

## CRICKET LEINSTER WOMEN'S COMMITTEE REPORT 2021

Despite a second COVID affected season, 2021 saw another busy programme of matches take place. Cricket started earlier in 2021 than in 2020 allowing for a more comprehensive programme of league and cup matches, including the reintroduction of the Pilkington Plate 50 over competition. The significant work done by the clubs in staging matches and fielding teams is commendable and resulted in a highly enjoyable season.

The 2021 summer saw the reintroduction of a number of teams and, probably more significantly, the introduction of a new team from Terenure that meant the number of clubs taking part in 20 over leagues was boosted to 28 for the first time in many years. This helped the province move to four full divisions, each with their own cup, plus the Pilkington Plate competition.

Women's Cricket in Leinster is indebted to the support of Sprint Coatings Limited. Alan and Michelle Maginnis continue to support the game brilliantly, allowing for investment in the growth and development of Women's & Girls' cricket across Leinster. In particular, Michelle is well practiced at handing out trophies and everyone in the game thanks them for their support.

The Division 1 title was retained by Leinster CC, with a consistent performance across all their matches. Division 2 was highly contested, with Rush CC coming out as victors. That club's success continued with their 2<sup>nd</sup> XI winning Division 3 and Clontarf 3<sup>rd</sup> XI were worthy winners of Division 4.

The Senior Cup was won by Pembroke CC (who went on to win the inaugural All Ireland T20 Cup). The Junior Cup was taken by North Kildare. Pembroke 2<sup>nd</sup> XI won a captivating Minor Cup final against Railway Union and the new *Stella Downes Cup* for Division 4 was won by Clontarf 3<sup>rd</sup> XI – an impressive league and cup double for the newly formed team.

Eight teams in two groups of four took part in the Pilkington Plate. The teams who finished top of the two groups – Merrion and Leinster – played in the final which was fittingly the showpiece end to women's competitions. Another well contested final saw Merrion CC the victors. This was one of many matches streamed from Sydney Parade by Cricket Leinster and Pembroke CC and we thank them for giving the women's game the profile it deserves.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge the assistance of the Competition Administrator Michael Cotter in administering results, scorecards, player registrations and much more.

The work of the Cricket Leinster Women's & Girls development officer is clear and shows significant benefits to the game. The introduction of programmes to attract new people to the game (Simply Social) and keep others interested (HBL) is more visible but no less important than the continuing support and encouragement that Isobel offers to all clubs in Cricket Leinster. There is no doubt that her work will continue to see the number of Cricket Leinster clubs with women's cricket increase and she deserves the praise of all our member clubs for this work.

It was particularly pleasing to see the return this year of the HBL after it wasn't possible to hold it in 2020 and I'd like to extend a huge thank you to Sue and Rob O'Connor for their work in running it again this year.

We also saw a return in 2021 of interprovincial cricket with Leinster U13, U15, U17 and U19 teams playing against the NCU and the NWCU. Representative cricket is a key stepping stone for girls and women on their cricket journey and it's great to see this level of cricket once again being played on the island of Ireland. A big thank you goes to Naomi Scott-Hayward for her work on an administrative level in getting these games played as well as training for all of the Leinster squads.

The Women's Committee worked well this year, all members contributed in meaningful ways and I thank them for their service on the committee. And finally, I thank our member clubs for being diligent and hardworking supporters of the women's and girls' game in Leinster and I look forward to seeing the game continue to grow in 2022 and beyond.

Siobhan McBennett  
Chair, Women's Committee