

3rd April 2016

It was a season defining weekend for our U14 and U16 girls as both teams challenged for silverware on two fronts. Both teams experienced the emotion of joy and despair over a hectic weekend.

On Saturday both teams travelled to Cork to compete in their respective Championship Finals. Sadly for our U14 girls, it was not to be their day as the occasion proved too much for them. They fell to a comprehensive defeat to Brunell, the cup specialists in Cork.

Our U16 girls however took home the silverware in an all Limerick affair with UL Huskies. After a number of final defeats over the years, the U16 girls will enter the club's records books as the first team to win a championship final in Cork. Despite been denied the services of Aoife Morrissey through injury, the girls were always in command in this game. The girls started at a blistering pace to open up a 17-4 first quarter lead on the back of scores from our U14 contingent of Bronagh Dollard and Jana Zundel. The lead was stretched out to 31-12 at the interval with good work by Caoimhe O' Neill and Hazel Dinneen. UL to their credit never gave up and came back strong in the third quarter but could make no inroads into the deficit. Our girls kicked on in the final quarter with Jody O' Halloran hitting a down town "3" pointer. Siofra Gleeson rounded off the scoring with the final two baskets in a comfortable 61-29 win.

This was an excellent squad performance with a good spread of scoring throughout the panel. Top scorers were Amy Higgins 13, Orla Zundel 12, Hazel Dinneen 8 and Sophie Moore 8.

On Sunday both teams faced Cobh in the Cork League, with the winners of each game guaranteed the league title. Our U14s were first in action. They soon shrugged off the disappointment of the cup defeat to race into a 22 -4 first quarter lead. Cobh through their international player Dara Diggin had the better of the second quarter winning it 10-9. The girls poured on the scores in the third quarter outscoring Cobh 22-5 with Sophie Moore doing an excellent defensive job on Diggin. Buki Adejomehin, who has improved over the past few weeks notched 2 late baskets to seal a 62-32 win. The win was the club's first win in the Cork A league and huge congratulations go to a very dedicated bunch of players who have worked their socks off over a long season.

Bronagh Dollard and Sophie Moore top scored on 17 and 13 points respectively, but there were also very strong performances not alone in this game , but throughout the season by Abbie Pigott, Julia Cunneen, Aoife O'Neill, Lucy Liston, Lucia McGill, Buki Adejomehin, Allannah O' Connell and Jana Zundel, together with the U13 contingent who stepped in for games during the season, most notably Susannah, Sarah and Lily.

Our U16 girls game against Cobh can only be described as a helter skelter game. The pace of the game was frightening right from the start and continued for the duration of the game. Both teams put in huge defensive performances which meant a low scoring but hugely exciting game for the large crowd in attendance. Our girls got into early foul trouble which would come back to haunt the girls towards the end of the game. Cobh opened up a 6-2 lead helped by good free throwing. They stretched this lead out to 12-4 early in the second quarter, before our girls got their running game going to score 10 points on the bounce to lead 14-12. However a big big "3" pointer on the buzzer had Cobh 1 point ahead at the interval. The girls suffered a big blow with Bronagh Dollard sitting out the second half with a finger injury. She would not be risked ahead of the U14 AICCs next weekend. The third quarter was hugely entertaining and going into the final quarter the teams were locked at 25 points apiece. The first 5 minutes of the final quarter was tense, hard fought with both teams completely shutting down the opposition. The girls early foul trouble soon had a huge bearing on the outcome of this game. One by one, Siofra Gleeson, Amy Higgins and Jody O' Halloran were fouled out. This gave Cobh a huge advantage which they exploited to the full scoring the final 6 points in a 33-27 win. Both teams should be commended for a terrific, absorbing, edge of the seat game. In the

end Cobh won this game with excellent free throw shooting. They scored 16 points to our girl's 4 which proved a huge difference.

Top scorers for the girls on the day were Jody O' Halloran who had an awesome game, Orla Zundel and Bronagh Dollard.

The girls should be extremely proud of their performances over the season. Despite falling at the final hurdle, the club consider them winners and great ambassadors for the club.

Dorothy, Emily, Joanne and Deirdre, the coaches of both teams deserve a huge thanks for keeping both teams so competitive over a long season which began back in September.

Our U14 Girls travel to Cork next week for the AICCS "A" competition where they face the league winners from Dublin and Basketball Northern Ireland. It does not get any easier!

Our Senior Saints finished their North Munster league campaign with a 36-48 defeat to Shannon. A poor second quarter performance proved their undoing. They came back strong in the second half and had Shannon on the back foot. However, basketball is a game of putting the ball in the basket. Despite some excellent play, the girls just could not buy a basket.

Best for Colms were Sharon Griffin, Eimear Dollard and Lynsey Purcell.

9th April 2017

It was the All Ireland Club Championships for U14 girls this weekend. 25 clubs, who were either the league winners or runners up from the 13 different area boards took part in these championships. 13 teams travelled to Limerick for the "B" championship. The top 12 clubs including St Colms competed in the premier "A" Championship in Cork.

This was the first time that St Colms qualified for the "A" competition and therefore entered into these games slightly under the radar. They were included in Pool 1 which included Liffey Celtics, current Dublin league champions and reigning All Ireland Champions and Tyrone Towers from Northern Ireland.

The first pool game was against Liffey Celtics, which would prove an acid test of our girls abilities. Liffey went into this game the warmest of favourites, but this did not inhibit our girls. The first half ended all square at 20-20, after both teams had to adopt the five on five off rotation policy for the first two quarters. This game was turning into a bit of a classic. Liffey went 5 points ahead in the third quarter with the game apparently beginning to follow script. However nobody had told our girls. What followed from our girls was some unbelievable basketball. They took the game to their opponents, played real tough defence and played some lovely free flowing basketball. They turned this game on its head storming into the lead and never relinquishing it in a fantastic 44-38 win.

Top scorers were Bronagh Dollard 17, Sophie Moore 12 and Abbie Pigott 12.

The win for the girls opened up a very favourable path to the later stages of the competition.

After winning their first game, the girls were naturally on a high. They continued their impressive form in their second game against Tyrone Towers. Our girls went about their business in a ruthless and efficient manner. They opened up a 23-6 interval lead, before cruising to a 46-12 win. The only downside to this win was a flare up of an old finger injury to Bronagh Dollard, who was rested as a precaution in the second half of the game. Abbie Pigott took the high scoring honours in this game with 15 points followed by Sophie Moore on 10 and Jana Zundel on 7.

So against all odds, the girls as pool winners would compete in the top 4 competition of the All Ireland Club Championships.

The girls had an early night! to recuperate and recharge their batteries.

The following morning was an early start with a semi final against Midleton who had qualified with wins over Corrib from Galway and Muckno Lakers from Castleblaney. Midleton were the only team to inflict a league defeat on our girls, this season, way back in October, so a tough and close game was envisaged. Both teams did not disappoint. This was a game that our girls, despite not playing at their best, did just enough to tough out the win. Final scoreline of 33-29 reflects the tightness of this game.

Top scorers for the girls were Bronagh Dollard 17, Sophie Moore 9 and Jana Zundel 4.

So, unbelievably our girls were now getting ready to contest an All Ireland Club Championship "A" Final. Their opponents were St Mary's Castleisland. The Kerry girls went into this final with a long and proud history in the premier competitions in Ireland. However our girls had reached this final on merit and went into the game relaxed with no inhibitions. The first half was a tight affair with the Kerry Girls 17-13 up at the interval. Our girls put in a huge effort in the third quarter to bring the

deficit back down to a solitary point going into the final quarter. However that third quarter effort took a huge toll on our girls. They could not muster one final last effort and were running on empty in the final quarter. St Mary's went for the kill and ran out deserving and worth champions on a scoreline of 38-25.

This was undoubtedly one, if not the greatest performances by one of our underage teams in the long history of this club. These girls are a delight to coach. They train with a smile on their face and a steely determination which allows them to compete and beat the top teams in Ireland. A huge appreciation must go to their two coaches Dorothy and Emily who have nurtured this squad over the last 4 or 5 years. A huge thanks to all the parents who travelled to support their girls not alone this weekend, but through all the dark nights travelling up and down to Cork over the season.

A team needs it's leaders and this team have a number of leaders who lead their team through their actions on the court. The team is blessed to have the talents of Bronagh Dollard, Sophie Moore, Abbie Pigott, Jana Zundel, Julia Cunneen, Aoife O' Neill, Lucy Liston, Buli Adejohemin, Allannah O' Connell, Lucia McGill, Susannah Holland and Sarah Cantillon.

A big thanks to Julia Cunneen who postponed her holidays to France so she could help out her team mates.

Finally well done to Bronagh, Sophie Jana and Abbie on making the North Munster U14 team and to Ruth Dollard, Orla Zundel and Aoife Morrissey on making the North Munster U17 team ahead of the Southern Regional games on Easter Monday.

WELL DONE GIRLS