherine O'Hare	Silverbridge Harps GFC	Armagh
Cathy McCaffrey	Knockninny	Fermanagh
Catriona Sweeney	Clg Beart	Donegal
Donna McCrory	Edendork	Tyrone
Ellan Callaghan	CLG An Tearmainn	Donegal
Grainne Boylan	Killeavy	Armagh
Hannah Caldwell	Limavady Wolfhounds	Derry
Hannah Mullan	St. Canice's Ladies GFC Dungiven	Derry
Helen McMeel	Augher St Macartans	Tyrone
Laura McMullan	East Belfast GAC	Down
Lauren Martin	St Mary's Burren GAA	Down
Leanne Prior	Derrylin O'Connells GAC	Fermanagh
Louise Kearney	Loughinisland GAC	Down
Maeve O'Neill	Killeavy	Armagh
Maria Toman	Clann na Banna	Down
Melissa Gartlan	Carrickmacross	Monaghan
Nicole O'Connor	East Belfast	Down
Sinead Mcmanus	Newtownbutler	Fermanagh
Sinead Mimmagh	Drumquin Wolfe Tones	Tyrone
Tanya Rhatigan	Newtownbutler First Fermanagh's	Fermanagh
Tara Clarke	Dromintee GAC	Armagh

# GAELIC4GIRLS



**FUN, SPORTY, TEAM SKILLS**

Gaelic4Girls is a 10-week coaching programme for girls aged 8-12. Fun, relaxed sessions, group activities and non-competitive blitzes. Build skills and confidence in a safe, nurturing environment run by LGFA Clubs.

**GET THE BALL ROLLING. APPLY TODAY!**

<https://ladiesgaelic.ie/lgfa-hub/games-development/gaelic4girls/>

**15th November closing date**



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# CurrentAccount.ie Volunteer Awards

## If you think they're great then **NOMINATE**

Do you have an unsung hero in your club whose efforts you think needs to be recognised?  
Then nominate them in one of the categories below by  
closing date of Friday **26th November 2021** to be entered in this year's Awards.



Overall - Lulu Carroll Volunteer of The Year



County/Provincial Officer of the Year



Club Officer of the Year



Club Coach of the Year



Young Volunteer of the Year



School Coach of the Year



PRO of the Year



Local Journalist of the Year



International Volunteer of the Year



Hall of Fame Award



For more information on the Awards visit  
<https://ladiesgaeltic.ie/the-lgfa/national-volunteer-awards/>





# FITR WOMAN

FitrWoman helps you track your menstrual cycle and provides evidence-based training and nutrition suggestions tailored to the changing hormone levels throughout your cycle.

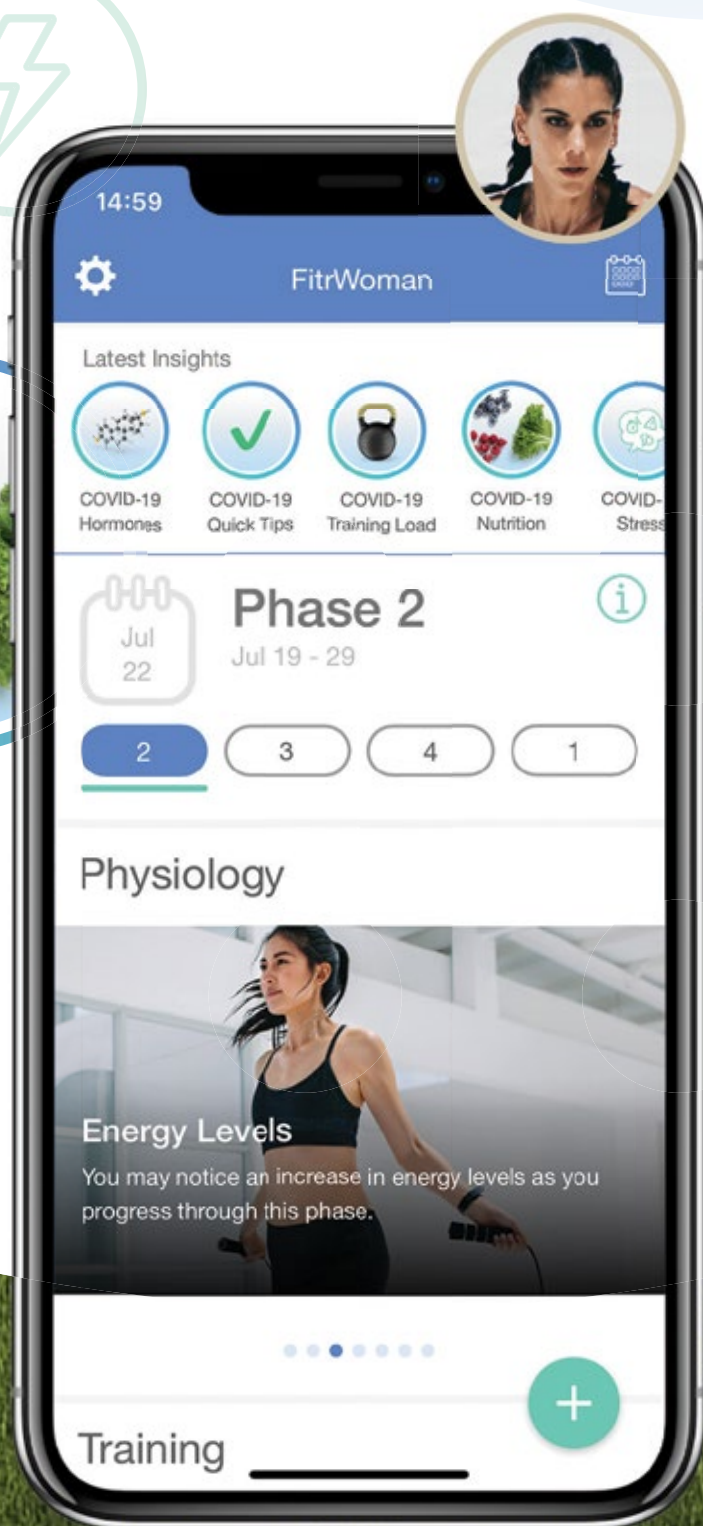
## #KNOWYOURCYCLE

Take the guesswork out of training. Know when to push harder, when to prioritise recovery and how to optimise your performance on any given day.

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**FAN SLÁN**



@fitrwoman





# COACHING CARD

**USING GAME-BASED  
ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST  
WITH AEROBIC CAPACITY**







## ACTIVITY 1

### What do I need to set up this exercise?

- Footballs and cones.

### How do I execute this activity?

- Set up a grid or grids (depending on your numbers) as shown in the diagram - 55m in length/30m in width. Include four goals two at either side of the grid (2m in width), (2m in width).
- Maximum of 8 players (4v4) play in a grid. This is important to achieve maximum aerobic benefit from the game.
- Apply rules to game to challenge the players relative to their stage of development i.e., only permitted to conduct one pass backwards, one play of the ball etc.
- When a team scores, all players from that team must get up to the end line within a certain timeframe i.e., 10 seconds before they attack the opposite side.

### Duration:

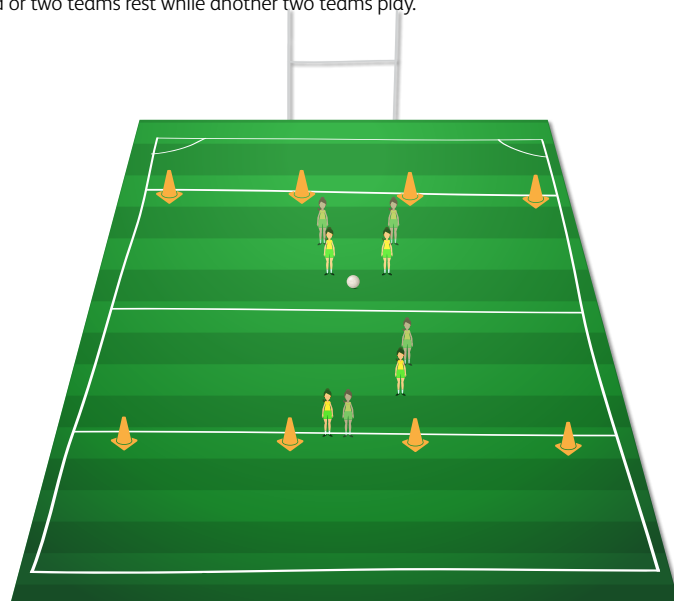
- Each game is 3 minutes in duration with 3 minutes rest between each round or two teams rest while another two teams play.
- Each group conducts the game three times.

### What are we getting form this activity?

- Aerobic fitness will be improved due to nature of the activity.
- Use of four steps and bounce where appropriate.
- Moving ball forward with pace.
- Timing of runs and promotion of running at angles.

### What you might see:

- Poor execution of handpass to the chest which in turn will have knock on affect for player timing their run.
- Timing of runs could be too late or early.
- Slow pace.



## ACTIVITY 2

### What do I need to set up this exercise?

- Footballs and cones

### How do I execute this activity?

- Players are divided into three even teams. Place two goalkeepers in each goal.
- Set up an area 45m in length and 35m in width. This may vary as dependant on stage of development of players.
- Within the grid, apply three zones using cones.
- Assign one team to each zone.
- To commence the game, the team in the centre attacks a goal.
- If they score a goal, then they retrieve a ball straight away from the goal mouth and attack the team in the far zone.
- If they don't score i.e., wide ball, then team defending collects a ball from the goal mouth and attack the team in the far zone. Same applies if defending team dispossess the team attacking, they immediately attack the far side.

### Duration:

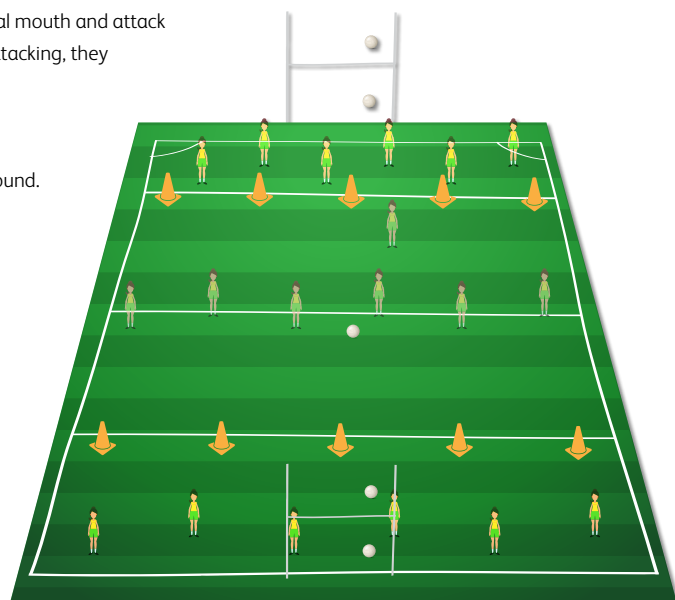
- Do three rounds of 4 minutes in duration. Rest for one minute in between each round.

### What are we getting form this activity?

- Good movement and support play
- Execution of basic skills
- Timing of runs and importance of running at angles
- Importance of width and depth in attack

### What you might see:

- All players find themselves ahead of the player in possession of the ball
- Players being very narrow in attack and not using width
- Slow movement of ball
- Players going into contact
- Timing of runs by players on cones D, E and F are not done with pace
- Execution of scores not great due to poor kicking technique on the run



# WEBINAR SERIES A WELCOME ADDITION TO LGFA

2020 was a tumultuous year for all involved but it also brought about opportunities. The LGFA tested the waters with educational webinars during the first covid-19 lockdown, which resulted in additional winter and spring series of webinars due to the hugely positive feedback received. So what was the impact of these webinars through the evaluations conducted?

## HOW WERE THE WEBINARS RATED?

The feedback was extremely positive from participants attending the webinars, with **99.3% rating the session they attended as good, very good or excellent**, with only 0.7% rating the webinar as fair and 0% as poor.

The participants were complimentary of the high standard of the content in the webinar they attended and cited the importance of the content delivered being as described in the title.

*“Expert advice and good constructive feedback, as well as loads of opportunities for Q and A.”*

The other common positive theme from attendees was relating to the ease of access, being able to attend from home, and the fact that webinars were recorded, so they could watch back again

*“The interaction is great, it is more convenient, cost and time efficient without the travel, more accessible when travel is removed, and risk to health is eliminated.”*

## PREFERRED METHOD OF LEARNING

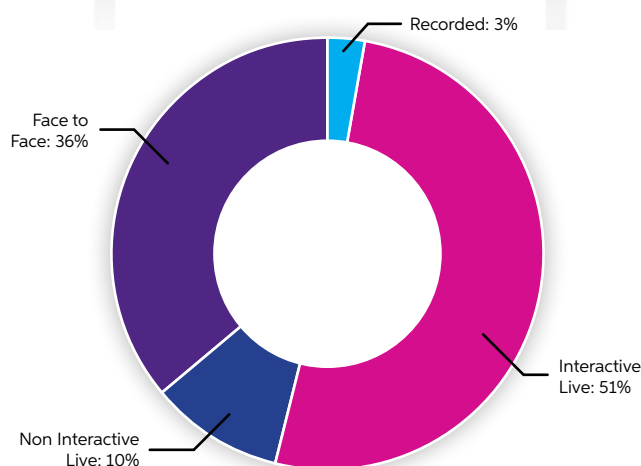
Participants arranged their order of preference for delivery of webinars with **51% preferring interactive online webinars** followed by 36% opting for face to face. Ease of access was the main reason cited by attendees for their preference for webinars.

*“Online webinars allow people to watch from home and work around their schedule. This really assists the busy role of volunteers.”*

However, it will still be important to have face to face options available in the future as we emerge from the pandemic, as a proportion of people still rather the opportunity for further interaction and networking opportunities.

*“Face to face workshops allow people to come forward with new ideas and feel supported. It creates a network of like-minded people.”*

Regardless of the method of delivery, the LGFA was praised for recording the webinars, allowing participants to watch back and also watch in their own time. There is now a full suite of webinars available on the LGFA YouTube channel under Coach, Player, Match Official Education and then County or Club Leadership. These will benefit all members in their roles.



The lessons learned from the evaluations will help staff in LGFA to design a new series of webinars for the coming winter and spring months, to meet the needs of our members. Both series were a huge success and there is certainly an appetite for further online education.

*“The offering of webinars since we were forced off the pitches through Covid-19 has been exceptional. There is something for everyone and I would encourage LGFA to continue with these webinar series in the future. Thank you!”*

**WATCH BACK ON WEBINARS ON THE LGFA YOUTUBE CHANNEL, WITH PLAYLISTS FOR COACH EDUCATION, PLAYER EDUCATION, MATCH OFFICIALS EDUCATION, CLUB LEADERSHIP AND COUNTY LEADERSHIP.**