



**Cumann Camógaíochta
Átha an Rí**

Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí



Policy for Underage Coaches/Management & Parents of Athenry Camogie Club

*The following document was developed by the Executive of Athenry Camogie Club
in Q1 2022*

Introduction:

The executive encourages the following elements of best practice for coaches and management teams for underage squads in order to ensure the complete development of young players in our club.

Player inclusion and development are an intrinsic part of this policy. We believe that the focus on skills in the younger age groups is much more important than “winning at all costs”. It is important that all players, irrespective of their abilities, should be given equal attention in coaching and game time.

Below is a description of the best practices for coaching the various under-age groups to promote inclusion of all players and player development.



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In addition to these high-level guidelines, please review the detailed 'Player Pathways' for the applicable age group ([see Camogie Association Development Resources' \(Page 35-73\)](#) (QR code to PDF provided below).

These 'Player Pathways' clearly outline the skills that should be practiced and coached at each age level.



22 Camogie Player Pathway

👉 Technical Capacities

During this phase, the player will...

- Display confidence in performing Camogie skills including goal keeping skills
- Display consistency in performing Camogie skills including goal keeping skills
- Display control in performing Camogie skills
- Practice skills under competitive conditions
- Undertake an intensity of training relevant to competition and opposition.
- Display individual style of play
- Perform the following skill: Flick ball on ground
- Perform the following skill: Flick ball in the air

📍 Tactical Capacities

During this phase, the player will...

- Undertake advanced team play when in possession e.g use of long ball/diagonal ball
- Take sidelines
- Adopt a specific role within the team, when taking opposing teams' strengths/weaknesses into account.
- Adapt to opponents game plan
- Read the game and move on and off the ball accordingly
- Adapt game plan to climate wet/wind/heat
- Continue self-analysis in training and competition
- Apply decision making in relation to skill selection





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U6-11 – Players should be trained at a level that is appropriate to the age whilst maintaining the Go-Games principles. Games at this level primarily involve blitzes and all players must be given game time.

It is important to note that Go-Games are national policy of the GAA and the Camogie Association. The philosophy is that every child gets to play (a Go) in every game, for the full game and it applies to all children up to and including 11 years of age. For more information on Go Games Refer to Appendix 1 at the end of this document.

U12 - This is the first age group where players compete in a championship. If there are enough players, more than one team can be entered, but the players who are closest to the upper age limit should be given priority with game time.

U13 - This competition was introduced to give players an additional opportunity for skills development, and the same principles apply as for the U12 age group. Therefore, it is important to focus on the skills for this year. All players should get adequate game time (reflecting their participation and attendance at training).

U14 - U14 players compete in a championship. If there are enough players, more than one team can be entered.

The temptation to focus on winning rather than on the development of the player should be resisted. U14 level is again viewed as developmental with the aim being to give players of all abilities as much game time as possible.



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U15- U15 is again viewed as developmental, however due to the COVID restrictions, in 2021 and 2022 the Féile competition is now played at U15 level (whereas previously would have been played at U14).

For Galway Co. Championship if there are enough players, more than one team can be entered, at present this is not an option for Féile.

All players should be afforded as much game time as possible with factors such as training attendance and commitment being considered.

U16 Players are still developing at this level. Although this is a competitive championship it is important to continue to focus on the development of players and their continued enjoyment of the game is crucial, this will ensure they continue to play and transition into adult camogie. Managers and coaches should be mindful of the pressure and demands on young people of this age. A positive environment would benefit these girls in every way.

U18 This is the first highly competitive championship for club teams. Players aged 18 and over are considered adults and many players may already be involved in the adult panels. It is important that a place is found for every player in this age group regardless of their ability level to ensure their continued participation. It is the club's goal that all players progress to adult camogie and beyond i.e., club officers, coaches etc because of the positive experience they have enjoyed with Athenry Camogie.

AN TREOIR OIFIGIÚIL states the MINIMUM age requirements for club camogie as the following.

'A player

U12 - Be Under 12 and Over 8

U14 - Be Under 14 and Over 10

U16 - Be Under 16 and Over 12

U18 - Be Under 18 and Over 14

Adult - Be Over 15'

However, given the large size of our club and abundance of players at most age groups, **players who are within 1 year of the upper age limit only should make up the panels from U16 down.**

To illustrate this please see below:

To play U16 a player must turn 16 or 15 in the relevant calendar year

To play U15 a player must turn 15 or 14 in the relevant calendar year

To play U14 a player must turn 14 or 13 in the relevant calendar year

To play U13 a player must turn 13 or 12 in the relevant calendar year

To play U12 a player must turn 12 or 11 in the relevant calendar year

To play U11 a player must turn 11 or 10 in the relevant calendar year

To play U10 a player must turn 10 or 9 in the relevant calendar year



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Only if there is a shortage of players should younger players be permitted to join a panel above their age group, (Where Age group means U10, U11, U12 etc). This ensures that the players within their age group get game time, do not feel undermined and would protect the younger players from burnout.

Even if players feel that competitive camogie at adult level is not for them, we envisage creating an environment where they could still play an active role and make a valuable contribution to Athenry Camogie Club.

Athenry Camogie Club Executive

Amended on 19/12/22

Appendix 1 – Go Games Information

Source: gaa.ie - *suíomh oifigiúil CLG (see QR code below)*

What are Go Games?

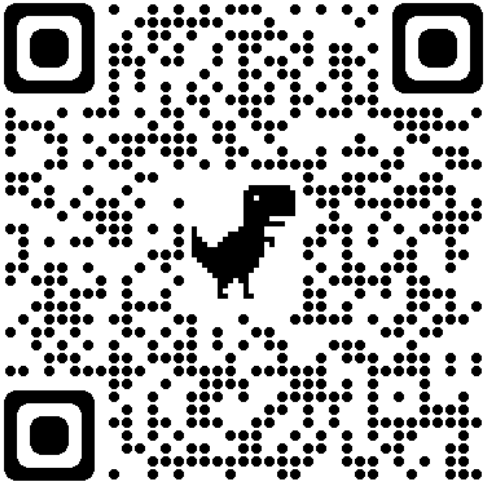
GAA Go Games are Hurling/Camogie and Gaelic Football for children up to and including 11 years of age, where every child gets to play (a Go) in every game, for the full game.



For too long the practice in sport has been to identify and cultivate talented players and elite teams at younger and younger ages. There is a tendency to nurture the perceived best and neglect the rest.

This has contributed to adult training and playing conditions being imposed on young players. Training and competition are geared for outcome and not for the process of development. For children's games, coaches must reassess the balance between the need to win games and cups versus the need to develop players and recognise the importance of fair play; i.e., provide full participation within an environment where participants are encouraged to achieve their full potential.

Children participate in Gaelic games for a number of reasons – to have fun, to play with friends, parental encouragement, etc. Lack of fun, lack of perceived competence and an over-emphasis on competitive outcomes (which usually come from coaches and parents) are major reasons for dropout.



Players can generally learn the basic skills of Football and Hurling/Camogie with relative ease. The better players who practise more often, come on faster than those who only participate in collective coaching sessions.

However, players find it more difficult to develop the ability to make the right decisions – when to pass, whom to pass to, where to run, etc. – in full-sided games. Through small-sided games the aim is to optimise their decision-making and at the same time enhance their technical development.

Recent research conducted at DCU sheds light on the error of imposing traditional competitive models on young players who, during their formative years, are particularly susceptible to dropout. The study looked at the activity patterns and responses of children when playing small-sided games and 15-a-side games. The study found that, when participating in small-sided games, the children worked harder (as measured by heart rate), had more touches on the ball (catches, passes, lifts and scoring attempts), and expressed a greater level of enjoyment and perceived competence as compared with participation in 15-a-side games.

Go Games are national policy of the GAA under to Rule 6.27 of the Official Guide – This Rule states that ‘Games in the Under 11 and younger age groups shall be organised on the Go Games model, as approved by Central Council. [Click here for the national policy.](#) Go Games is also national policy of the LGFA and Camogie Association. The three Associations work closely together to promote and develop Go Games.