



# **WOMEN'S O35 EZ LIVING PREMIER CUP FINAL**

**SATURDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025, 17:00  
EAMONN DEACY PARK**



# **HISTORIC NIGHT FOR WOMEN'S OVER-35S FOOTBALL IN GALWAY**

*Colemanstown United v Kiltullagh – GFA Women's O35 Cup Final, EDP*

**Sponsored by EZ Living**

Tonight marks a truly special occasion in the history of the Galway & District League (GFA), as we host the **first ever Women's Over-35 Cup Final** under the floodlights at Eamonn Deacy Park – proudly **sponsored by EZ Living**.

Since 2014, the GFA has organised Over-35s football for men, creating a vibrant and competitive scene across the region. The natural next step was to extend this opportunity to women, and tonight is the result of years of growing interest, community spirit, and hard work behind the scenes.

Colemanstown United and Kiltullagh, two clubs with strong traditions and passionate supporters, lead the way as the first finalists in what we hope becomes a cornerstone of our footballing calendar. Their commitment to this new chapter of the game is both inspirational and historic.

The GFA Over-35s initiative isn't just about competition – it's about keeping people involved in the game for longer, building friendships, staying active, and fostering a strong sense of community.



This women's competition shows exactly what football can offer at every stage of life.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to **EZ Living** for their generous support of this new competition. Their commitment to community and sport has helped make this occasion possible.

“Galway has always led the way in girls' football, and now we're making history again with Ireland's first ever Over-35, 11-a-side league! A proud milestone for our county, and a shining example of how women's football keeps breaking barriers. To both teams, their supporters, and all those who have helped get this competition off the ground – thank you. And to the young girls watching on tonight – remember, football will always have a place for you.” said Kevin O'Neill, Chair of the Galway FA.

Best of luck to Colemanstown United and Kiltullagh in what promises to be a thrilling and memorable final.

**Martin Hughes, Galway FA – Proud to Support Football for All Ages**

**With thanks to our sponsor: EZ Living**





# HISTORY OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

Kiltullagh Pioneers AFC was founded in 1979 but it was not until the Summer of 1992 that a Womens team was entered in the Galway leagues. The first season brought some success with the team been promoted to the Premier division for the 1993 season. The team played at Premier level in the years 1993 to 1997. Playing in the leagues at that time involved a lot of travel as teams from Athlone and Westport were part of the Galway leagues. Players such as Joan Whiriskey, Caitriona Lawless and Orla Lawless were regulars on the Galway teams which played and indeed won the Bracken Cup which was the Irish inter leagues competition. Orla Lawless won an Irish U21 cap v Australia in 1992. Eventually the team disbanded as numbers fell away.

## Galway and District Ladies' Soccer League

### Division One

Weststar .....  
Mount Gable Celtic  
Kiltoom Cam .....  
Ashe Rovers .....

### Division Two

Kiltulla .....  
Carraroe .....  
Bank of Ireland .....  
Puritan Bennett .....  
Trinity Girls .....  
Bard .....



Kiltullagh Pioneers' first Women's team



After a gap of many years, a Women's team was reformed in August 2020, and a team was entered in the Galway and District Ladies League for the 2020/2021 season. An inexperienced but very enthusiastic squad was assembled, and on Thursday, 21st August, a Kiltullagh Women's team returned to action. The game was a challenge game away to Colmanstown and ended in a 4-2 loss, with Hazel Bichard scoring the first goal for the reformed Kiltullagh Women's.

The Women's team played their first league match on Sunday, Oct 4th, away to Dunmore, the game ended in a 4-1 loss with Rebecca Cannon scoring Kiltullagh's goal. However, due to COVID restrictions, the 2020/21 season was halted and only resumed in the summer of 2021.



Senior Squad 2020/2021- First match

Over the following seasons, the team went from strength to strength, and although results were slow to come, progress was being made. Finally, some silverware arrived with a win in the Women's Shield final in May 2024.



A Teagan Cannon goal deep into injury time in a close game away to Oughterard was a deserved reward for several seasons' work and commitment. Additionally, a number of younger players from Kiltullagh's underage teams were now starting to make their way to the Women's squad, which is a great reflection on all the work being done with underage girls' football in the club.



Women's Shield winners 2023/2024

The following season of 2024/2025 was the most successful season since the Women's team was revived, with a strong second place finish in the Women's Championship and promotion to the Ladies Premier division for the 2025/2026 season.



Senior Squad 2024/2025



The summer of 2025 saw Galway FA introduce a Women's O35 competition, and it has proved to be very popular in Kiltullagh. A squad of 33 players, ranging from experienced players to those who had never played football before the season started, finished second in the table and qualified for this evening's final.



O35s team 2025



# HISTORY OF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL

When Colemanstown United was founded in 1982, there was only one team in town... our junior men's side. It wasn't long though before the ladies wanted a kick about too, and by the mid to late 1980s, a makeshift women's team was assembled for an inter-firms league. To say we didn't feature very well in that competition would be putting it kindly, but it was great fun, plenty of craic, and in hindsight may well have lit the first spark for women's football in the club.

It took until 1997 when Ladies' football really reappeared in Colemanstown colours. Back then, there was no underage structure; just the adults. In 1997, we beat Athenry in our final league game to capture the Division 1 League title under the management of Andy Concannon & Gerry Connor. Captain Chris Fleming (Quirke) & Catherine Burke (Curtin) were on the mark as we beat Athenry 2-0.



Colemanstown United's first Women's team



Then in the 2000/01 season, under the management of Liam Mullins & Paul Moran, our ladies made history by winning the Division 1 league and Cup double & to top it off, we played on the hallowed turf of Terryland Park – a rare treat for a rural club. That day, Emer Finn (O'Brien) & Mary Flannery (Mellody) found the net & Catherine Burke (Curtin) helped herself to a brace as we beat Galway Rovers in the Cup Final. Another fine win over the same opposition earned us the League title with second half goals from Catherine Burke (Curtin), who claimed a brace & Patricia Burke (Sullivan).

What followed were weeks of celebration and many unforgettable nights. The sort of nights where the cup was never too far away & the stories got better with each retelling. The following season (2001/02), we braved the Premier League, taking on the city's big guns, and even managed to win the Premier League Cup. But soon, the reality of life at the top hit hard. After a year or two, we got hockeyed in more than a few games, and naturally, interest began to wane. Still, those seasons weren't without their rewards; not least because a few romances blossomed during that time. Some of those who couldn't score on the pitch clearly made up for it off it... with a handful of weddings that can be traced back to those Premier League days! Sadly, the team itself disbanded after a few tough years, but the love stories still live on.



2000/01 League & Cup Double winners



2001 in jubilant mood after winning the cup



In the 2003/ 2004 season, the club trialled its first underage girls team at U13 level. The young side under the management of Steve Jackson & Noreen Parker impressed in their debut campaign, reaching the Cup final where they narrowly lost to Salthill Devon on penalties. Unfortunately, the team disbanded after just one season due to a lack of available coaching resources, but their efforts marked an important step in the development of girls' football in the club.

Fast forward to 2013/14 and Colemanstown ladies dusted off the boots again. Under the guidance of Kara Mullins, who was fresh home from her US soccer scholarship in Slippery Rock University, Pennsylvania & Conor Jackson, we won the Division 1 title and were Cup runners-up in our very first year back. In 2014, we went one better, claiming both the League Cup and Premier League titles. That Cup Final in Tuam against Shiven Rovers is still remembered: 2-2 after extra time, with goals from Anna Grant and Shauna Ward, before we held our nerve in a nail-biting penalty shootout.



2013 League Winners & Cup runners up





2014 Division 1 winners

After another short break (Colemanstown ladies were never ones to do things the easy way!), the team reformed in 2016 with player/manager Kara Mullins at the helm. That season brought another League and Cup double, with captain Tessa Mullins lifting the silverware after a 2-1 extra-time win in the Cup against Corrib Rangers. Goals from Grainne Barrett and Kara herself sealed the victory, and remarkably, the team only conceded two goals all season.



Double Winners 2016

Once again, the ladies took another break (our stop-start history could nearly rival a Galway city traffic jam by this stage). By 2018/19, two trailblazers; Niamh Kennedy (RIP) and Ella Carroll, lined out with the U12 boys' team, helping them to a league title. Recognising that the future for our ladies lay in underage development, the club began to build a girls' structure in 2019/2020. This coincided with the 20x20 movement, which aimed to increase visibility and participation in women's sport by 20%. Locally, this was spearheaded by Laura Parker, Zoe Kennedy and Tara Roberts, supported by Robbie Parker's Female Participation Strategy and FAI initiatives like Soccer Sisters, UEFA Disney Playmakers and GLOW Football, amongst others.

The results speak for themselves: by the end of the 2024/25 season, Colemanstown United boasted 138 registered female players alongside 245 males – a remarkable shift from where we began.

And so we arrive at the present day and now the latest chapter..... The Over-35 Ladies squad of 2025.... Many of these women were part of those golden eras in the early 2000s and mid-2010s, and they returned hungrier than ever when Gerry Flannery answered the call to manage. With 29 players signed, we had enough to fill a bus to every game; though not enough jerseys to kit them out. The solution? The ladies went shopping and bought their own – jerseys, drill tops, the works. Commitment at its finest!

On the pitch, they proved just as determined. They won all but two of their league games (lost 1-0 to this evening's opposition Kiltullagh & 3-1 to Knocknacarra) they marched to a semi-final showdown against the mighty Knocknacarra in Cappagh Park.



In what turned into a 6-5 goal-fest, the green and white came out on top thanks to strikes from Catherine Burke (Curtin), Kara Mullins, Shauna Ward, Deirdre Finn (O'Grady) & a brace from Alicia Flannery (Hynes), while goalkeeper Ruth Dempsey pulled off heroics between the posts.



O35s team 2025

That victory has brought the ladies here this evening to Eamonn Deacy Park for another historic final.... Whatever happens, one thing is certain: Colemanstown Women's Football has come a long way from that makeshift team of the 80's. The craic, the passion, the trophies, the pints and even the love stories – they're all part of our success story... and as always, we'll paint the place green and white!

And finally, given this is the first year Galway FA have run an Over-35 Women's League; the first of its kind in the country; we commend them on the successful running of this inaugural competition. Let's hope Colemanstown United make it into the history books this evening! A special word of thanks to Frank & Bernie Burke of Burke's Bar, Colemanstown, who not only kept the glasses full but also gave us the grounds on which our club was built; their generosity was a real game changer. Also, thanks to Adrian & Michelle Burke of Porter Cooling Services, whose support over the last decade has kept the club running as cool as their name suggests!



# COLEMANSTOWN UNITED TEAM



1. Ruth Dempsey



2. Alicia Hynes



3. Lorraine McGann



4. Patricia Sullivan



5. Eleanor Morrissey



6. Shelly Finnerty



7. Orla McCaffrey



8. Michelle Harrison



9. Helen Keane





10. Olivia Broderick



11. Nicola Finn



12. Jacinta Brett



13. Deirdre O Grady



14. Ann-Marie Walsh



15. Marian Wilson



16. Kara Mullins



17. Mary Rohan



18. Emer O'Brien





19. Anita Murphy



20. Shauna Ward



21. Sinead Kavanagh



22. Sandra Schwitalla



23. Aoife Cummins



24. Rita Burke



25. Louise Lally



26. Karen Dunne



27. Catherine Curtin





28. Marie Ryan



29. Sandra King



Gerry Flannery

# KILTULLAGH PIONEERS TEAM

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Leanne Cannon**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Susan Cavanagh**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Orla Creaven**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Monica Daly**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Colette Deely**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Sandra Dillon**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Yvonne Earls**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Geraldine Evers**

KILTULLAGH PIONEERS



**Michelle Fergus**



**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Jenny Fleming**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Ruth Garrett**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Mary Gilbert**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Lorraine Holland**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Paula Hynes**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Brenda Kelly**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Cathy Kyne**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Orla Lawless**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Julie Lewis**



**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Una Mannion**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Claire Moran**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Emer Moran**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Katarzyna Motyka**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Tanya Mulhern**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Sharmen O'Donnell**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Therese Quinn**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Maura Raftery**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Niamh Seoighe**



**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Dee Sheerin**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Sarah Staunton**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Michelle Tooher**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Emma Whyte**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Michelle Cannon**

**KILTULLAGH PIONEERS**



**Nadine MacFarlane**

# A TRIBUTE TO NIAMH KENNEDY

This evening, we remember our friend, teammate, coach, and inspiration, Niamh Kennedy, who tragically left us far too soon at the tender age of just 18, seven weeks ago this weekend.

From the earliest days, Niamh was never without a ball at her feet. Constantly kicking around at home with her younger siblings, it was no surprise when she began her soccer journey with our U12 boys' team.



Sleeves rolled up & wearing her bandana, Niamh never looked out of place. From her very first game, it was clear she understood football instinctively, clever on the ball, composed in every situation & always ready to bring others into the game.

When she started secondary school in St Cuans, her passion only grew stronger. Niamh was the driving force behind the introduction of girls' soccer there. Without her determination & persistence, it would not have happened. She became the heartbeat of every team she played with, leading quietly but with an immense presence.



As she moved up through the age groups in Colemanstown United, Niamh was central to many victories. A natural sharpshooter, fearless in front of goal, she was equally admired for her calmness, composure & ability to make every teammate feel important.

Her impact, however, stretched far beyond her own playing career. Alongside her mum Zoe, Niamh was instrumental in setting up and driving the underage girls' structure within Colemanstown United. Together, they helped to lay the foundations for the next generation of girls in our club. Niamh went on to pour herself into coaching our academy girls, and her commitment was remarkable as she cycled from her home in Liscune to Colemanstown pitch, a 13km trip each way, just to be there for the younger players. She inspired them not only as a coach but as a role model in every sense.

In 2024, with no Ladies' team in Colemanstown to accommodate her, Niamh joined Kiltullagh Ladies, where she was instantly loved and cherished by her new teammates. No matter where she played, her talent, humility & warmth shone through.

Niamh will forever be remembered by her coaches, teammates, the academy children she guided & everyone in Colemanstown United who was so fond of her. She was never afraid to volunteer, never hesitated to lend a helping hand & always carried herself with kindness and positivity. Our club, and the wider community, has lost not just a player but a truly special young lady whose inspiring presence touched everyone she met.

Niamh, we will remember you always... for your spirit, your smile, and your love of the game. May you stay forever 18.

Rest in peace, Niamh.

# A TRIBUTE TO NIAMH KENNEDY



As Kiltullagh Pioneers and Colmanstown Utd meet this evening in the Women's O35 Cup final, we remember a young woman who gave so much to the game of football as a member of both clubs. At the far too young age of 18, Niamh Kennedy tragically passed away on the 12th of July. Niamh started her football career with Colmanstown, where she excelled both on and off the field.

However, last year, with Colmanstown not fielding a team for Niamh to play with, she had to look beyond her beloved Colmanstown Utd to continue her playing career. In August 2024, Niamh joined the Kiltullagh Pioneers Women's squad. From the first training session, Niamh's talents were obvious, and despite not having played in the adult league before, she quickly made her mark and became one of the first names to be put on the team sheet game after game. Her football ability was not only appreciated by her teammates, many's the occasion a referee or a coach for the opposition would ask who the Kiltullagh number 8 was, for the number 8 jersey was Niamh's; she chose it at the start of the season and wore it with pride from that day on.



The season of 2024/2025 was the most successful season in Kiltullagh Women's football history, while no silverware was won, a strong run of results earned the team promotion to the women's Premier Division for the upcoming season. Niamh ended the season with 7 goals, including a winner against Craughwell, described by Craughwell's match report as a wonder strike. And so, we ended the season and were looking forward to the upcoming one, where Niamh's array of skills were set to be displayed at the Premier level of Galway women's football.

Niamh had an abundance of talent in a sporting context; however, it is Niamh Kennedy the person who won our hearts and took to our squad like she was always part of it. At first, we knew Niamh as the quiet newcomer, but as time went by, we got to know the real gem of a person she was. After the season's final game, the traditional match analysis in Mary Wards was interrupted by the appearance of a birthday cake. Niamh joined in the singing of Happy Birthday, initially, not realising the cake was for her, as it was her 18th birthday. This was so typical of Niamh's selfless, gentle, and giving nature.

Sadly, we must now play on without Niamh as she left us far too soon; it would have been a pleasure to see her back in the number 8 jersey of Kiltullagh Pioneers for many more seasons. We will carry Niamh's memory forever more.

Rest in peace, Niamh.

# ROAD TO THE FINAL



Colemanstown Utd



5 - 1



Athenry

Cregmore/Claregalway



0 - 3



Colemanstown Utd

Knocknacarra



3 - 1



Colemanstown Utd

Colemanstown Utd



2 - 2



West Utd

Colemanstown Utd



0 - 1



Kiltullagh

Kinvara Utd



0 - 5



Colemanstown Utd

## SEMI-FINAL

Knocknacarra



5 - 6



Colemanstown Utd



# ROAD TO THE FINAL



Knocknacarra



2 - 0



Kiltullagh

Kiltullagh



4 - 3



West Utd

Kiltullagh



2 - 1



Kinvara Utd

Colemanstown Utd



0 - 1



Kiltullagh

Cregmore/Claregalway



0 - 0



Kiltullagh

Kiltullagh



0 - 0



Athenry

## SEMI-FINAL

Kiltullagh



2 - 1










Kinvara Utd



# WOMEN'S O35 PREMIER LEAGUE

The Women's O35 Premier League kicked off on Monday, 2nd of June. Seven teams, Athenry, Colmanstown, Cregmore, Claregalway, Kiltullagh, Kinvara, Knocknacarra, and West Utd began their campaign. For many of the players, it was a return to team sports, and for others, it was their first experience of competitive sports. As the league progressed, the improvements made by all teams made this a strongly contested league. In the end, the top 4 teams progressed to the Premier Cup playoffs while the remaining 3 contested for the Europa Cup.

Team	Pld	W	D	L	+	-	+/-	Pts
 Knocknacarra	6	6	0	0	23	2	21	18
 Kiltullagh	6	3	2	1	7	6	1	11
 Colemanstown Utd	6	3	1	2	16	7	9	10
 Kinvara Utd	6	3	0	3	10	15	-5	9
 West Utd	6	1	2	3	9	14	-5	5
 Athenry	6	1	2	3	4	12	-8	5
 Cregmore/Claregalway	6	0	1	5	3	16	-13	1



In the Europa Cup, Athenry overcame Cregmore in the semi-final to meet West Utd in the final. This game was played on Tuesday, 26th August, with West Utd bringing home the cup after a penalty shootout.

Meanwhile, in the Premier cup, Colmanstown beat unbeaten Knocknacarra after extra time in a high scoring game. Kiltullagh overcame Kinvara in a tight game. The league game earlier in the season between these 2 sides was a close affair decided by a single goal in favour of Kiltullagh, so this evening's final promises to be a close game again.

This first season of Women's O35 football has been a great success, and next year should see the league expand and even more clubs join this league next season.



Ruth Dempsey  
Alicia (Flannery) Hynes  
Lorraine McGann  
Patricia Sullivan  
Eleanor Morrissey  
Shelly Finnerty  
Orla McCaffrey  
Michelle Harrison  
Helen Keane  
Olivia Broderick  
Nicola Finn  
Jacinta Brett  
Deirdre O Grady  
Anne-Marie Walsh  
Marian Wilson

Kara Mullins  
Mary Rohan  
Emer O'Brien  
Anita Murphy  
Shauna Ward  
Sinead Kavanagh  
Sandra Schwitalla  
Aoife Cummins  
Rita Burke  
Louise Lally  
Karen Dunne  
Catherine Curtin  
Marie Ryan  
Sandra King

Management: Gerry Flannery





Leanne Cannon  
Susan Cavanagh  
Orla Creavan  
Monica Daly  
Colette Deely  
Sandra Dillon  
Yvonne Earls  
Geraldine Eysers  
Michelle Fergus  
Jenny Fleming  
Ruth Garrett  
Mary Gilbert  
Grace Greene  
Lorraine Holland  
Paula Hynes  
Brenda Kelly  
Cathy Kyne

Orla Lawless  
Julie Lewis  
Una Mannion  
Claire Moran  
Emer Moran  
Katarzyna Motyka  
Tanya Mulhern  
Sharmen O'Donnell  
Catherine Quinn  
Therese Quinn  
Maura Raftery  
Niamh Seoighe  
Deirdre Sheerin  
Sarah Staunton  
Michelle Tooher  
Emma Whyte

Management: Michelle Cannon  
Nadine MacFarlane

## Thanks to

### **Sponsors:**

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Kiltullagh Community Hub

Galway FA O35s sub-committee, led by Martin Hughes, for their commitment to developing and running this league, and for the use of Eamonn Deacy Park for this season's finale.

Match officials: Mikey Walsh, Mike Cubbard, Paul Healy

### **The Editorial team**

Kiltullagh Pioneers:

Michael Finn, Hannah Finn, Nadine MacFarlane

Colmanstown United:

Martina Donnellan, Sandra King

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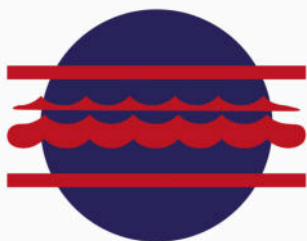
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