



**Dear Coach Fantastic,**

I am currently managing a senior ladies team and unfortunately we got knocked out of Championship in the early stages. We still have the league to play for but I am finding it very hard to keep my players motivated for this. Have you any ideas on how to keep your team interested and motivated for the remainder of the season? **(Siobhan, St Bridget's)**

Hi Siobhan

This is a problem that many coaches are facing heading into the summer months. It is not an ideal situation for clubs and it is encouraged for county boards to keep their clubs involved in championship as long as possible but they also have deadlines to reach to enter the provincial series.

With regards to your own team, it is essential that you, as manager, put a real importance and emphasis on the league competition in your county. Leagues are a key element of the structures and it is a major achievement if your team can win this as it takes a lot of consistency with so many teams and games involved.

There is an article in our coaching section on 'Goal Setting and Motivation' and this should really assist you. Motivation requires having a goal so if you can set short term goals for your team throughout the league it will give them something to aim for step by step. I would encourage you to change these every 1/2 weeks to keep the team fresh.

An individual has to be motivated in order to motivate others so if your players also set personal goals along with team goals they will encourage each other to achieve these. Your players must understand why they are setting goals and that these will help them go ahead of their competition.

The most important thing for you to do when you have these goals set is to keep training varied to encouragement engagement from your players and ensure the team have regular matches, league or challenge games. Any period without games will force your players to lose their interest. If you can celebrate every small success and measure things like turnovers, shots on target, tackles etc your team will buy into striding to continue to improve until the end of the season.

Finally if you have a team bonding day or train on the beach for example it will break the monotony and keep them close as a team. This will be a tough time as a manager but it is now that the true manager will step up and make sure their team continues to improve and aims to be league champions. This will also assist you for next years' championship campaign.

As I said at the beginning there is a full article to follow which will really assist you with setting the goals.

I hope this provides some ideas and you are successful in the league!

Coach Fantastic