

5<sup>th</sup> February 2018

The club had a number of league and challenge games against UL Huskies during the week and recorded good wins in each of them.

Our Division 1 Ladies team were first in action and welcomed Fiona O' Connell and Eimear Dollard back from their College Co-op work experience stints. The girls fast break worked well right from the start of the game with Laurie Brosnan and Lynsey Purcell getting some nice scores. This continued for the remainder of the game with all 10 players getting on the scoresheet. The girls had a 9 point lead at the end of the first quarter, improving this out to 19 by the interval. With their offence working well, the girls also were working hard in defence. Their tight defence allowed Fiona O' Connell, Ciara Stapleton and Deirdre Barton to get steals and initiate quick offence. The girls through Joanne DeLoughrey, Sharon Griffin and Aoife O' Connell dominated their defensive boards, which set the platform for the girls to play a high tempo and free flowing game. Aoife Donovan and Eimear Dollard combined well on the offensive boards to work some good scores. The coaches had the luxury of playing a 5 on 5 off strategy for the entire game before running out comfortable winners. The team would also like to wish Sharon Griffin on her peace keeping duties over the next few months.

Our U10 girls got games underway last Sunday with a non -competitive game against UL Huskies. There was plenty of talent on show with both teams serving up an excellent game of basketball. This was a high scoring game which showcased the work that goes on behind the scenes with these young players. Coaches Colm and Karen can only be pleased with the progress their young charges are making with each passing game.

Our U16 girls certainly showed the benefit of a week off after their gruelling schedule last week. The game against UL Huskies was a welcome distraction for some of the girls during exam week. The girls were back in excellent form. They were very professional right from the start with their defense rock solid and their offence quick and efficient. The girls put this game to bed in the first quarter opening up a healthy lead that they improved on as the game progressed. Each player got plenty of game time with Abbie Pigott coming off the bench to top score on 16 points. Three other players were in double figures namely Bronagh Dollard, Aoife Morrissey and Sophie Moore. However this was a complete performance by the whole squad with Jody O' Halloran, Amy Higgins, Izzy Murphy, Isabelle Meaney, Jana Zundel and Julia Cunneen all playing their part.

The U12 girls were next in action and also put in a very strong performance. The girls edged a close first quarter before showing the depth of their squad in the second quarter. The girls scored 15 points alone in this quarter to establish a strong interval lead. The girls continued to play strong and ran out comfortable winners with top scoring shared by Nofeesat Muniru, Grace Liston and Grainne Ni Cholbaird.

Our U12 development girls joined some of the U12 squad to play UL Huskies in a challenge game. The girls are certainly showing the benefit of these games as they grow in confidence each time they play. The girls held a slight first quarter lead before a little wobble in the second quarter allowed UL to go in at the interval leading 12-8. The girls began to convert their chances in the second half to draw level 20-20 heading into the final quarter. The girls really upped their game in the final quarter to run out 32-22 winners. Top scoring honours were shared out between Ava O' Halloran, Chloe McDonagh, Maxim Loussakou, Ciara and Aishling Downey.

The girls U14 league game against UL Huskies was cancelled and instead a challenge game was organised. The girls suffered an early blow with Susannah Holland and Kate Barry retiring from the game after a couple of minutes due to illness and injury. However the U14s are unrecognisable from

the team that started the season. They are playing some great basketball and are playing with a lot of confidence. They were able to cope with the loss of the two girls and actually led at the end of the first quarter by 4 points. Our second quarter unit proved much too good for the inexperienced UL girls and this laid down the platform for a good win. The pleasing aspect of the performance was that 9 players were on the scoresheet. Aimee Rossiter had by far her best game of the season and does a lot of unseen defensive work. Ellageorga O' Shea really stepped up her game getting a lot of steals which led to some easy scores for her team mates. Top scoring honours were shared out between Abbie Pigott, Lily O' Halloran, Alana Moran, Azeezat Muniru and Sarah Cantillon.

Next week our U15 girls and U18 girls are away to Fr Mathews and Bantry respectively in the Cork League.

Our Senior Division 2 team are in North Munster League action against MICE.

12<sup>th</sup> February 2018

The weather had an impact on proceedings with a number of our Cork League games cancelled. However a number of games did go ahead.

Our Ladies Division 2 team were first in action and continued their winning ways with a narrow win over Celtics 2. The girls led a low scoring first quarter by 3 points. Despite some good outside shooting by Grace Kavanagh, the teams were tied at 18 points each at the interval. The third quarter was another tight affair with the girls eking out a slender 3 point lead. Good inside play by Eimear O' Malley (9 points) and Siobhan Keane (10 points) kept the scoreboard ticking over. Olivia DeLoughrey and Michelle Walsh were very solid in defence to keep the girls' lead intact. This enabled them to run out winners on a scoreline of 39-30.

Our U18 girls travelled to Cork to face Bantry in an important double header which would have a bearing on league positions. Four of the panel were missing but the remaining 8 players really stepped up to the plate. The first quarter was a cagey affair with both teams sizing each other up. The girls upped the tempo and their passing game in the second quarter which led to some nice inside scores by Ruth Dollard and Clare Terren-Hogan. Elaine Murray was the architect of these scores with some lovely passes to her inside players. Bantry had to alter their defence to stop the inside threat posed by our girls. This allowed space outside for Jody O' Halloran, Aoife Morrissey and Isabelle Meaney to hit some nice outside shots. Amy Higgins and Siofra Gleeson controlled our defensive boards which allowed our guards get some easy scores off fast breaks. This was an excellent performance by the girls reflected on the scoresheet with a great spread of scorers. The win guarantees the girls a top 4 finish with 2 games yet to be played.

Our U15 girls were also in Cork with a league game against Fr Mathews. The girls were delighted to be back in action at their own age group. The girls maintained their second spot in the league with a comfortable win. The girls employed a press right from the start which paid immediate dividends. The girls established an early lead, through numerous turnovers, which was improved on as the game progressed. Fr Mathews to their credit kept plugging away and some nice outside shooting by their guards kept our girls honest in defence. However our girls proved much too strong as evidenced by the fact that the entire panel were on the scoresheet, with Bronagh Dollard, Sophie Moore, Abbie Pigott and Julia Cunneen each in double figures.

Our U18 girls are home to Donoughmore while both our U15 and U16 girls are away to Glanmire in the Cork League. Our Ladies Division 1 team are in action against Shannon while our Ladies Division 2 team are in action against Springfield in the North Munster League.

Finally, huge congratulations go out to two of our U16 players who received some welcome news during the week. Aoife Morrissey was selected for the U17 Irish team while Caoimhe O' Neill was selected for the Munster U16 Rugby squad.

19<sup>th</sup> February 2018

Our U12 girls joined their U16 and U18 counterparts by qualifying for the North Munster Cup Final with a hard fought win away to Springfield.

Our girls were slow to get going and found themselves 2 points down at the end of the first quarter. The second quarter unit led by Lauren Cosgrove upped the tempo and quickly established a lead which they held to the interval. Half time score 15-10. The second half was a very low scoring affair with defences holding the upper hand. The girls kept chipping away while shutting down the Springfield offence. Final score 22-10.

Top scorers for Colms were Lauren Cosgrove 7, Melissa Do 7 and Nofeesat Muniru 4.

Our U15 and U16 girls travelled to Cork to play Glanmire in the Cork League.

The under 15 girls were quickly into their stride and employed a pressure defence right from the off. Glanmire found it very difficult to get the ball up the court and were forced into numerous turnovers. Our girls punished these errors to establish a first quarter lead of 18-2. The girls stretched out the lead to 31-7 by the interval. There was a significant drop in intensity and scoring in the third quarter with the girls relaxing knowing the result was safe. However, they finished very strongly to run out comfortable winners on a scoreline of 52-15.

Top scorers for the girls were Bronagh Dollard 20, Sophie Moore 17 and Abbie Pigott 8.

Our U16 girls went into their game minus Aoife Morrissey who was away on international training. The girls took a little while to get going and found themselves 4 points down midway through the first quarter. However a strong finish to the quarter helped our girls into a slender 15-14 lead. The girls tightened up their defence in the second quarter allowing Glanmire only 5 points as they established a 28-19 interval lead. The girls were never seriously in trouble in the second half as they always held a 10-12 point cushion before closing out the game 49-38.

Sophie Moore had an excellent game top scoring on 23 points followed by Amy Higgins on 10 and Izzy Murphy with good outside shooting on 7.

Our Senior Division 2 team played a North Munster League match against Springfield. This was a very low scoring game which Springfield won by 8 points. The girls could not buy a basket all night and were also not helped by some disjointed defence which allowed Springfield some easy scores.

Next Saturday is North Munster Cup Finals day with the club represented in 3 finals at U12, U16 and U18 level. Our U14 Girls also contest the Final of the Shield competition.

The following day our U15 girls travel to Cork to play Waterford Wildcats in the semi finals of the Cork Championship.

Our Ladies Division 1 team are also in action during the week against Glen Cruisers.

26<sup>th</sup> February 2018

It was North Munster cup finals day in UL last Saturday with the club represented at all 4 age levels. The four teams did themselves and their club proud with their performances. Both our U14 girls and U16 girls took home the silverware, with our 12 and U18 girls just falling short.

Our U12 girls were the first team in action against Celtics. The girls really impressed with their performance and edged a tight first quarter 7-6. The game was won and lost in the second quarter as the occasion seemed to get to our girls. Celtics won the quarter 11-02 to lead at the interval 17-9. The second half was nip and tuck with little, if anything, separating two evenly matched sides before Celtics closed out deserving winners on a 31-20 score line. There were some outstanding performances by Ciara Downey, Treasa Ni Cholbaird and Nofeesat Muniru in an all round solid team performance where every player gave their all.

Our U16 girls went into their cup final buoyed by the news that they were at practically full strength for the first time in many months. Our girls laid down an early marker dominating the offensive boards from the off, forcing Celtics into early fouls. They dominated the first quarter to open up a 15-6 lead. It was evident from early in the game that each player was fully focused on the task in hand. Each player that came off the bench played their part as the girls continued to keep Celtics on the back foot. The girls played exceptional defence and kept Celtics to single figures in all 4 quarters. The girls were able to relax long before the final whistle as they ran out worthy winners on a score line of 46-27. There were great displays by Amy Higgins, Jody O' Halloran and Bronagh Dollard in defence while Aoife Morrissey and Sophie Moore led the scoring stakes. However, this was a solid all round performance with each team member playing their part, in this historic win.

Our U14 girls went into the final of the Shield as favourites against Rockets on the back of two earlier league wins. The girls got off to the perfect start to open up a strong early first quarter lead. Once nerves subsided, Rockets came strongly back into the game to trail 13-24 at the interval. Our girls pushed out the lead in the third quarter, but Rockets kept plugging away right until the end before our girls held out for a narrow 42-35 win. Best for Colms were Julia Cunneen who was the game's top scorer, Abbie Pigott, Susannah Holland and Ella Georga O' Shea.

A number of the U16 girls teamed up with their U18 counterparts to face Celtics in the cup final. The girls were competitive right from the off with some good scores by Aoife Morrissey and Ruth Dollard. However, it soon became evident that the earlier U16 game had taken it's toll on a number of our girls and they could not keep up the pace and intensity of their game. This allowed Celtics to run out comfortable winners in the end.

Our U15 girls travelled to Cork the following morning to play Waterford Wildcats in the semi finals of the Cork Championship. This was a superb advertisement for underage basketball with the two teams giving it their all in an absorbing contest. The girls got off to the perfect start scoring the first two baskets of the game. They dominated proceedings in the first quarter to lead 14-7. Wildcats then really tested the resolve of our girls with strong performances in the second and third quarters to trail only 29-35 going into the final quarter. The teams traded early baskets in the fourth quarter and Wildcats had got to within 4 points 39-43 with a couple of minutes to go. Our girls greater experience came to the fore in the final few minutes. They closed out the game with 7 unanswered points to win out 50-39.

When it came to a battle, Abbie Pigott really stepped up to the plate. She really pushed her team mates forward and came up with the crucial scores when they were needed most. She top scored on 19 points followed by Bronagh Dollard on 11 who again had an immense game both offensively and defensively and is slowly but surely turning into the complete package.

Our North Munster Division 2 team had another good win in the league this time against Glen Cruisers. This was a tough physical game right from the start. The girls ran in 5 quick points but a lack of execution and some forced passes allowed Glen Cruisers back into the game. However an action packed display by Aoife O' Connell ensured the girls went in leading by 2 points at the end of the first quarter. An eye injury to Ciara Stapleton ruled her out of the game for the second half, while Aoife O' Connell was forced off injured late in the game. The girls continued to try and play basketball in a game that got more physical as it wore on. Fiona O' Connell had a superb game in defence and chipped in with 8 points. Joanne Deloughrey and Aoife Donovan began to get to grips on their defensive boards, allowing the girls to run their fast break. It was only late in the game, when they were able to pull away winning out 43-30. Aoife O' Connell top scored on 14 points with Deirdre Barton hitting 8.

Next week our U18 girls are in Cork championship action against Carrigaline. Our U16 girls face off against Celtics again, this time in the Cork League. Finally, all our teams will be in action against Celtics in the North Munster league.