



Cork Womens & Schoolgirls Soccer League

Development Plan

2023 to 2028

Background

Cork Womens & School Girls Soccer League (CWSSL) have been co-ordinating Girls and Ladies soccer in Cork city and County for many years.

Our committee is made up of voluntary individuals who have spent many years coaching and developing soccer in Cork

CWSSL and all our clubs are affiliated to the SFAI and MFA.

The League are committed to the development and growth of Female Soccer in Cork. We take a player centred approach and endeavour to cater for all abilities. We try to ensure that there is a definable pathway guiding female players to a level of football, which will fulfil their potential and retain them in the game. Players at all levels and ages need opportunities to fulfil their potential and enjoy the game as much as possible. We also ensure that elite players are afforded every opportunity to forward their careers. The League has worked hard to structure a development programme. We currently run Development Academies at u12, u13 & U14 & U16 years of age catering for over 150 girls. These academies have produced many Irish Internationals over the years and our plan is for this to continue.

Both our clubs and our representative teams participate in all National Competitions including the SFAI national cups, SFAI interleague competitions and the U14 Gaynor tournament played in Limerick every June

Soccer Participation Rates-Cork

Below is a table outlining the current participation numbers in our Girls/Senior leagues.

The number of teams in 2014 was 52.

The figures below exclude the schoolgirl academies (u6 to u9) in each club.

	No of Teams	No of Players
U10	40	480
U12	43	602
U13	26	416
U14	21	336
U15	26	416
U17	21	336
U19	7	112
Senior	14	250
Total	198	2948
Clubs	41	

What we do....

Some of CWSSL roles include the following:

- Organise Schoolgirl and Senior ladies leagues each year. They are over 1,400 leagues games played throughout the season.
- Organise local cup competitions for all ages with finals held in St Colman's Park/Turners Cross
- Set up and run development academies at U12, U13, U14 & U16
- From the academies we select Cork representative teams to enter national Interleague competitions
- Run a national U12 blitz each year
- Maintain a presence on social media (Facebook & Instagram)
- Participate and run relevant training courses for coaches and officials.
- Ensure all child safeguarding rules are complied with across our inter league panels and league centres.

Set out below are CWSSL's goals for 2023 to 2028

After discussions and feedback from clubs and committee, below CWSSL have set goals for the next 5 years.

- **Grow female soccer participation rates in Cork by 25%. This includes 'Football for All' for girls programme.**
- **Endeavour to find solutions to keep teenagers in our game.**
- **Centre of Excellence-CWSSL should strive to have its own 'home' which would include pitches, dressing rooms, meeting rooms etc**
- **Have league competitions for all ages from u12 to Senior and plan to enter all inter league competitions**
- **CWSSL to employ a part time Development officer**
- **Increase the quantity and quality of coaches for both clubs and leagues**

Why a development Plan

As our league continues to grow, we as a committee felt it is important that a 5 year development plan for CWSSL should be put in place. Growth brings challenges and opportunities. The outcome we hope is a plan that will give the league and its clubs a pathway to capture these opportunities and strive to overcome challenges. It will not be easy, we will hit roadblocks on the way but working together we should see CWSSL as one of fastest growing leagues in Ireland, acknowledged as a league who develops players to achieve their personal goals all built around our 'state of the art' Centre.

Each goal explained

Below we have each goal explained together with some of the obstacles and outcomes from achieving the goal. Some goals will require further plans prepared by special committees drawn from clubs to achieve their final target.

Action Plan

AIM-Goal 1 Leagues (Competitive) for all age groups from 12yrs to Senior.

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	Timeline
CWSSL Leagues, league centres and representative teams at all ages from u12 to senior. Minimum 3 divisions per age group to cater for a range of standards.	1. Add U16 leagues. 2. CWSSL enter all inter league competitions.	Obstacles include Shortage of pitches, volunteers, qualified coaches and referees. It is important to work with clubs to ensure female soccer is not pushed down the value chain in clubs (need to be treated equally). Maybe clubs supply ref's for u12 matches and/or lower leagues at U13? Strategy to get and retain coaches(See goal 4 below)	CWSSL	2 Years

AIM-Goal 2 Retaining teenage girls in soccer to continue playing into adulthood

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	Timeline
Keep girls playing soccer from their late teens onwards	Support clubs to retain players in late teens and address reasons why girls leave sport.	Build on existing initiatives from other organisation (for example https://www.athleticsireland.ie/news/retaining-girls-in-sport-workshop/). Help train coaches on ensuring girls are enjoying the game. Other options for this committee to consider may include Creating a "Retention Officer" role within CWSSL to focus on this. 2. Provide a forum for clubs with existing u17/u19/senior teams to share their learnings with clubs building up to those ages/levels.	Special committee	1 Year

AIM-Goal 3 Increase playing numbers in our league by 25%

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	timeline
Set a target of Increasing playing numbers in our league by 25%	With the help of clubs promote soccer in their area. Visit/coach in primary schools-See also development officer goal. (2) Offer to work with FAI on any pilot programmes. (3) Introduce 'Football for All' for girls.	Shortage of volunteers/coaches. Continue to promote soccer in the community, provide assistance to coaches to attend courses., mentoring programmes in clubs where experienced coaches 'help' new coaches(parents). Maybe CWSSL has its own training course for coaches?	Development officer?	3 years

AIM-Goal 4 Increasing and retaining coaches in clubs and in the league

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	Timeline
Increase and retain coaches if we want to increase playing numbers	Working with clubs to formulate a recruitment/retention policy. This would cover areas such as advertising/promotion, training, mentoring, defining their role, communications within club/league. THE LGFA have a very good toolbox on recruitment	Parents 'help out' when their child is playing but then leave after building up their experience. There is a general shortage of volunteers across lots of organisations, so we are competing for recruits from a small pool, so we need to do something different! We must make it easy and simple for new coaches. We cannot overload them!	Special Committee to complete and implement a plan	12 months

AIM-Goal 5 -Appoint a part time Development officer

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	Timeline
<p>Development officer role would be to promote female soccer throughout the region</p>	<p>CWSSL would employ a PT development officer to promote female soccer in Cork. We would work in partnership with FAI. Also may have role training coaches for clubs/leagues. The officer would work with local clubs to increase numbers. Options would include visiting schools and giving them a 'soccer pack' to allow girls to play soccer and enter school competitions, local open days/blitz's, online promotion.</p>	<p>Major obstacle is cost and how we source income for this project. The outcome would be increase in number of players and coaches. CWSSL will discuss with FAI, SECAD and other local bodies if there is budget for this role and/or work with the FAI Dev officer</p>	<p>CWSSL Committee</p>	<p>9 months</p>

AIM-Goal 6- CWSSL Centre of Excellence facility

Action Plan

Objective	How	Implications/Obstacles/Solutions	Who	Timeline
CWSSL to have its own pitch/dressing room facility giving female soccer in Cork its own identity	A separate plan will be required for this project but in summary we source a site and develop 2 full size pitches (one would be astro with floodlights) so facility is available for female soccer all year around and a focal point for female soccer in Cork.	Obstacles include sourcing land, costs, grants & planning permission. A separate business/project plan to be completed. Huge goodwill already from major stakeholders such as FAI, Sponsors, Councils and clubs	CWSSL/Club special committees (Project and fundraising committees)	5 years

Other goals we have but that are not included in above but we continue to review on an ongoing basis:

- Outline every 3 years our competition plans for the league to include age bands, competitions etc- See Appendix 1
- Improve & expand our social media content and improve our website with a better platform for results/fixtures/tables.
- Increase our sponsorship and sources of income
- Set a target for our Gaynor/inter league teams
- Continue to review our rules to ensure they are fit for purpose

Summary

This plan is owned by the clubs of CWSSL. Our committee will report each year on progress on each of the 6 goals outlined above.

Appendix 1

Cork Womens & Schoolgirls Soccer League

3 Year Competition Plan

2022 to 2025

2022/23 Season

The season will commence on the 1st Weekend of September 2022 with a projected finish of May 2023. There may be a small break at end of Dec/early January.

The age categories are as follows

Category	Year Born
U8	2015/2016
U10	2013/2014
U12	2011/2012
U13	2010/2011
U14	2009/2010
U15	2008/2009+2010*
U17	2006/2007+2008+2009
U19	2004/2005/2006+2007

Players will be able to play up to older age group as normal as outlined in blue above.

*As the process started to have leagues at each age a number of years back we see no reason to bring up more than 1 year if a team is short players. This applies to u12 to u14 inclusive. We will allow more flexibility for U15 TO U19 as outlined above. If clubs are struggling for numbers occasionally they will be allowed bring in younger players. Our league registrar will be able to determine if a club is struggling with numbers from the FAINET. CWSSL recommends that clubs should be entering teams that have at least 9 players in the correct age category. It is very important that clubs plan ahead for absences, Backlog of games, National cups, LOI transfers etc before entering a team.

The format of the season for **U12/U13/U14/U15/U17/U19** will be normal full season of league games (home & away) and Cup competitions (Cups, shields).

The number of teams and which division they will be placed in will be based on the number of teams registering with the league and performance from the previous season.

CWSSL committee's decision on how teams are divided is final.

U10- This age will be arranged in groups which will be further split during the season based on results.

Normal u10 rules apply and it is non-competitive.

U8 will be local club blitz's (non competitive)

Seniors: These league/cups will continue as normal with a projected start of April with season ending in Sept. There will be one team relegated from premier and one promoted from 1st Division

2023/24 Season

The season will commence on the 1st Weekend of September 2023 with a projected finish of May 2024. There may be a small break at end of Dec/early January.

The age categories are as follows

Category	Year Born
U8	2016/2017
U10	2014/2015
U12	2012/2013
U13	2011/2012
U14	2010/2011
U15	2009/2010+2011*
U17	2007/2008+2009+2010
U19	2005/2006/2007+2008

Players will be able to play up to older age group as normal as outlined in blue above.

*As the process started to have leagues at age a number of years back we see no reason to bring up more than 1 year if a team is short players. This applies to u12 to u14 inclusive. We will allow more flexibility for U15 TO U19 as outlined above. If clubs are struggling for numbers occasionally, they will be allowed bring in younger players. Our league registrar will be able to determine if a club is struggling with numbers from the FAINET. CWSSL recommends that clubs should be entering teams that have at least 9 players in the correct age category. It is very important that clubs plan ahead for absences, Backlog of games, National cups, LOI transfers etc before entering a team.

The format of the season for **U12/U13/U14/U15/U17/U19** will be normal full season of league games (home & away) and Cup competitions (Cups, shields).

The number of teams and which division they will be placed in will be based on the number of teams registering with the league and performance from the previous season.

CWSSL committee's decision on how teams are divided is final.

U10- This age will be arranged in groups which will be further split during the season based on results. Normal u10 rules apply and it is non-competitive.

U8 will be local club blitz's (non-competitive) to start in Sept 2023.

Seniors: These league/cups will continue as normal with a projected start of April with season ending in Sept. There will be one team relegated from premier and one promoted from 1st Division

U16-We may add an under U16 league for 2023/24. This will depend on numbers closer to the time.

2024/25 Season

The season will commence on the 1st Weekend of September 2024 with a projected finish of May 2025. There may be a small break at end of Dec/early January.

The age categories are as follows

Category	Year Born
U8	2017/2018
U10	2015/2016
U12	2013/2014
U13	2012/2013
U14	2011/2012
U15	2010/2011+2012*
U17	2008/2009+2010+2011
U19	2006/2007/2008+2009

Players will be able to play up to older age group as normal as outlined in blue above.

*As the process started to have leagues at each age category number of years back we see no reason to bring up more than 1 year if a team is short players. This applies to u12 to u14 inclusive. We will allow more flexibility for U15 TO U19 as outlined above. If clubs are struggling for numbers occasionally, they will be allowed bring in younger players. Our league registrar will be able to determine if a club is struggling with numbers from the FAINET. CWSSL recommends that clubs should be entering teams that have at least 9 players in the correct age category. It is very important that clubs plan ahead for absences, Backlog of games, National cups, LOI transfers etc before entering a team.

The format of the season for **U12/U13/U14/U15/U17/U19** will be normal full season of league games (home & away) and Cup competitions (Cups, Shields, Plates).

The number of teams and which division they will be placed in will be based on the number of teams registering with the league and performance from the previous season.

CWSSL committee's decision on how teams are divided is final.

U10- This age will be arranged in groups which will be further split during the season based on results. Normal u10 rules apply and it is non-competitive.

U8 will be local club blitz's (non-competitive) to start in Sept 2024.

Seniors: These league/cups will continue as normal with a projected start of April with season ending in Sept. There will be one team relegated from premier and one promoted from 1st Division

Fixtures-General:

These will be distributed to clubs at the beginning of the season for up to 3 months in advance.

Week 1; Saturday - U12, U14. Sunday U17

Week 2; Saturday - U10, U13, U15. Sunday U19

Midweek games for schoolgirls will also be fixed for Tuesdays and Thursday when light allows.

Unlike 2021/22 we should know Gaynor and other interleague fixtures/competitions in advance so this will help with our planning of fixtures.

The committee has the right to change fixtures/reissue revised fixtures at any time.

If a game is cancelled for weather or other reasons this game should be played with the next 7 days. As an example if an u13 game is cancelled it should be played the following Week/weekend. This may clash with an u15 game but there is no reason why players cannot play 2 games on consecutive days if either the u15 or u13 game is moved to Sunday to facilitate this.

We cannot have a situation where a team can go 5/6 weeks without a game.

We will be reviewing our competition rules particularly around cancelling/postponing/transfers/signings to ensure they are fit for purpose. If this requires a change to our constitution then proposals will be brought to an EGM for a vote.

CWSSL