

Football focus needs to be on the young

Drive by the Showgrounds or St Columbs park in Derry on a weekend and you will see hoards of local men playing in the Saturday morning league. But have you ever considered how this affects the next generation of footballers? Headliners reporter Daniel McLaughlin certainly has.

The players of local primary school teams, including myself, are left to play in the aftermath of the local junior football leagues or even worse we play on separate pitches, because we are not as important as the adults.

Being left with second class facilities is no way for the Patrick McCourts and Darren Gibsons of tomorrow to be treated, and local schoolchildren are very angry at being confined to these poor facilities.

How do we expect our local football teams like Derry City to continue their recent European success if the council and school boards do not provide adequate facilities?

I think that giving adults the best pitches is a waste of time as giving them over to primary school children would be much more beneficial, as they could help to nurture new players rather than being wasted on over the hill amateurs.

However I do not expect the pitches in Derry to be of an excellent standard as even our best stadiums are below par. The Brandywell, Riverside stadium and Celtic park are not at a respectable level, and I feel this may be a good example of what is wrong with sport in Derry .

I'm not asking for Olympic standard venues or Premiership quality pitches, but just that young people like me and my school team-mates be given a better chance of developing and learning about our favourite sports, so that in years to come if we are not successful we will only have ourselves to blame!



About this article

This article was written by Daniel McLaughlin, 11, and published in the [Sunday Journal](#).

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