



**THE
CAMOGIE
ASSOCIATION**
An Cumann Camógaíochta

MEANINGFUL PLAYING TIME REPORT

February 2024



Camogie Association launch recommendations on Meaningful Playing Time for Camogie Players.

The Camogie Association launched a series of recommendations to address recent research findings on the lack of playing time for players. In 2023 a Working Group was established to examine the research findings along with relevant competition rules and structures within the organisation.

Following this extensive examination, a series of recommendations have been adopted by the Camogie Association.



Research Findings

The Camogie Association Player Welfare Research conducted in 2021 found that **1 in 10 adult players reported being a substitute** that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played.

Sport Ireland Coaching Teenage Girls Research (2022) discovered almost half of teenage girls playing Camogie say although they enjoy competing, they are **playing more for enjoyment**.

A Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit 2021 found 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over **lack of playing time for their children** was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee.

74% of clubs said that **more than 8 was the optimum number of games** to play but only 45% of Junior teams/clubs stated they were getting this number. (Camogie Association Club Survey 2022)

Finally, in a 2022 Gaelic Games Youth Participation Study, 52% of Under 14 females reported '**playing up**' to **Under 16** and 72% of Under 16 females reported '**playing up**' to **Under 18**.

Research Findings



10%

1 in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is seldom or never played.



45%

45% of teenage girls say while they enjoy competing, they are playing more for enjoyment.



37%

37% of Clubs state that complaints by parents over lack of playing time for children was one of the main issues brought to the Clubs attention.



52%

52% of Under 14 females reported 'playing up' to Under 16 teams.



72%

72% of Under 16 females reported 'playing up' to Under 18 teams.



74%

74% of clubs said that more than 8 games would be the optimum number played per year.



Recommendations

The Working Group have made a number of recommendations based on previous research findings and members feedback including:

- Introduction of Cross County Boundary competitions to be led by the provinces for Adult club teams.
- Investigate the potential for more lower-level competitions in league format for 3rd level Institutes.
- A motion to congress 2024 for an amendment to Playing Rule 5.1 (Official Guide Part 2 – Playing Rules) to increase substitutes for intercounty underage teams and adult club teams from 5 to 8 across all competitions and to allow unlimited substitutions for underage club teams across all competitions i.e. League and Championship.
- A motion to congress 2024 for an amendment to Rule 28.4. (Official Guide Part 1) to prohibit underage players playing on adult intercounty teams and to prohibit Under 16s players playing on Under 18s intercounty team to allow fairer playing time and reduce the risk of burn out.
- Policy for Under 13 competition structure introduced across all counties.
- Develop appropriate content for social media and other channels to highlight the impact the lack of playing time has on children and young adults.

Recommendations

- Survey to track teenage development squad members involvement in camogie through to adulthood.
- Coaching Teenage Girls workshop to be mandatory for one mentor from each development squad from 2025
- The introduction of a Club Charter Programme



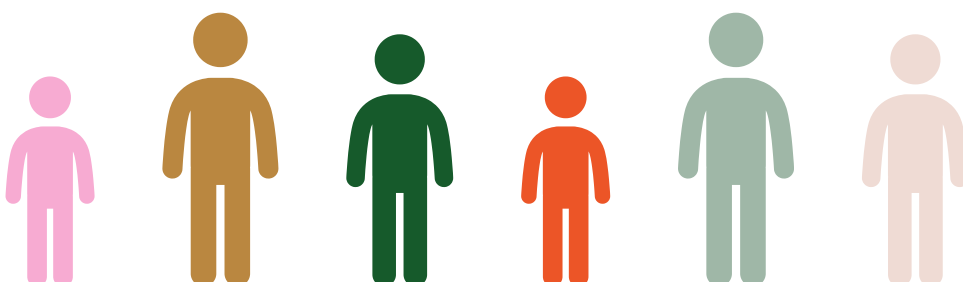


Rationale

Introduce Cross County Boundary competitions to be led by the Provincial Councils for adult club teams. These will be played with non-intercounty players and panel sizes should be minimum of 9 to play.

Rationale: One in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played (Camogie Association Player Welfare Research 2021). 74% said that greater than 8 was the optimum number of games but only 45% of Junior teams/clubs stated they were getting this number. (Camogie Association Club Survey 2022).

The smaller team/squad sizes allow multiple teams to be entered into competitions but also smaller clubs can still play games with fewer players available to them. The option of crossing county borders would ensure that clubs are not reliant on the other clubs in their county to form a competition and with the games programme to be led by Provincial Councils. Crossing borders gives added variety to clubs playing season and is likely to add a further social element for them.



Rationale

Investigate the potential for more lower level competitions in league format for 3rd level education.

Rationale: 45% of Teenage girls playing Camogie say although they enjoy competing, they are playing more for enjoyment (Sport Ireland Coaching Teenage Girls Research 2022). Anecdotally the number of players making themselves available to 3rd level teams is increasing. The highly competitive nature of the 3rd level competitions means the selection of squads is highly competitive and many girls do not get to play. 2nd and 3rd tier competitions would enable more girls to play when they would otherwise not be as they may be living away from home and their club team and unable to play with them. Lower level competitions would allow for girls to be reintroduced camogie and experience the social nature of 3rd level Camogie.

A motion to congress 2024 for an amendment to Playing Rule 5.1 (Official Guide Part 2 – Playing Rules) to increase substitutes for intercounty underage teams and adult club teams from 5 to 8 across all competitions.

Rationale: One in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played. (Camogie Association Player welfare research 2021). Allowing increased substitutions would remove this barrier for coaches to enable them give game time to more players during games.

A motion to congress 2024 for an amendment to Playing Rule 5.1 (Official Guide Part 2 – Playing Rules) to allow unlimited substitutions for underage club teams across all competitions i.e. league and championship.

Rationale: 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over lack of playing time for their children was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee. Allowing for unlimited substitutes would remove this barrier for coaches to enable them give playing time to more players during games.



Rationale

Policy for Under 13 competition structure to be introduced across all counties.

Rationale: 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over lack of playing time for their children was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee. (Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit 2021). The current Go games policy ensures all players get playing time within the go games structure. After this teams are in the Under 14 competition structure with no policy to ensure adequate game time for all players. Proposal is to introduce an Under 13 structure that is a bridge between the Go Games Policy and Under 14 competitive structures ensuring all players get adequate game time.

Develop appropriate content for social media and other channels to highlight the impact the lack of playing time has on children and young adults.

Rationale: 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over lack of playing time was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee. (Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit 2021). Creating short videos and other appropriate content would highlight the impact not playing or always being the substitute has on a player. These can also be used to set parental expectations on how much playing time all players should get. As One in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played. (Camogie Association Player welfare research 2021). Videos and other appropriate content can also be developed to target the impact on adult and youth players. All content would be short and vibrant allowing for use across a variety of platforms.

Rationale

A motion to Congress 2024 for an amendment to rule 28.4. (Official Guide Part 1) to rule prohibit underage players playing on adult intercounty teams.

Rationale: One in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played. (Camogie Association Player welfare research 2021). It is recommended a motion to be put to the members of the Camogie Association to amend rule 28.4 inhibiting under 18 players playing on intercounty adult teams. Currently minors playing on adult teams are taking a place of an adult player as they are potentially more talented. There are also player welfare concerns for underage players in an adult changing room, player burnout for minors playing multiple teams and the risk for more injuries. It is proposed to introduce this rule in phases. Starting with Tier 1 counties in 2025, Tier 2 counties in 2026 and Tier 3 counties in 2027. This will ensure ample time for counties to ensure they have sufficient players within their squads.

A motion to Congress 2024 for an amendment to rule 28.4. (Official Guide Part 1) to rule prohibit Under 16 players playing on Under 18 intercounty teams.

Rationale: 52% of Under 14 females reported 'playing up' to Under 16 and 72% of Under 16 females reported 'playing up' to Under 18. (Gaelic Games Youth Participation Study 2022). It is recommended a motion to be put to the members of the organisation to amend rule 28.4 inhibiting Under 16 players playing on intercounty Under 18 teams. Currently Under 16's playing on Under 18 teams are taking a place of an older player as they are potentially more talented. However, this player has additional years to play at minor level whereas the older player may not. There are also player welfare concerns on potential player burnout and increased injury risks for Under 16's playing multiple. It is proposed to introduce this rule in phases. Starting with Tier 1 counties in 2025, Tier 2 counties in 2026 and Tier 3 counties in 2027. This will ensure ample time for counties to ensure they have sufficient players within their squads.



Rationale

Coaching Teenage Girls workshop mandatory for one mentor from each inter county development squad from 2025:

Rationale: 45% of Teenage girls playing Camogie say although they enjoy competing, they are playing more for enjoyment. (Sport Ireland Coaching Teenage Girls Research 2022). These workshops were offered to all counties in the autumn of 2023. The course includes modules such as 'Dropout and Engagement in Girls' Sport and Physical Activity', 'Meeting the Psycho-Social Needs of Girls in Sport', and 'Preparing for the Challenges of Adolescence in Girls'. In 2025 it is proposed that a minimum of one person from each development squad coaching group has attended a workshop. This is subject to receiving adequate funding and upskilling 6-7 additional coach developers for this purpose.

Survey to track teenage development squad members involvement in camogie through to adulthood.

Rationale: 52% of Under 14 females reported 'playing up' to Under 16 and 72% of Under 16 females reported 'playing up' to Under 18. (Gaelic Games Youth Participation Study 2022). 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over lack of playing time for their children was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee. (Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit 2021). 45% of Teenage girl's playing Camogie say although they enjoy competing, they are playing more for enjoyment. (Sport Ireland Coaching Teenage Girls Research 2022). A similar study titled "where is she now" was completed in 2016 and tracked U14 intercounty development squad members from 2012 and 2013 to ascertain were they still playing Camogie in 2016. It is proposed to conduct this research again to track teenage development squad member involvement in camogie through to adulthood.

Rationale

Introduction of a Club Charter programme:

Rationale: One in 10 adult players reported being a substitute that is infrequently used or being seldom or never played. (Camogie Association Player Welfare Research 2021), 45% of Teenage girls playing Camogie say although they enjoy competing, they are playing more for enjoyment. (Sport Ireland Coaching Teenage Girls Research 2022h), 74% said that greater than 8 was the optimum number of games but only 45% of Junior teams/clubs stated they were getting this number. (Camogie Association Club Survey 2022), 37% of club's states that complaints by parents over lack of playing time for their children was one of the main issues brought to the attention of the Club Childrens Officer or the relevant Committee. (Sport Ireland Safeguarding Audit 2021), 52% of Under 14 females reported 'playing up' to Under 16 and 72% of Under 16 females reported 'playing up' to Under 18. (Gaelic Games Youth Participation Study 2022).

Recognising the dedication of the vast majority of coaches, clubs, and mentors who prioritise players and strive to provide equal playing opportunities, there is a recommendation to establish a national club charter. The aim is to promote best practices among clubs and emphasise the importance of placing all players at the forefront of their activities. Upon signing, clubs would commit to specific criteria including prioritising the development of all players, ensuring equal playing time throughout the season, and fostering the growth and retention of all team members.

The Working Group comprised of:

Working Group Chair:

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