



Reframing Attire Standards in Women's Sport: A Welfare Perspective from Inter-county Camogie Players

Position paper developed by: The Gaelic Players Association in collaboration with the European Athletes and Players Association

Context: The Camogie Association mandates skorts for match play, a tradition that no longer reflects the preferences or welfare needs of today's players.

Summary: This paper examines the intersection of player attire, mental wellbeing, and athlete autonomy in elite women's sport, highlighting widespread discomfort among inter-county camogie players. It argues for player choice between shorts and skorts, aligning with international standards and broader athlete welfare principles.

Widespread Policies and Best Practice

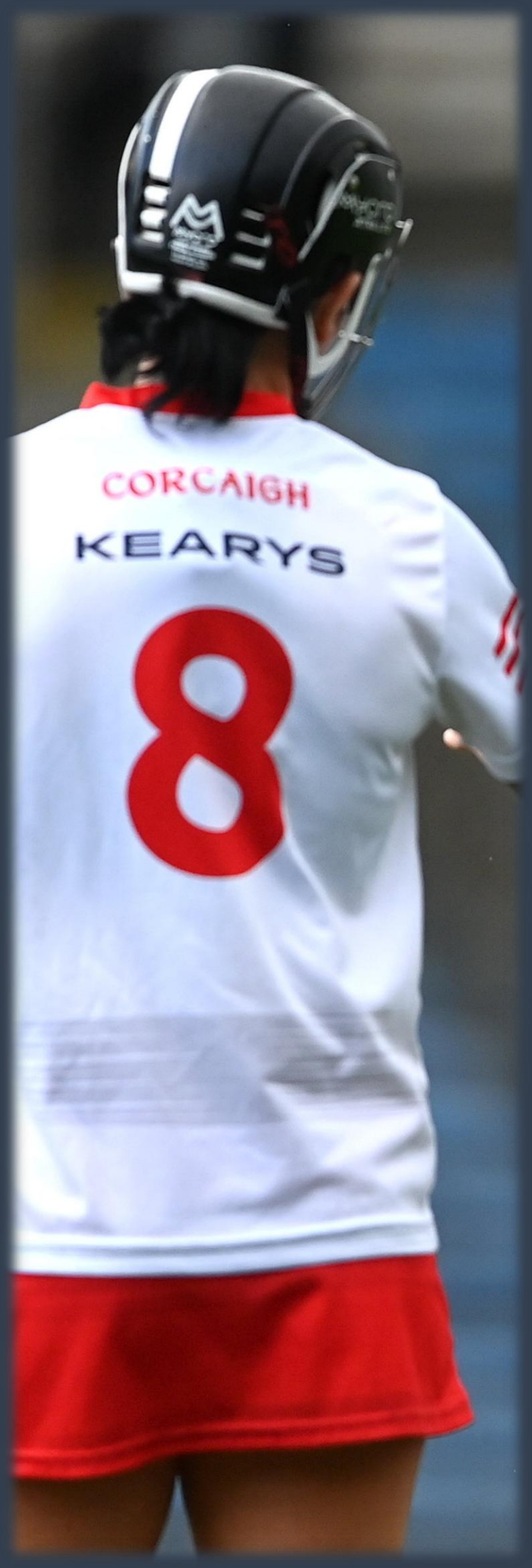
Sport Ireland *Women in Sport Policy* promotes gender equality and athlete empowerment. It encourages National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to ensure that women and girls feel safe, respected, and confident in their sporting environments. The policy supports athlete-centered decision-making.

UNESCO *International Charter of Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport*, advocates that athletes should feel safe, confident, and respected when participating in sport, without discrimination or fear of discomfort

The European Athletes and Players Association (EAPA), of which the GPA is a member, emphasises player autonomy, safety, and mental health as key tenets of sustainable sport environments

World Players Association's Universal Declaration of Player Rights states that every player is entitled to a safe and secure sporting environment, which promotes her safety, physical and mental health, and social wellbeing

Mandating attire that leads to discomfort or exposure undermines these principles and disregards the duty of care owed to all athletes



Research Findings

The GPA Annual Player Survey recorded responses from 650 inter-county camogie players. Survey results and direct quotes from players:

70%

reported discomfort while wearing skorts

"Skorts are so uncomfortable and do not stay in place. Constantly fixing them during matches which has massive negative implications to performance and concentration"

65%

expressed concerns about exposure in media content, affecting their mental state

"Have been exposed on social media through images almost every season I have played both club and county."

49%

said they had experienced anxiety around period leaks

"Would have period anxiety"

The Player Sentiment

83%

of players surveyed would prefer to wear shorts OR believe that players should have the option to choose

"Disagree strongly with wearing skorts always feel very uncomfortable during games and honestly think it impacts how I play in a negative way"



Case Study

International Hockey Team

The English Women's Hockey Team, in 2023, successfully advocated for the right to wear shorts instead of skirts after players voiced discomfort with the existing uniform standards

Their governing body responded constructively, acknowledging the changing norms around women's sportswear and the need to prioritise player input

This progressive stance is now echoed across other national and international sports teams, underlining a global shift toward empowerment and respect for female athletes. Camogie has an opportunity to lead in Ireland by following suit

#RightToChoose



Summary of GPA Position



1. Players should have the choice to wear Skorts or Shorts on the basis of player welfare
2. Player welfare should be prioritised over established norms & traditions in decision making
3. Players remain open to collaborative dialogue on this issue with the Camogie Association, GAA, Sport Ireland and other sporting bodies

