

THE FOOTBALL ROUND-UP MAGAZINE



**NEW SEASON. NEW FACES.
NEW OPPORTUNITIES.
SAME REASON WE ARE ALL HERE...
THE GAME!**

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STARTS BEFORE
THE WHISTLE**

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**LIFE
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OFFICIAL SPORTS
RETAIL PARTNER



DDSL Education Partner

The DDSL is delighted to continue working with CJ Fallon as our Education Partner, supporting our young players both on and off the pitch. CJ Fallon proudly sponsored our Kennedy Cup and Gaynor Cup squads and has plans to work with players within our Emerging Talent Programme (ETP), highlighting the importance of keeping on top of their studies while balancing the demands and opportunities that come with football.

Through the partnership, DDSL players can also access a range of educational supports and products at reduced rates, helping make study and learning that little bit easier alongside football. These include Daly Exercise Plus, Leaving Cert Plus, OurClassBook, and OurTeamBook, with offers available across the wider DDSL player community. The partnership reflects our commitment to supporting the overall development of our young players — in football, education and beyond.

THE WORK STARTS BEFORE THE WHISTLE

A Message from DDSL Chairman Niall

There is something special about the beginning of a new football season.

New boots. Freshly cut pitches. New teams taking their first steps. Players meeting back up with their friends. Coaches preparing for that first training session and families getting ready for another season of weekends built around football.

But long before the first whistle sounds, an enormous amount of work has already taken place behind the scenes. Throughout the summer, our staff, fixtures secretaries, administrators and volunteers have been working incredibly hard to prepare for another hugely busy DDSL season.

Fixtures have to be organised. Teams processed. Registrations completed. Queries answered. Referees prepared. New initiatives planned. Workshops organised. Clubs supported.

Much of that work will never be seen on a Saturday or Sunday morning – but without it, the football simply doesn't happen.

I want to take this opportunity to recognise the fantastic people working behind the scenes across the DDSL. We are extremely fortunate to have a dedicated team who care deeply about the league and the experience we provide to our clubs and members.

The same is true within our clubs.

Every committee member, secretary, coach, manager, grounds person, Child Welfare Officer, BDO, volunteer and parent who gives their time plays a part in making grassroots football possible.

As another season begins, there will undoubtedly be challenges along the way. There always are in a league of this size.

But there will also be thousands upon thousands of brilliant football moments.

Goals scored. Saves made. Friendships formed. New coaches finding their feet. Young referees taking charge of their first game. Children putting on their club jersey for the first time.

That is what makes all of the preparation worthwhile.

On behalf of the DDSL board, I would like to thank everyone who has helped prepare for the season ahead and wish every club, coach, volunteer, referee, parent and, most importantly, every player a fantastic season.

Enjoy it. Support one another. And let's make it a season to remember.

**Niall
Chairman, DDSL**

THE BIG NUMBER

In excess of 55,000 Players
Almost 11,000 Coaches
Nearly 1,000 Referees & Junior
Match Officials

*Players preparing to take part in
DDSL football this season.*



REMEMBER WHO WE DO IT FOR

A Message from Director of Football Barry



A new season brings excitement. New teams. New coaches. New challenges. New ambitions.

But before the first ball is kicked, I want to thank everyone involved in the game across our DDSL clubs — coaches, managers, volunteers, secretaries, administrators, referees, grounds people, players and parents. Without the commitment of every single person, over 50,000 children would not have football every week.

And I want everyone involved in the DDSL to remember something very simple:

IT'S THE CHILDREN'S GAME.

For our players, football should be a place where they have fun, learn new skills, make decisions, make mistakes, spend time with their friends and, above all else, enjoy playing the game.

Not every pass will find a teammate. Not every shot will hit the target. Not every decision will be the one we would make from the sideline — and that's okay. Players will win and players will lose. That is how children learn. As adults, one of the greatest gifts we can give young players is the freedom to experience the game for themselves.

Encourage them. Support them. Celebrate their effort. Let them solve problems. And sometimes, simply let them play.

We have a huge programme of Coaching Workshops planned throughout the season. Whether you're taking your first team, have been coaching for years, or simply want a few new ideas, I'd encourage you to come along. Our role is to support coaches, share ideas and help make football better for everyone.

I'll also be getting out to matches and clubs throughout the season, so if you see me around the grounds, come over and say hello.

To all of our coaches, players, referees, volunteers and families — best of luck for the new season.

Let them play. Let them learn. Let them enjoy it.

Barry Ferguson
Director of Football, DDSL

"Our job isn't to make the decisions for them. Our job is to create an environment where they can learn to make those decisions themselves."

LEAGUE UPDATES

PLAYER REGISTRATION AND TRANSFERS

With the season under way, clubs are reminded to check that every player is correctly registered and added to the appropriate panel before taking part in fixtures. Completing registrations accurately and early helps avoid delays and ensures players can get onto the pitch without unnecessary issues.

The player transfer deadline is 23 September. Clubs and families considering a transfer should begin the process as early as possible and allow enough time for all required steps to be completed before the deadline.

3X3 FUN IS COMING BACK

Our popular DDSL 3v3 tournament fun is coming back very soon. These events give children lots of touches, goals, decisions and opportunities to play in a fast, enjoyable environment. Keep an eye on DDSL channels for registration information and make sure your club is ready to get involved.

Date	Event
31 October 2026	DDSL 3x3 Tournament
29 November 2026	DDSL 3x3 Tournament
3 January 2027	DDSL 3x3 Tournament
27 February 2027	DDSL 3x3 Tournament
21 March 2027	DDSL 3x3 Tournament

DDSL HEROES AWARDS

The DDSL Heroes Awards will return later this year, giving clubs another opportunity to recognise the people who make a special contribution to grassroots football. Nominations are expected to open across October and November, with the award recipients announced in December.

Every club has people who go above and beyond: the coach who is always there, the volunteer who keeps everything organised, or the person whose kindness and commitment make the club a better place. Watch this space and get ready to nominate a hero from your club.

FOOTBALL REALLY IS FOR ALL

Everyone Deserves Their Game

For Mick and the DDSL Football For All team, the objective is beautifully simple:

Create opportunities to play football.

The programme continues to grow, with more players and families becoming involved and another fantastic blitz recently bringing the Football For All community together.

Hosted by **Cambridge Football Club**, the event welcomed 6 teams, providing another brilliant day of football, smiles and friendship. Numbers matter because they show the programme is growing.

But sometimes the better measure is what you see around the pitch

.
Children playing.
Families watching.
Volunteers helping.
People belonging.

Mick and his team continue to work tirelessly to create more opportunities, and we are incredibly proud to see Football For All becoming an increasingly important part of the DDSL football community.

BECAUSE FOOTBALL IS BETTER WHEN EVERYONE GETS TO PLAY.

COACH EDUCATION IS HITTING THE ROAD

Coaches Corner

Coming to a Club Near You...

Coach Education doesn't have to mean sitting in a classroom for hours listening to someone tell you there is only one way to coach football.

This season, we're doing things differently.

DDSL Coach Education is going on the road, bringing practical workshops, experienced educators and different perspectives directly into clubs. And there's something for everyone.

Coach Education Is Back

DDSL Coach Education is back, and the response from coaches across the league has been fantastic. Nearly 400 people have already attended our workshops, showing the real appetite that exists within our clubs to learn, share ideas and create the best possible experience for every child.

A major strength of these workshops is that they take place in the coaches' own football environments. Coaches can see practical ideas on the pitch, discuss the challenges they face each week and learn alongside other like-minded volunteers. No two clubs are exactly the same, but there is huge value in coaches coming together, exchanging experiences and bringing new ideas back to their own teams.

A big thank-you to the clubs that have hosted workshops so far: Crumlin United, Granada FC, Leicester Celtic, Swords Celtic, Baldoyle United, St Mochta's FC and Lucan United. Their support has helped make coach education accessible to more people across the league.

If your club is interested in hosting a DDSL Coach Education workshop, please contact clubdevelopment@ddsl.ie.

NEW TO SMALL-SIDED GAMES?

Our SSG workshops will help beginner coaches understand the playing formats and feel confident heading into match day.

COERVER COACHING

Practical ideas from Coerver coaches with a focus on developing players through the ball, skills and decision-making.

GOALKEEPERS – FAULTS & FIXES

Dave Henderson brings his wealth of goalkeeping experience to help coaches understand common goalkeeper challenges and practical ways of helping young keepers develop.

DB SPORTS

DB Sports joins the Coach Education programme, bringing its own experience, perspective and insight into the game.

EFFECTIVE SESSION PLANNING

JJ Glynn looks at how coaches can get more from the time they have with their players – better organisation, more football and less standing around.

YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING TO BE A GOOD COACH.

You just need to keep learning.

[Find all our coach education course at DDSL.IE/Coach.Education]

DDSL COACH EDUCATION

October Workshops

Practical learning for coaches across the league

DATE	WORKSHOP	VENUE
MONDAY 05 OCT	Coerver Coaching Clinics	Blessington FC
TUESDAY 06 OCT	First Touch Workshop	Peamount United FC
WEDNESDAY 07 OCT	DB Sports Coaches Workshop	Leixlip United FC
MONDAY 12 OCT	Coerver Coaching Clinics	Lusk United FC
TUESDAY 13 OCT	First Touch Workshop	Hartstown Huntstown FC
WEDNESDAY 14 OCT	Building an Effective Session Workshop	Glebe North FC
WEDNESDAY 14 OCT	Fault & Fixes GK Workshop	Venue TBC
MONDAY 19 OCT	Coerver Coaching Clinics	Venue TBC
TUESDAY 20 OCT	First Touch Workshop	Cherry Orchard FC
WEDNESDAY 21 OCT	DB Sports Coaches Workshop	St Joseph's Boys FC
TUESDAY 27 OCT	First Touch Workshop	Ashbourne United FC
WEDNESDAY 28 OCT	Building an Effective Session Workshop Fault & Fixes GK Workshop	Drogheda Boys FC Venue TBC

All workshops are free for DDSL coaches

PLACES ARE LIMITED

Book online at DDSL.ie

THE TEAM BEHIND THE LEAGUE

GROWING THE TEAM. IMPROVING THE EXPERIENCE.

The DDSL doesn't stop when the final games of the season are played. If anything, that's when another type of work begins.

The Team Behind the League.

Delivering a new season across the DDSL takes an enormous team effort. Behind the fixtures, programmes, referee appointments, coach education and day-to-day administration are 14 full- and part-time staff, 55 volunteer coaches and 10 volunteer league administrators, all focused on supporting our clubs and delivering for the season ahead.

We would be lost without their time, knowledge and commitment. Much of their work happens quietly behind the scenes, but it is essential to keeping the league moving and ensuring children across Dublin can enjoy their football each weekend. On behalf of everyone involved in the DDSL, thank you to every staff member and volunteer who gives their time to the game.

Ahead of the new season, we have welcomed a number of new faces to the DDSL team across **administration, our student programme with UCD and referee coordination.**

They join an already committed team working across every area of the league.

ADMINISTRATION

Behind every registration, fixture, email, team entry and query is a significant amount of administration.

With the sheer scale of DDSL football, our administration team plays an essential role in keeping the league moving.

The start of a season is one of the busiest periods of the year, and we're delighted to strengthen the team as we continue working to provide clubs with the best possible service.

THE NEXT GENERATION – UCD STUDENTS



We are also delighted to welcome students from UCD into the DDSL environment.

Their involvement provides an opportunity to gain real-world experience within one of the largest underage football leagues in the country, while bringing fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm into our organisation.

REFeree COORDINATION

NO REFEREE. NO GAME.

It really is that simple.

As our referee pathway continues to grow, so does the work required to recruit, educate, appoint and support match officials.

Our new Referee Coordinators will work alongside Edwina and the wider referee team, helping us continue to improve the experience for referees and clubs.

MORE PEOPLE. MORE SUPPORT. ONE DDSL.

We continue to grow our team for one reason: to provide a better experience for our clubs and members.

Welcome aboard!





Club Development Officer **Sean Moore** has spent much of the build-up to the new season working closely with clubs and their Behaviour Development Officers.

But BDO support is only one part of Club Development.

Working alongside Director of Football Barry, the Club Development function exists as a practical support for clubs across the league.

That might mean helping a club develop its coaching environment.

It might be delivering a workshop.

It could be supporting a Director of Football, helping a committee work through a challenge, discussing parent education, looking at player development, or simply having someone at the end of the phone to bounce an idea off.

HOW CAN CLUB DEVELOPMENT HELP?

Coach Education

Practical workshops, resources and support for coaches at different stages of their journey.

BDO Support

Helping clubs build positive match-day environments and giving BDOs the confidence and tools to make a difference.

Directors of Football

Supporting DOFs with structures, coaching, player development and the football environment within their club.

Parents & Spectators

Resources and education around creating positive environments for children.

Committees & Club Development

Support with planning, structures, club development and challenges that arise throughout a season.

Funding & Grants

Helping clubs understand opportunities and pointing them towards useful resources.

And sometimes?

It's just a conversation.

If there's something happening in your club and you're not sure where to start, don't be afraid to reach out.

"Club Development isn't about telling clubs what to do. It's about working alongside them." Sean Moore, Club Development, DDSL

BDOs: MAKING MATCH DAY BETTER

**EVERY CLUB IS DIFFERENT
BUT THE CHALLENGES WE
FACE ON MATCH DAY ARE
OFTEN THE SAME**

Every club is different.

Different colours. Different communities. Different grounds. Different traditions.

But speak to the people working behind the scenes and you quickly realise that many clubs face exactly the same challenges.

That is one of the reasons the DDSL Behaviour Development Officer programme continues to grow.

Ahead of the new season, Sean has been working closely with BDOs across the league through workshops designed around real conversations, real situations and practical ways to improve match day.

The role isn't about standing on a sideline looking for trouble.

It is about being a friendly, approachable presence.

Someone who can have a quiet conversation before a problem becomes a bigger one.

Someone who can remind adults why we're all standing beside that pitch in the first place.

➤ CLUBS BUYING IN

DDSL has recently worked directly with Shelbourne FC and Newlands Castle Park FC, with both clubs embracing the programme and engaging in excellent discussions alongside their BDOs.

More clubs are now coming on board.

And the message is simple:

We can change the environment around children's football — but we have to do it together.



FROM THE BDOS THEMSELVES

LAURA RATCLIFFE — TALLAGHT TOWN AFC

LAURA RATCLIFFE — TALLAGHT TOWN AFC

"Being the BDO for Tallaght Town AFC is a highly rewarding role because it is all about supporting development right here in our own community.

Tallaght is a passionate football area, and our club serves as a vital outlet for hundreds of local families.

The role of the BDO is to ensure match days are a positive experience for everyone involved — most importantly our young players — while offering support to managers, parents and players in keeping sideline behaviour positive.

My role is also to ensure club officials, parents and players uphold our club values and abide by the Code of Conduct.

The recent DDSL workshop was an excellent initiative. Sean made everything clear and practical, ensuring we walked away with real tools to bring straight back to our coaches, parents and volunteers.

Meeting officials from other clubs also showed that we share many of the same challenges.

The workshop gave me the confidence and information to bring those conversations back into Tallaght Town AFC and help ensure we're all on the same page heading into the new season."

WANT TO GET YOUR CLUB INVOLVED?

Speak to your club BDO or contact clubdevelopment@ddsl.ie



WELCOME TO THE NEW ERA

DIGITAL MATCH CARDS ARE COMING

The pen isn't completely dead...

But it might want to start considering retirement.

Digital Match Cards are coming to the DDSL as we continue to modernise how match-day administration works across the league.

It is an important step forward and, like any change, we know coaches and clubs will need support as everyone becomes familiar with the new process.

That's why we are producing simple step-by-step videos and guidance to take coaches through exactly what they need to do.

No 48-page instruction manual.

No degree in computer science required.

Just clear support to help make the transition as straightforward as possible.

WHY DIGITAL?

Less paperwork.

More accurate information.

A simpler process.

And another step towards making the administration around grassroots football easier.

Protecting Children's Information

Moving league processes online is not only about making administration quicker and easier. It also helps ensure that children's information is accessed only by the people who are directly involved in organising and delivering their games. Clear digital roles and permissions give clubs and the league greater control over who can view player data, while helping information to be managed more securely and responsibly.

Keep an eye on DDSL channels and [DDSL.ie](https://www.ddsl.ie) for guides, videos and updates.



WE CAN DO BETTER

Zoe Takes the DDSL Message to Ireland AM

The conversation around sideline behaviour reached a national audience when Zoe represented the DDSL on Ireland AM.

The reason for the appearance wasn't something we want to celebrate.
Disciplinary incidents within children's football remain a serious concern.
Behind every disciplinary report is a children's match that should have been about football.

A game.
A Saturday or Sunday morning.
Children playing with their friends.

Instead, too often, the behaviour of adults becomes the story.

THAT HAS TO CHANGE.

The beginning of a new season gives all of us an opportunity to reset.

Coaches.
Parents.
Spectators.
Club officials.
Everyone.

We don't expect people to agree with every decision.
We don't expect every match to be completely emotionless.
Football matters to people. That's part of why we love it.
But passion and poor behaviour are not the same thing.

THIS SEASON, LET'S BE BETTER.

**LET THE COACHES COACH.
LET THE REFEREES REFEREE.
LET THE PLAYERS MAKE DECISIONS.
AND LET CHILDREN'S
FOOTBALL BELONG TO CHILDREN.**



IT'S MY GAME!

New Season. Same Message.

Thousands of children will take to pitches across Dublin this season.

They'll score brilliant goals.
They'll miss easy ones.
They'll make unbelievable saves.
They'll give the ball away.
They'll make great decisions.

And they'll make some decisions that leave every adult on the sideline scratching their head.

That's football.

More importantly, that's learning.

Q102 and DDSL's It's My Game campaign returns this season with a message that remains as important as ever.

LET THE CHILDREN PLAY.

Positive support from the sideline can make a child's football experience.
Constant instructions can completely change it.

When a player receives the ball and hears five different adults shouting five different instructions, are we helping them make a decision?

Or are we making it for them?

Children need opportunities to look up, solve problems, try something, get it wrong and try again.

That's development.

And when it comes to referees, the message is equally simple.
A referee will make decisions you agree with.
A referee will make decisions you don't.
Shouting abuse won't change the decision.
It might, however, change a child's experience of the game.

AND NOW – IT'S MY GIRLS' GAME

This season we are also delighted to expand the message with It's My Girls' Game.

Girls' football continues to grow, and with that growth comes an opportunity to make sure every girl entering our game experiences football for what it should be:

Fun. Friendship. Learning. Belonging. That's Football.

Different campaign.

Same fundamental message.

IT'S THEIR GAME. LET THEM PLAY IT.

DUBLIN'S
Q102



READY FOR 5V5. READY FOR 7V7.

Taking Some of the Stress Out of That First Match

First game as a coach.
The kids are excited.
Parents are arriving.
Someone has forgotten their boots.
You're trying to remember the retreat line.
And somebody has just asked you a rule you've never heard of.

Welcome to grassroots coaching!

Our 5v5 and 7v7 Player Development Plan workshops have been designed to make those first steps a little easier.

Delivered online and in person, the workshops give coaches an in-depth understanding of the playing formats, answer the questions that inevitably arise and provide a practical toolkit to take into match day.

The response has been fantastic, with coaches bringing plenty of questions and discussions to the sessions.

Ultimately, understanding the format isn't just about knowing the rules.

It gives coaches confidence.

And a confident, relaxed coach can help create a much better environment for young players.

30 DAYS. 30 TIPS.

You may also have spotted our 30 Tips campaign across DDSL social media during August.

Players. Coaches. Parents. Referees. Volunteers.

We covered everything from match-day preparation and training ideas to respect, sideline behaviour and simple football tips for young players.

There were even a few pointers for youngsters dreaming of following former DDSL players such as Katie McCabe and Troy Parrott.

Did you miss a few?

Head back through our social channels and have a look.

There might just be something useful waiting for you.



**PRACTICAL ADVICE TO HELP COACHES FEEL PREPARED AND YOUNG
PLAYERS THRIVE.**

43 TEAMS. A NEW HOME. ONE EXCITING SEASON AHEAD.



There is plenty happening at St Mochta's FC.

Actually, "plenty" might be underselling it.

The club begins the new season with a record 43 teams – 38 boys' teams and five girls' teams – while preparing to move into major new facilities in late September.

A new girls' team joins the club this season, while three boys' teams graduating from the club's U7 post-Christmas programme will make the move into DDSL U8 football.

For St Mochta's, providing football across different levels remains central to the club's identity.

From Premier football through the divisions, the aim is to create somewhere players of different abilities can play, develop and enjoy the game.

A NEW HOME

Late September will mark a landmark moment in the club's history.

The new development includes a full-size all-weather pitch, dedicated 9v9 Astro, full-size grass pitches, modern changing facilities, fully equipped gym and a new two-storey clubhouse.

Facilities that won't just serve today's players – but generations still to come.

€20,000 AND A LOT OF BURGERS...

The club's annual Mini Leagues once again proved a huge success.

Registrations, the barbecue, raffle and other activities helped raise almost €20,000, supported by club members, families, volunteers, sponsors and the wider community.

That's a lot of football.

And presumably quite a few burgers.

DEVELOPING MORE THAN PLAYERS

Several young St Mochta's players completed the DDSL Junior Match Official course during the summer and are now preparing to referee U10 and U11 football.

Players from the club's Premier boys' and girls' teams have also earned selection for the upcoming DDSL Emerging Talent Programme.

Meanwhile, three weeks of summer camps provided football for children from the club and surrounding community, supported by the club's own lead and young coaches.



And for the next generation?

The Little Saints Academy returns for boys and girls aged four to seven.

A first step into football.

Who knows where that first step might lead?



EMERGING TALENT PROGRAMME RETURNS



The DDSL Emerging Talent Programme (ETP) is back, with players once again returning to Abbottstown for the new season. The programme provides talented young players from across the league with an opportunity to come together, develop their game and enjoy a positive football experience alongside players from different clubs.

At the heart of the ETP is a simple philosophy: the player and their experience come first. While we want to challenge players and help them develop technically, their time with the DDSL should be about much more than football. We want players to work hard, enjoy themselves, make new friends, learn to take responsibility for their own development and leave every session looking forward to coming back.

That philosophy continues right through our foundations programme and into the Kennedy Cup and Gaynor Cup squads. Success on the pitch is something everyone strives for, but how we develop our players and the memories they take from their experience with the DDSL are just as important.

A Word from Gaynor Cup Head Coach Kay McKenna

Kay McKenna, a UEFA A Licence coach with 30 years of coaching experience, returns for her third year as Head Coach of the DDSL Gaynor Cup Squad.

"Working with the DDSL has been a very enjoyable experience for me, which is why I'm honoured, privileged and excited to be back for another year.

The DDSL are striving to give every player that comes to Abbottstown, whether for an ETP session or an FFP session, a really positive and enjoyable experience. That is no different for the Kennedy & Gaynor Cup squad. From our first interaction with a player to our last, we hope that the player will say they had fun, they worked hard, they learned a lot and they made new friends.

Kay's role as Head Coach is not to win the Gaynor Cup, although every team would love to win it. "My role is to encourage every player to be the best they can be, both on and off the pitch."

"As a staff, we focus on the fun

elements of training while encouraging discipline, hard work, team spirit and connections. We strive for individual technical development on the pitch while asking players to take ownership and responsibility for their personal development away from the pitch, picking up some important life skills along the way."

"I'm very proud to be a small part of a player's football journey, but I take the most pride from meeting players, parents or coaches weeks or years later and hearing them talk about how much they loved their time with us, how it helped them on their journey, how much they learned, how it was the best week of their life and, most importantly, how much fun they had."

Kay sums up her approach with a quote from legendary basketball coach Pat Summitt: "Winning is fun. But winning is not the point. Wanting to win is the point. Never letting up is the point. Never being satisfied with what you have achieved is the point."

FROM DDSL TO LA LIGA



TROY'S SPANISH ADVENTURE

The Dublin striker has taken another huge step in his career, joining Spanish giants Real Betis after a remarkable spell in the Netherlands.

Troy Parrott has added another unforgettable chapter to his journey from DDSL football to the highest level of the game. The Republic of Ireland striker scored the winning goal against Real Madrid, one of the biggest clubs in world football, before finding the net again with the winner on his Champions League debut.

For every young player in the DDSL, Troy's story is a reminder of where hard work, resilience and belief can lead. From learning the game on Dublin pitches to delivering decisive moments against the world's top clubs, he continues to show that the journey can begin in grassroots football and reach the biggest stage of all.

It's a long way from the Dublin pitches where the journey started.

And that's exactly why his story should inspire young DDSL players.

Careers don't always travel in straight lines.

There will be setbacks.

Different teams.

Difficult periods.

Moments where things don't quite happen as quickly as you'd hoped.

Keep working.

Keep learning.

Keep enjoying football.

Because you never quite know where the game might take you.

For Troy, the next stop is Spain.

And everyone across the DDSL football community will be watching proudly.

FROM DUBLIN TO SEVILLE.

Buena suerte, Troy!

Keep enjoying football.

Because you never quite know where the game might take you.

For Troy, the next stop is Spain.

And everyone across the DDSL football community will be watching proudly.

FROM DUBLIN TO SEVILLE.

Buena suerte, Troy!

KATIE TAYLOR - DREAM TO DREAM

Who says a girls from the DDSL cannot reach the world stage? Before Katie Taylor became an Olympic champion and one of the greatest sportswomen of her generation, she played football with boys for Ballyfermot United in the DDSL.

Katie went on to represent the Republic of Ireland in international football before making sporting history in the boxing ring. Her journey is a powerful reminder to every girl in our league that dreams do not have to fit inside one box. Talent, courage, hard work and belief can take you anywhere.

For the next generation of DDSL girls, Katie's message is simple: dream big, dare to dream, and never let anyone else decide how far you can go.



310 WHISTLES READY TO GO

MEET THE NEXT GENERATION OF MATCH OFFICIALS.

310.

That's the number of Junior Match Officials expected to be part of the programme this season.

And every one represents something important for the future of our game.

The JMO programme gives young people an opportunity to experience football from a completely different perspective while developing confidence, communication, decision-making and leadership skills.

Last season, our young officials were fantastic.

Were they perfect?

Of course not.

Neither are Premier League referees.

Neither are coaches.

Neither are players.

That's the point.

They're learning too.

Clubs have played a major part in the programme, with many identifying and nominating young people who they believe could thrive as JMOs.

This season, we want that pathway to grow again.

WHY BECOME A JMO?

Learn to make decisions.

Build confidence.

Develop communication skills.

Stay involved in football.

See the game differently.

And maybe begin a refereeing journey that goes much further.

WANT TO BECOME A JMO

Would you like to become a Junior Match Official and take your first steps into refereeing? Contact your club to find out more and register your interest. Becoming a JMO is a great way to learn the Laws of the Game, build confidence, develop communication skills and support football in your local community.

Remember: the young referee standing in the middle is developing too. Give them the same patience we give our young players.

BE A LEADER IN THE DDSL!

BORN TO LEAD

- Become a Junior Match Official for DDSL games
- Unique bespoke Kit for Junior Leader Academy
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REGISTER AT THE LINK BELOW

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KEEP YOUR LOVE OF THE GAME | REFEREE FOR YOUR CLUB | EARN SOME POCKET MONEY

DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE



ANTHONY TAYLOR

An Evening with Anthony Taylor

When you've refereed Premier League matches, FA Cup finals, European finals, Champions League games and major international tournaments, you have probably experienced a little bit of pressure.

So when Anthony Taylor joined DDSL referees and coaches for a special workshop, there was plenty to talk about.

The evening provided a fascinating insight into life at the highest level of refereeing.

But perhaps some of the most valuable lessons weren't actually about laws of the game.

They were about decision-making. Communication. Resilience.

Handling pressure. Getting something wrong and moving on.

Skills that matter on a football pitch. And skills that matter away from one too.

Anthony spoke openly about his career and experiences, giving those in attendance a rare opportunity to learn from someone who has operated at the very highest level of the game.

He also reinforced something particularly important to the DDSL:

Grassroots football matters.

Every elite referee started somewhere.

Every international player started somewhere.

Every coach started somewhere. We were extremely fortunate

to welcome Anthony and thank him for giving his time, experience and insight to our football community.

An unbelievable evening — and one we won't forget anytime soon.



PARTNERS DRIVING THE GAME FORWARD

YOU MIGHT SPOT US ON THE ROAD...

There's something new travelling around DDSL grounds this season.

Actually, two things.

We are delighted to welcome **Hyundai** as a DDSL partner, with two new **Hyundai KONA** vehicles joining the league.

You'll see them travelling to matches, club visits, workshops, school programmes and DDSL events throughout the season.

And while a partnership involving cars naturally looks good in a photograph, what matters most is what those cars allow us to do.

Get out to clubs.

Get into communities.

Deliver programmes.

Support our members.

Our work increasingly takes the DDSL team across Dublin every week, and this partnership provides practical support that helps us be where the football is happening.

A huge thank you to Hyundai for coming on board and supporting the **DDSL**.

If you spot the cars at your club this season, come over and say hello.





**LIFE
STYLE
SPORTS**



OFFICIAL SPORTS
RETAIL PARTNER

**DDSL MEMBERS
GET 12.5%
DISCOUNT
ON FOOTBALL GEAR AT
LIFESTYLESPORTS.COM
WHEN YOU REGISTER**



www.lifestylesports.com/ie/register



ALMOST 40,000 AND COUNTING

Our partnership with Lifestyle Sports continues to provide genuine benefits directly to the DDSL football community.

Almost 40,000 people have already registered their Lifestyle Sports account through the DDSL programme.

Members can access a 12.5% discount, alongside additional benefits and opportunities throughout the season.

Already registered?

Brilliant.

Haven't done it yet?

What are you waiting for?

With thousands of DDSL families benefiting, the partnership is another example of how working with the right organisations can create real value for our football community.

DON'T MISS OUT.

SHOP IN-STORE & [ONLINE](#)

SOMETIMES FOOTBALL GIVES YOU A MOMENT YOU'LL NEVER FORGET

WHEN DAN MET HIS HERO

Workshops are about education.

Football is about much more.

During Anthony Taylor's visit to the DDSL, one particularly special meeting took place.

Dan loves refereeing.

And one of the people he had always dreamed of meeting was Anthony Taylor.

That dream came true.

Dan had the opportunity to meet Anthony, spend time chatting with him and share their love of refereeing.

For Dan, it was a moment he had been looking forward to.

For everyone watching, it was a reminder of the extraordinary ability football has to connect people.

Anthony couldn't have been more generous with his time, chatting with Dan and making sure the moment was every bit as special as it deserved to be.

There are results we'll forget.

Scores we'll struggle to remember.

League tables that eventually disappear.

And then there are football moments that stay with us.

This was one of them.

ONE GAME. MILLIONS OF MEMORIES.



BORN TO GROW

42 Schools. Thousands of Children. One Goal.

Sometimes growing football starts with a football.

A school yard.

And a child being given the opportunity to play.

Following a successful pilot with Fingal County Council in Dublin 15 schools last year, the DDSL Born to Grow programme is expanding significantly.

This season, Dublin City Council joins the programme, helping us bring Born to Grow into **42 schools across Dublin.**

The programme will primarily target children from Junior Infants through to Second Class, delivering fun, age-appropriate football experiences within their school.

For some, it might be their first organised football session.

And that's exactly the point.



SCHOOL



FOOTBALL



COMMUNITY



Born to Grow isn't designed to end when the school session finishes.

We want to create a bridge.

- ✓ Children enjoy football in school.
- ✓ They discover their local DDSL club.
- ✓ And hopefully, they take their next step into football within their own community.

SUPPORTING THE CLUBS TOO

We're not just introducing children to football.

As part of the programme, we will also work with local clubs and coaches, providing education around how to deliver enjoyable academy sessions for young players.

- More confident coaches.**
- Better environments.**
- More children enjoying football.**
- Stronger connections between schools and local clubs.**

THAT'S HOW WE GROW THE GAME.

READY?

A fixture list is just a list of games.
A pitch is just grass and white lines.
A football is just a ball.

Until the children arrive.

Then it becomes something completely different.
It becomes the place they see their friends.
The place they score their first goal.
The place they make mistakes.
The place they learn.
The place they belong.

Across Dublin, another DDSL season is about to begin.



Thousands of players.



Thousands of volunteers.



Hundreds of referees.



Clubs. Coaches. Families. Partners. Communities.

- ✓ All playing their part.
- ✓ We've done the preparation.
- ✓ The clubs are ready.
- ✓ The coaches are ready.
- ✓ The referees are ready.
- ✓ And we know the players are definitely ready.



WE GO AGAIN. HAVE A BRILLIANT SEASON.

DDSL


Your Game. Your League.



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DDSL INTOUCH

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE DUBLIN AND DISTRICT SCHOOLBOYS' / GIRLS' LEAGUE

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