

5th March 2012

There was a large and vocal crowd to witness the pivotal game in the Under 16 North Munster league between Scholars and Celtics last Sunday. Scholars had won the reverse fixture in December by 11 points, so could afford to still lose the game and stay top of the league.

The game was a very tense and physical affair with both teams fired up for this highly anticipated game. Celtics started the brighter and led by 5 at the end of the first quarter. They stretched this lead out to 8 towards the end of the second quarter and the situation looked ominous for the home side. However a huge “3” pointer by Ciara Stapleton right on the buzzer reduced the deficit back down to 5 at the interval. The third quarter was the defining quarter of this whole league campaign. The Scholars upped their game considerably and outscored their opponents by 7 points to head into the final quarter 2 points ahead. To their credit Celtics never gave up and came back strong late in the final quarter to win out on the day 33-28. However they never really looked capable of bridging the 11 point deficit from the first game.

Chloe Dineen had a huge game for Scholars and had great back up from Lynsey Purcell and Ciara O’ Halloran.

The Scholars then faced Newport in a further league game later in the day. The girls knowing that all the hard work was achieved in the earlier game, were very relaxed and put in a professional approach to win out 69-37 and put them within touching distance of the league title.

Top scorers in the game were Ciara O’ Halloran 21, Caoimhe Gleeson 11 and Becky Cleary 9.

The Scholars face their Saints counterparts in their final league game of the season next week, knowing a win will seal the title and entry into the All Ireland Club Championship in April.

The previous night the girls had a Cork league encounter with St Anthonys. With Sunday morning’s game in mind, this game was an opportunity for some of the younger players to get some court time. On the night St Anthonys proved much too strong and were deserving winners on a score line of 59-32 with Ciara O’ Halloran and Grace Kavanagh best for Colms.

Our younger U16 Saints suffered a backlash from Celtics in their North Munster league encounter on Sunday, and were comprehensively beaten on a scoreline of 16-82 with Under 14 player Jane Clohessy and Sarah Murray best for Saints.

Our U12 girls showed a number of changes for their North Munster league encounter with Celtics, as the rotation policy employed with this young squad continues. The girls were once again on the wrong side of a close encounter going down by a late basket.

Players to shine on the day were Megan Crowley, Elaine Murray and Lauren Walsh.

A large number of people were in attendance to watch our U8 girls play UL in a challenge game. These young stars of the future have developed over the past few months under the excellent guidance of their coaches Dorothy Kavanagh and Aisling O’ Neill. They displayed their skills to an appreciative audience and scored some

lovely baskets in what was a great team performance. Players to watch out for in the future are Abbie Piggott, Naoise Fitzpatrick, Julia Cunneen and Amber Gleeson amongst others.

At the other end of the age spectrum, our U18 girls welcomed current league leaders Carraig Na BhFear to Limerick for a Cork League encounter. The U18 girls have only lost one game in 2012 and were in confident mood ahead of this important league encounter. Colms had a great first quarter performance and opened up a 20-7 first quarter lead. The girls thereafter always had the upper hand and stormed to a resounding 61-32 win, which moves them up to third spot in the league.

Top scorers for Colms were Orlaith Woods 25, Aoife O' Connell 10 and Laura Sheahan 6.

The following day, the U18 girls hosted Clare Cascaders in the North Munster League hoping to consolidate their position at the top of the table. Despite a sluggish start by the girls, they soon got the measure of their opponents and eased to a comfortable 56-22 win. Orlaith Woods was again the game's top scorer on 23 points followed by Niamh Hannan on 8 and Lorna Boland on 6.

Our Senior teams had contrasting results in the North Munster League.

Our Scholars travelled to Nenagh hoping to avenge a home loss earlier in the season. The Scholars went into the game minus long term injury victim, Aisling O' Neill and Noreen Campbell. They shrugged off these absences by establishing first half dominance to lead 21-13 at the interval. However despite dominating possession in the second half, the Scholars old failings of not converting their scores resurfaced. They allowed Nenagh right back into the game and with seconds remaining, found themselves down a point. With one final offence, Joanne De Loughrey drove through the centre of the Nenagh defence to score the winning basket right on the buzzer. Joanne top scored on 15 points, with Siobhain Keane and Eimear O' Malley others to play well.

The Saints can count themselves unlucky in their game against Newport. The away side settled the better and opened up an early 6 point lead. However Saints came right back into this game and poked their noses in front at the interval 21-19. However both Simone Bourke and Aisling Stapleton were in early foul trouble and sat out a lot of the second half. The loss of both these players reduced the Saints' scoring capacity in the second half. The taller Newport team took full advantage in the second half to win out on a score line of 37-32.

Top scorers for Saints were Emily Kavanagh 10, Nuala O' Flaherty 8 and Aisling Stapleton 7

The club have a busy schedule ahead with our U16 and U18 girls hosting Ballincollig in the Cork League. Our U16 girls have a North Munster cup game away to UL while our Senior Scholars face a tough assignment against Celtics in the Senior North Munster Cup. Our U14 and U18 girls also have North Munster league games against Celtics.

12th March 2012

Our U16 girls certainly had a busy week playing 3 games, culminating in the winning of the North Munster U16 league. The girls will now compete in the All Ireland Club Championships next month in Cork.

The girls played their final North Munster League game against their Saints counterparts knowing that a win would be sufficient to regain the North Munster league title for the club. The Saints put up a very gutsy performance to only trail by 5-15 at the interval. The Scholars upped the tempo in the second half and eased to a solid 35-11 win.

Best for Scholars were Lynsey Purcell, Ciara O' Halloran and Aileen O' Connor while Jessica O' Brien and Sarah Murray shone for the Saints.

The U16 girls capped a good week with a win over UL in the North Munster Cup and a win over Ballincollig in the Cork League.

Our U18 girls continued their rich vein of recent form with an emphatic win over Ballincollig in the Cork League. The win moves them up to second place in the league. Colms always held the upperhand in this game and opened up a healthy 28-11 interval lead. They continued their dominance in the second half to seal an important 62-21 win to consolidate their top 4 play off aspirations.

Top Scorers for Colms were Orlaith Woods 26, Aoife O' Connell 14 and Niamh Hannan 9.

Our senior Scholars were disappointing in their loss to Celtics in the North Munster Cup. Despite a promising opening few minutes, the Scholars folded quite tamely, affording Celtics too much respect. A late rally was not sufficient to avoid a comprehensive 24-52 defeat.

Top Scorers for Scholars were Niamh Barton 6, Eimear O' Malley, Ciara Meaney and Niamh Ni Cheilleachair 4 each.

The Scholars will be hoping for a better display when they face Celtics again next week, this time in the league. Our senior saints will be away to Northside Hoops in the league.

19th March 2012

Top billing this week goes to our remarkable U18 girls who clinched the North Munster U18 League title with a resounding win over Celtics last weekend. These girls have never lost a North Munster league game within their own age group over a six year period. They have won two U14 league titles, two U16 league titles and now two U18 league titles.

The girls did look like they were going to get a close game against Celtics for a time. At one stage, early in the second quarter they trailed 14-15. However a 22-0 run for our girls soon put to bed thoughts of an upset. The girls were completely on top for the remainder of the game and eased to a 62-28 win.

Top scorers for Colms were Orlaith Woods 18, Ciara O' Halloran 16 and Aoife O' Connell 11.

The girls host UL next weekend in the semi finals of the North Munster Cup.

Our U12 girls found Celtics much too strong in their U12 league encounter losing out 11-51. Nevertheless the girls gained a lot of experience this season, with 21 players in total, getting court time. They should be more competitive next season, as they will be competing at their correct age group.

The girls travel to Cork where they will play 4 games in an open tournament next weekend. This will be great experience for the girls.

Our u14 girls had mixed results last weekend. The girls were certainly not helped by a flu that swept through this team. As a result the team was very much understrenght and were no match for Celtics A team losing out 15-58. They fared much better in their second game against Celtics B winning out 40-17.

The girls will need to show significant improvement when they host Newport in the quarter finals of the North Munster Cup.

Our senior ladies also had contrasting results. The Scholars put in a much better performance in their league encounter with Celtics before losing out 38-58. They are still lacking that clinical edge when it comes to finishing and should have been much closer on the scoreboard.

Best for Scholars on the night were Joanne Deloughrey, Niamh Barton and Anna Keyes.

Our Senior Saints just about edged a low scoring game with Hoops on a scoreline of 25-22. This was a typical end of season game with nothing at stake and was reflected in a low key encounter.

Best for Saints were Emily Kavanagh and Aisling Stapleton.

Finally our U16 Saints travel to Hospital next weekend for a North Munster Cup quarter final tie with Morning Star while our senior Saints host Tipperary in their penultimate league game of the season.

26th March 2012

Our U18 girls continued their winning run with a comfortable win over UL in the semi final of the North Munster Cup. The girls were quick out of the blocks and opened up an early 12-0 lead. UL rallied briefly to only trail 9-17 at the end of the first quarter. However it was evident from early in this game that our girls held the upperhand. Colms were in complete control of this game and gradually stretched out their lead, winning all four quarters, before sealing a 71-39 win.

Top scorers for Colms were Orlaith Woods 34, Ciara O' Halloran 12 and Niamh Hannan 10.

Our U16 Saints travelled to Hospital for a quarter final clash away to Morning Star. This followed the news that our U16 Scholars had to forfeit their game against UL after failing to record one of their players on the scoresheet.

The Saints turned recent league form on it's head with a gutsy win in a low scoring affair edging out winners on a scoreline of 23-18.

Jessica O' Brien, Sarah Murray and Eimear Dollard were best for Saints.

They will next face Clare Cascaders in the semi final in Ennistymon.

Our U14 girls went into their quarter final clash against Newport as strong favourites after two comfortable wins in the league. However this team have been hit with the flu in recent weeks, with only two of the team at training during the week. They struggled badly in this game. The girls opened up a 13 point lead early in the second quarter, but there were already signs that the girls' energy levels were low. Newport kept plugging away and forced the game into overtime. A silly turnover by our girls gifted Newport a basket to be deserving winners on a scoreline of 39-36.

Top scorers for Colms were Roisin Gleeson 14 and Chloe Tobin 10.

Our Senior Saints had a good win against Tipperary in their penultimate game of the North Munster League. The Saints were missing Aisling Stapleton so there was a late call up for 16yo Aoife O' Connell to play the point position. The youngster had a huge influence on this game scoring 17 points and dictating the pace of the game. Others to play well in the 42-31 win were Emily Kavanagh and Simone Bourke.

Our U12 girls travelled to Cork for an invitational tournament. This was always going to be a big ask for these girls at this early stage of their development. However despite losing all their games, they got great experience and first hand knowledge of what is expected of them next season.

A big thank you to UL Basketball Club who hosted an U10 blitz last weekend. The club entered two teams, our U10s and U8s and both teams did themselves proud with some excellent displays.

Next week our Senior Scholars play their final game of the North Munster league campaign away to Shannon, while our U18 girls will be hoping to do the league and cup double when they contest the North Munster U18 cup final.