**Profile on former Irish International Marie Curtin is currently playing in the LWSSL and registered to play for Aisling-Annacotty FC football team.**

[Aisling-Annacotty FC](http://aislingannacotty.ie/) is privileged to have former Irish International footballer [Marie Curtin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marie_Curtin) playing for its senior ladies football team this year. Marie, who had 45 international caps for Ireland, played professionally in both the United States and Norway prior to her retirement in 2012. Upon returning to Ireland, she and her family established the [Temple Dairy company](http://www.templedairy.ie/about-us/), which produces high-quality chocolate milk and which supplies their products to many local sports teams, including Limerick FC and Munster Rugby.

In this interview, she discusses her career, favourite moments, and current projects.

**How did you become interested in soccer?**

I am one of seven children, with three brothers and three sisters. I watched my older siblings and their friends play soccer and began to join in. Somewhere along the way I became super interested in the game. Whereas kids today have so many toys and phone and Internet distractions, we didn't. There wasn't that much to do on a farm in Athlacca, so we ended up playing soccer a lot!

**When was your first international cap?**

I was brought into the senior squad as a 16-year-old. I was already in Irish underage 16 and 19 teams. My first trip away was to the Arsenal men’s training grounds in London where we played Arsenal Ladies in a friendly behind closed doors. We beat them. I played second half. My first real international cap was in Greece when I turned 17.

**What was your most memorable moment in an Irish jersey?**

It was when we played USA in Chicago in front of a crowd of about 45,000 fans at Soldier Field. Many of the legends of the game were playing that day: Julie Foudy, Mia Hamm, Brandy Chastain and Abby Wambach. I played midfield with Katie Taylor that evening. It was my first year at Hofstra University in America so I travelled from New York to Chicago to meet the team. We lost, but it was an unbelievable experience.

**Why did you go to America for college, and how did you enjoy your time there?**

Going to America on a football scholarship allowed me to get a college education and benefit from their full-time soccer environment. I wanted to become a better athlete and player, and they had everything there for me to do that. It was a difficult challenge being so far from home. Overall, the whole experience toughened me up. I matured as a player and a person.

**What was your work experience like in soccer after you graduated?**

I didn't know whether I was going to give up soccer. I was never going to stay in America because I wanted to get back home. I gave up soccer for a month when I returned. I went on a holiday and realised I was making a big mistake so I went to an Irish two-month training camp in America and ended up playing for another few years.

I very much put my whole life into the Irish team. I moved to Norway for a year to get regular full-time training. It was a fantastic football and life experience, but my International soccer experience wasn't good. Though I loved training and playing, I found the Irish team a little bit frustrating. We never qualified for a European or World Cup Championship, which was heart-breaking. The Irish women’s team and I were living our lives for soccer. When you are an athlete, you sacrifice quite a bit socially. You are always trying to keep yourself in top condition for the next game or tournament.

I was getting looked on less and less by the Irish manager, and I was frustrated by a lot of things so I decided to retire in 2012 at the age of 27.

**Why did you decide to come back to Limerick and start Temple Dairy?**

After I retired, I did some travelling to take a step back for a while. I didn't know what to do now that I didn't have to put football and training as my first priority. In the spring of 2013 I was working in a job I didn't see myself in forever. My father, a dairy farmer, brought up the idea of doing a value-added product with milk. He was frustrated also with farming and with low milk prices that the co-ops would pay for the milk in his dairy business. So I told him I'd help him look into the idea. I knew chocolate milk was really popular in the sports world. Athletes were drinking it as a sports recovery drink for its nutritional profile. I recognised that there was a gap in the market for a good healthy flavoured milk brand in Ireland. We took steps at developing a product, and we just haven't stopped ever since! I am now full-time Managing Director at [Temple Dairy](http://www.templedairy.ie/about-us/).

**Who is your favourite footballer?**

Paul McGrath was my first favourite player. I also came to love David Beckham and Zinedine Zidane for their class. In women's football, Abby Wambach was my all-time favourite player.

**Do you still follow football?**

I don't support any particular English men's team or other European club. I just enjoy watching good football. I have taken a great interest in our local Limerick FC lately. They're doing very well in the Irish League, and I enjoy going to the odd game.

I always keep an eye on the Irish women's soccer team and their progress. [Denise O' Sullivan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Denise_O%27Sullivan) is playing professionally in Houston, USA, and [Megan Campbell](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Megan_Campbell) for Manchester City women's team. They are two former teammates who, in my opinion, are Ireland's most effective players at the moment.