



CUALA JUVENILE GIRLS COMMITTEE 2009

JOINT REPORT OF CHAIRPERSON & SECRETARY

2009 was another busy year for the Juvenile Girls. Only our 2nd year in existence, we benefited greatly from all the ground-work done in 2008. We looked after 5 age-groups during the year from U13 to U9 with approx 150 players fielding 5 football and 7 camogie teams for the leagues run by the Ladies Football and Camogie County Boards.

One of the highlights of the year for the committee was the success of the 1997 (U12) group. At the start of the year we were uncertain if they would be able to field a team for the leagues due to their low numbers but they persisted and when it came to the Championship they excelled, winning the Division 3 Football Championship in a thrilling and nerve-wrecking final against Clann Na Gael. The 1997 camogie team was narrowly beaten in controversial circumstances by just 2 points in their Division 2 Championship semi-final. Overall, a great year for the group and with several new players joining since September their future as a stand-alone group is secure. Thanks to Fiona Ross, Olga Barry and everyone involved with the 1997s for sticking with the group throughout the year.

The 1996s(U13s) also had a busy year. They are through to the Division 2 Football Shield Final which is scheduled for Sun. 15th November. They also remain in contention for the runners-up position in the Division 3 camogie league with just 1 match left to play. We wish them the best of luck in both these matches.

The 1998s(U11s) decided to enter teams in Division 1 in both camogie and football this year. After losing many of their matches in the early stages of the leagues they found their winning form and were firmly established as a Division 1 team in both codes by the start of the summer. They have just won the Division 1 Football Shield Final and narrowly lost out on a semi-final place in the Camogie A Championship.

The 1999s(U10s) entered 2 teams in the non-competitive leagues in both football and camogie. These leagues provided a great opportunity for the group to improve their skills and they have the distinction of being unbeaten in their football league. Approximately 12 players from the 1999 group also played with the 2nd U11 team in the Camogie B Championship which was great experience for the group in advance of them playing in the competitive league at U11 next year.

The past year has been very important for the 2000s(U9s) in their 1st year out of the Academy. We wish to commend the group for their organisation and the ease with which they slotted into the Juvenile structure. The group entered 2 teams in the non-

competitive camogie league and is unbeaten to date. There are no football leagues for this age-group but in between camogie matches their mentors have kept them busy by arranging football matches with other local clubs.

We consider it important to acknowledge the strong rapport and co-operation between the various age-groups. On occasions some age-groups have been short on players or have needed to borrow some younger players for key matches. Whilst the priority is always given to the players own age-group we are delighted that the managers and coaches seem to be able to juggle fixtures to try to ensure the best possible outcomes for all teams. For the camogie championship this year the 1998s provided some key players to the 1997s. Also, with the support of the 1999s, the 1998s decided to enter a second team for the U11 camogie championship and this ensured that all of the 1998 players got significantly more playing time than during the league. The general consensus was that all groups concerned benefited from the interaction outside their own age-groups.

We continued our policy of encouraging the girls to play both camogie and football and this has been very effective in the last year in that none of the groups have had any players expressing any serious preference for one code over the other. Some of the older groups have actually benefited in that some self-declared footballers are now declaring themselves available for camogie matches.

The committee was conscious that most of our efforts in the first 2 years had gone into organising the committee and ensuring that all age-groups were self-sufficient. Before the summer we decided that we needed to place a stronger emphasis on coaching and player development. In an effort to move this initiative forward we set up an initial meeting with Willie Braine in May at which it was decided to formulate a Player Pathway for girls for both camogie and football. These player pathways have now been finalised and winter training for all groups will be designed to ensure that all players develop broadly in line with the pathway for their age-group. We want to aim for excellence on the field of play and want to ensure that all age-groups have access to high-quality coaching.

There were several notable events during the year for the committee off the field of play. The first annual awards evening for the Juvenile Girls was held in early February with 200+ players and family attending. This was followed up by Fintan Quill being awarded the Clubperson of the Year Award at the Cuala Awards evening for all his work over the years in the Academy and in the setting up of the Juvenile Girls committee. Then in May the committee celebrated La na gClub to mark 125 years of the GAA. It was a warm sunny Sunday, the players, led by a Piper, paraded through Dalkey to Hyde Road where they took part in several skills tests and races. The day was a resounding success and thanks to Maria O'Sullivan and Fintan Quill for organising the day and to all the coaches and parents who rowed in on the day to make it a successful and memorable event.

The group organised a trip to Croke Park early in the summer for the Dublin double-header in football and hurling. We also went as a group to the Ladies All Ireland Football final to cheer on Dublin in what was a thrilling match. We had a huge turnout with approximately 150 players and parents making the trip. We had an

added bonus on the day in that Sorcha Clarke from the 1996s played in the mini games at half-time.

2010 promises to be another busy year with the 2001 girls officially joining us from the Academy. We anticipate fielding 7 football teams and 9 camogie teams for the leagues and that brings it's own challenges with Meadowvale almost at full capacity at present. Over the next few years we anticipate that the number of players in the group will increase from the current level of 150 to approximately 250 due to us continuing to cater for the players up to and including U16. All these groups coming out of the Academy need to be organised and self-sufficient. We will be liaising with the Coiste to ensure additional pitches can be made available for training and when 2 or more groups have a timing clash for home fixtures. We also plan to take some time to work on our section of the Cuala website and set up a page for each age-group to maintain.

2010 will be the first year that our section participates in Feile with the 1996s fielding teams in both camogie and football. We also wish to congratulate Asia Kirwan and Ciara McKeown on getting selected for the Dublin camogie development squad to play at U14 next year. We wish them the best of luck.

In the meantime we are preparing for our 2nd annual awards ceremony which is scheduled for 6th December. We are also having a sponsored walk on November 14th and we are organising a fundraising Cuala Ladies lunch for January 8th. So despite the matches winding down at the moment there is always something to do!

It just remains for us to thank everyone who participated on the committee during the year – the list is too numerous to name all individually but we would particularly like to thank Trish Madden and Maria O'Sullivan who attended the monthly football county board meetings, the various people who attended the camogie county board meetings and Fintan Buckley, our representative on the Coiste. Pdraig O'Dea is stepping down as Registrar but we would like to thank him for all his efforts during the year and acknowledge the great work he has done on setting up the membership database for the group.

Finally, we would also like to thank the Coiste for their help and support during the year including the provision of Meadowvale & Loreto and the use of the hall, the committee room and the bar when needed. We would also like to acknowledge the help and support provided by the camogie and ladies football sections of the club during the year.

Barbara O'Reilly, Cathaoirleach

Linda Farren, Runai