**School:**

Convent of Mercy Roscommon

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**Entrance Title:**

Camogie needs more attention to increase retention!

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***Introduction Idea***

The aim of our project is to make Camogie more recognised in Ireland and around the World and to lower the amount of players dropping out.

To try and make this issue happen first we will outline the obstacles that hinder the promotion and development of camogie.

We will then propose solutions to promote and develop camogie which will increase retention of players overall.

Camogie today isn't noticed as much as it should be for the highly skilled sport it is and for all the hard work, dedication and time put into it by our amazing players and volunteers.

We are from Roscommon Town and we feel that Camogie is overlooked as a competitive sport throughout the county compared to other sports such as Mens Football, Hurling and LGFA.

We feel that action needs to be taken to reverse this situation and to promote and keep more players involved in this exceptional game.

In Roscommon we only have a minimum of seven clubs and most are finding it difficult to continuously field teams in all age groups and facilitate training sessions.

We as players observe that girls start to walk away in particular at our age group U16 because of not being able to make time for themselves due to the pressure of school, homework and exams.

Camogie generally requires a high level of fitness and skill, thus requiring a lot of dedication which often goes unrecognised and unappreciated which leads to some girls giving up.

One of our main ideas is to have more camogie matches on National Television i.e The Sunday Game.

Our other main idea is to have Camogie as a core part of Physical Education in Primary and Secondary Schools.

Finally we feel Camogie should have more National Club Competitions for all age groups, such as Feile.

***Methods that could be used to put your idea into practice***

**National club competitions**

For one of our solutions we propose the setting of some national club competitions. We are aware of some already established National Club Competitions ie; Feile but in reality these competitions only cater for the top teams. This inevitably leads to the majority of teams having little or no success throughout the various seasons. In Roscommon we see girls starting to walk away at u16 or minor. We think this happens because they aren’t getting played and also because the team that they play for is never really going to compete or even win. Even our own competitions are generally one sided at different age groups which does not help the players confidence when playing camogie. So we thought if the Camogie introduced a National Club Competition that went from age groups u14 to Minor and gradeded the various teams so that they participants competed with teams of equal ability. This would mean less girls would leave camogie because everyone is getting games, the games would be competitive and there would be a bigger chance of success. If this works we believe that this will greatly increase interest and participation in Camogie. Once girls are getting enjoyment from participation this will have a positive impact in girls general health and wellbeing.

Sport is so important for teenagers, especially for their mental health which we will talk more about.

**Social media/ Sunday Game**

For our second idea we would like to see more Inter county camogie matches televised on channels like RTE 2. We would like to see more games analysed and analysed in more detail first on the Sunday Game to keep people up to date of what is happening and to get more following and interest in the matches.

This week we noticed that in the sports page of our local paper The Roscommon Herald the Roscommon Junior camogie team got two full pages of coverage in the paper due to both our hurling and mens football teams being out of their respective competitions, if these teams were still in there competitions the camogie team would not have got near as much coverage. Games also need to be promoted more throughout different social media like Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

**Physical Education/Mental Health**

Our final topic we will speak about is how beneficial camogie is for girls mental health and how this sport should be enhanced in physical education for primary and secondary students. Girls particularly at the age of 15/16 drop out of this sport especially due to a high level of skill and lack of practice. By making this sport a core section of Physical Education this could keep girls interested in this sport. Many sports are core parts in Physical Education for example tennis, handball, soccer etc and camogie has never been included in this. If camogie was introduced as a core segment of PE for secondary school girls it could keep girls interest in the sport which could lead to less girls dropping out. If camogie was introduced to primary school kids they might discover a fondness for camogie at a young age and develop their skill. As girls who have played camogie since under eights we can assure camogie boosts your mental health in every way. Camogie keeps fitness levels up, brain reflexes constantly get worked and making new friends is a huge benefit with training with a club.

***What do we hope to achieve***

With the methods we have suggested we would hope to achieve that the number of girls playing camogie would increase and not as many girls would give up this fantastic sport.

We would also hope to have more leaders in the Camogie Association and people who would not be afraid to speak for the players and people who put so much work time and dedication into the players and the sport itself.

As we mentioned in the above we would hope that camogie would become more of a core subject in Physical Education as it would boost interest, improve mental health and keep skill up.

We hope you take in some of our ideas and put them into practise.