

DELIVERING THE YOUTH STRATEGY

FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



Recruitment and Retention

- Launch of Housing Association Football League
- Study Visit to 'Football for Peace' in Brighton.
- Attended University of Ulster Fresher's Fayres.
- Launch of Hillsborough Boys' Girls Academy.
- Ongoing work on a pilot Rural Female Football Fitness project in conjunction with DEARA, PHA and YFCU.
- Ongoing work on establishing a Corporate Business League.



The Irish FA's Kris Lindsay and Michael Boyd with representatives from Helm Housing at the launch of the NI Housing Association League



The opening match of the NI Housing Association League

Disability Football

3 October 2016: Launch of Irish FA Disability Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020.

8 October – Northern Ireland Cerebral Palsy Squad enjoy lap of legends at Northern V San Marino World Cup Qualifying Game. This was to celebrate the fact they have qualified for 2017 World Championships.

15 October – Junior Paralympic Fun day at Girdwood Hub, Belfast. Over 40 participants enjoying Powerchair, Cerebral Palsy or Frame Football.

16 October – Disability Inclusion Training delivered by Disability Sport NI to 17 coaches at Stranmillis College, Belfast.

30 October – First trials for Under 19 Learning Disability Squad – They will compete in Home nations Championships in Dublin in April 2017.

5 November – Amputee Football OPEN Day at Ashfield Girls High School in partnership with FAI and Irish Amputee Football association.



Michael Boyd, David Martin and Alan Crooks at the Irish FA Disability Strategy launch

Girls Regional Excellence

September

The programme recommenced after the Summer break in all four regions with 178 girls taking part. The Elite programme also recommenced with players in the 02, 03, 04 , 05 age bands all coming in for extra sessions at the Dub one night a week. Soccer Genius tests were carried out with all the regions tests being recorded for comparison.

October

The programme continued with both the Regional Excellence squads and Elite groups having weekly sessions. The U15s played several games v boys teams and were fitness tested at the Ulster University.

Women's International

September

The U17s travelled to Macedonia to play their UEFA U17 European Championship Tournament, losing to Bosnia 0 – 4, beating Macedonia 4 – 0 and losing 0 – 4 to Austria. The young squad played well but careless defensive mistakes cost them dearly in two of the games.

The Senior International squad played their final two European Championship games against Italy at home and Switzerland away. Playing with a number of regular starters missing, they lost 0 – 3 to Italy at Mourneview with two late goals flatter the scoreline and 0 – 4 to the group winners, Switzerland in Beil. These results meant that the squad finished fourth in their group with 7 points .

October

The U19 Preparatory Tournament for the 2017 Finals took place with Northern Ireland playing France, England and the USA. Based at the Stormont Hotel the games took place at Mourneview , Shamrock Park, Ballymena Showgrounds and the National Stadium at Windsor Park. Northern Ireland lost 0 – 4 v France, 0 – 5 v England and 0 – 3 v USA. These games were of great benefit to the girls and made them quickly aware of what is required to play at next year's Finals. Although losing all of the games, the players learned a lot and it was good to see the improvement in fitness levels.

During the month, workshops on a range of skills were delivered to the players and staff. A number of players who play for Northern Ireland were also funded on an Irish FA Level 1 course. This was particularly pleasing as if successful, the girls will also be used as role models for players, and practice their skills at the Regional Excellence programme.

Refereeing

All Safeguarding training has now been completed by Referees at all levels in Northern Ireland with over 700 referees taking the four hour development module.

11 separate development events have been held in the last month – these have included a four day CORE residential for the National Development Group at Intermediate level. There were a variety of seminars based on fitness, laws of the game, psychology, preparation and resilience.



There were also Nutrition seminars held in Belfast and Cookstown, Regional Workshops in all four areas and the usual development for Senior and Premier referees.

At Premier level, Andrew Davey officiated two games in Europe taking charge of Arsenal vs. Basel in the Champions Youth League and an Under 21 International in Malta. Arnold Hunter also officiated two matches – an Under 21 International in Israel and a key Champions Youth League game between Manchester City and Barcelona. Great to see a number of young development assistants also involved in this game. Andrew Nethery (21) and Ryan Kelsey (23) travelled to Manchester and Adam Jeffrey (22) to Arsenal.

Other appointments saw Tim Marshall and team referee Leicester vs. Porto in the Champions Youth League and Sebastian Jankowski became our first International Futsal referee officiating in two international matches between Wales and Latvia.



NIBFA

The NIBFA Cup competitions were launched a month ahead of the schedules used in previous years, to try and alleviate cancellations and fixture congestion in member leagues. Entries for the season were 520+ which was on a par with 15/16 season and as anticipated this enabled all the games to go ahead as planned. The U11 & U12 (9-a-side) competitions are down to the last 16 and will take a winter break before resuming at the end of February 2017. The remaining age groups will all be down to the last 16 by early December and will also will have a break until early February. The Finals date is set for Mayday at Lurgan Town Arena.

Affiliations and Insurance renewals are ongoing but to date we have 1116 teams registered and fully expect to reach the record numbers of 1254 last season. We are currently finalising the remaining information with the leagues concerned.

The NIBFA Website has been renewed and we will have it fully loaded with up to date content and information in the coming months, it is still the main source of information for the NIBFA Competitions.

Peace IV Funding is open and a meeting is to be arranged in the next week with Brian McConnell to look at options for a viable project.

Discussions are ongoing on how we can evolve the annual Small Sided Games Festival at Mallusk.

Club & Volunteer Development

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

The CCDO, with support from the Football Development Manager and the Female Domestic Officer, has been managing the recently appointed Youth Development Co-Ordinators with a view to them developing NIFL clubs in the male and female game. This work is ongoing and has already seen huge progress being made both on and off the pitch within some of the IFA's largest and highest profile clubs.

The CCDO was heavily involved in the successful delivery of the first ever Homeless Soccer 5 Nations Cup. This tournament brought together homeless teams, both male and female from across the UK & Ireland.

Futsal

The IFA first post primary futsal competitions was launched back in October . There was 12 regional tournaments both boys and girls with the winners playing in the national finals at Lisburn Leisureplex in Wednesday 16th and Thursday 17th November respectively.

The dates and venues for all the regional tournaments are below:

Lisburn Leisureplex Boys – Tuesday 4th October

Lisburn Leisureplex Girls – Wednesday 5th October

Omagh Leisure centre Girls – Thursday 6th October

Omagh Leisure centre Boys – Friday 7th October

Shankill Leisure centre Boys – Wednesday 12th October

Shankill Leisure centre Girls – Thursday 13th October

Lakeland forum Girls – Tuesday 18th October

Lakeland forum Boys – Wednesday 19th October

Antrim Forum Boys – Thursday 20th October

Antrim Forum Girls – Friday 21st October

Foyle Arena Boys – Monday 24th October

Foyle Arena Girls – Tuesday 25th October

A freshers event in Ballymena saw approximately 50 participants take part in a Futsal taster session in the NRC.

