

GETTING TO KNOW THE KUWAIT HARPS

‘Gaelic football combines skills of soccer, scores of basketball with rough and tumble of rugby.’

By Faten Omar

The suspense and skill of soccer, the high scoring of basketball and the impact of rugby can all be found in Gaelic football, a popular sport in Ireland. Kuwait Times spoke with Chelsea Ellis, Chairperson of Kuwait Harps, the only Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) club in Kuwait, to learn more about the sport. Ellis is originally from Michigan, USA, she moved to Kuwait in 2010. She joined the Kuwait Harps in 2013 having never even heard of the sport before and has been playing with them ever since. This is Chelsea's second year as club chairperson. She looks forward to the season ahead and the success of the Kuwait Harps in the Middle East league.



Kuwait Times: What is Gaelic football? Where did Gaelic football originate?

Chelsea Ellis: Gaelic football is a field sport with Irish heritage that combines the skill of traditional football with elements of basketball, volleyball and Australian football. Originating in Ireland, Gaelic football quickly gained in popularity in the last few years with competitions now held throughout the globe. Ladies' Gaelic football, in particular, is recognized as one of the fastest growing female sports in Europe.

KT: What is the difference between Gaelic football and regular football?

Ellis: The biggest difference is that you can use your hands in Gaelic football, and because of this, there are many differences in gameplay and scoring. Gaelic football does contain some familiar elements of soccer, such as the ability to kick the ball and scoring by getting the ball into the net. Another big difference is that Gaelic sports at all levels are considered amateur, meaning that all athletes, even those competing at the highest level, do not receive any payment for playing.