Club Newsletter
Nuachtlitir Chlubanna

Nuachtlitir, Samhain 2009

Fáilte chuig eagrán Club Nuachtlitir na Samhna.

We would encourage clubs to forward this bulletin to their members and post on club websites and notice boards. Also, please feel free to reply to this email with any feedback about the Newsletter and suggestions about changes we might make to it.

125th Anniversary
The Association's 125 Anniversary Celebrations are coming to a close and on November 1 the GAA returned to where it all began back in 1884. Exactly 125 years after the foundation of the Association at Hayes' Hotel a special commemorative day of celebration was held in Thurles. Mass celebrated by Archbishop Clifford of Cashel at Thurles Cathedral was followed by a procession to Dr Croke's statue on Liberty Square. A number of speeches were made before the President and Director General laid a wreath.

Newtownshandrum's exciting Munster Club win over Thurles Sarsfields rounded off a memorable day. Work on the graves of founding fathers John McKay (London), Thomas St George McCarthy (Deansgrange), John Wyse Power and Michael Cusack (both Glasnevin) was also completed as part of the 125 Anniversary Year.

"The GAA: A People's History" was also launched this month to celebrate its 125th anniversary. The GAA: A People's History tells the story of how the GAA has carved for itself a unique place at the heart of Irish life. It outlines how Gaelic games and the social world which revolves around the Association, has shaped the lives of generations of Irish people at home and abroad. From parades and ballads to epic journeys across land and sea, this history of the GAA is as much about what happened off the field as what happened on it. Clubs play a central role in the growth of our Association and are featured throughout the book. Reflecting on where our clubs came from and how they have grown and developed over the past 125 years will help us to build a strong Association for the future.

A special word of thanks to all clubs who marked the year by organising their own unique events and to those who went to great lengths to celebrate Lá na gClub last May,.

Lisa Clancy
GAA Director of Communications

Club Focus - St Patrick's, Donaghmore, Co Tyrone / Naomh Pádraig, An Domhnach Mhór, Co. Thír Eoghain

Tyrone club St Patrick's Donaghmore are the latest of our clubs to enter into a community based arrangement that has assisted with the development of impressive new facilities. Uachtarán Uladh Tom Daly recently opened a new complex that has seen the Bardic Theatre and Donaghmore Youth Club come together under the umbrella of the new Donaghmore District Community Association.

This fine building has been fittingly named The Torrent Valley Complex in recognition of local landmarks. The complex is an example of a fit-for-purpose community facility. It includes a full-sized sports-hall, six changing rooms, a state of the art gym, meeting rooms, a purpose-built theatre catering for over 200 audience-members and retail units for commercial use.

Comhairle Uladh supported Donaghmore District Community Association in applying to Sport NI, the Department of Social Development, and the Department of Enterprise Trade and Investment to secure funding for the project. A sizeable portion was raised through the dedicated fundraising efforts of club volunteers from St Patricks GAA club. Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Criostóir Ó Cuana recently visited the complex to unveil a commemorative GAA 125 Anniversary plaque.

Finance – Distribution of Funds from Rugby and Soccer Internationals

The distribution of funds generated by the staging of rugby and soccer internationals at Croke Park is currently being overseen by the Association's Finance Department. To date €8m of the proposed final figure of approximately €35m has been earmarked for club and regional initiatives and new applications are currently being assessed and processed. €2.8m of the allocated money has been drawn down so far. The funds generated through the hosting of these matches was specifically ring fenced for the development and upgrade of facilities across the country. Each of the 32 counties have been allocated €250,000 and with the choice of investing these funds in projects that will benefit the entire county or to distribute between various club projects.

Galway, Meath, Kildare and Louth are amongst the counties investing in county facilities while Mayo, Sligo, Westmeath, Limerick, Down and Fermanagh feature on the list of those overseeing a distribution to clubs in their respective counties. A full and comprehensive list will be circulated at a later date when county intentions are confirmed and more of the funds have been drawn down.

Official Recognition for the Gaelic Players Association

A proposed new interim arrangement with the GPA was announced on November 21 after a series of negotiations in recent weeks. County Chairpersons and Secretaries and members of Management were briefed before the announcement and the GAA will now seek the approval of Central Council early next month. The next step in the process thereafter will see a motion going to Congress in Newcastle, Co. Down next April.

The arrangement would see the GPA enshrine amateur status in its constitution. The GAA will support a number of player welfare initiatives to the possible value of €1.1m and a

contribution of €250,000 will be made to the GPA's administrative costs for both 2009 and 2010.

To see full details of the arrangement visit http://www.gaa.ie/files/press/gaa_and_gpa.doc.

New GAA Email System - Update
As you may know by now, the GAA has introduced a new email system and as a consequence is winding down service on the old email server.

As highlighted previously, full decommissioning of the old server will take place on Monday November 30th 2009 at 10:00am.

What will this mean?

- services on the old email system will no longer be available and users will be unable to log into the old system.
- We would ask clubs who have not logged into the new email system to contact their county IT officer or PRO for details. Alternatively, please contact the GAA email helpdesk for your club login details. Details for the helpdesk are below.

Information on the new email system can be found under the following link:
http://newmail.gaa.ie/

As of the 23/11/2009, almost 90% of GAA clubs are active and using the new GAA email system. We would like to thank those involved at all levels in successfully rolling out the new email system over the previous number of months.

If you would like to get more information or support on the new email solution please contact the GAA email help desk at mail.support@gaamail.ie or by phone on 076-615 4932 (lo-call number).

Hurling Helmets
In just over a month a new ruling will come into effect meaning that all hurlers of all ages will be obliged to wear a helmet complete with faceguard once they pick up a hurley whether in training or in a game.

Members of the National Medical, Scientific and Welfare Committee made a presentation to the media in the last month outlining statistical evidence of the reduction of serious head and facial injuries when helmets are worn.

Helmets have been compulsory at U21 level since 2006 and although goalkeepers face a special challenge adjusting to the use of helmets, they too are covered by the new ruling.

From January 2010 match officials will stop play in a situation where a player removes a helmet or attempts to enter the field of play without one. Posters outlining this initiative can be downloaded from http://www.gaa.ie/page/hurling_helmets.html.

Ag Éisteacht Programme Continues
The Uachtarán and Ard Stiúrthóir between them have now visited almost 20 clubs since April with Eoghan Rua in Derry and Ballymanus in Wicklow, two of the most recent visits. Thanks to all clubs who have expressed an interest in hosting what is an informal two hour questions and answers fact finding and information gathering session. The 2010 schedule is being compiled and clubs that are interested in participating in the programme should contact the Communications Department through alan.milton@gaa.ie.

Vodafone Affinity Scheme
The roll out of an Affinity arrangement with GAA Football Championship Sponsors Vodafone that will see clubs that register their members recoup 5% of those members' Pay Monthly Bills or Top Up transactions continues after the launch of the scheme in October.

For more information about this new arrangement with one of the GAA's Official 'Give Back Partners' and for details on how your club can sign up, please visit http://www.supportyourgaaclub.ie.

Make a Splash with the GAA Museum
Ultimate Club Day Out - for under €15 - Special Offer – 25% off group rates when you visit Croke Park Stadium & the National Aquatic Centre in one day!

The Croke Park Experience has teamed up with the National Aquatic Centre to provide a fun filled day out for GAA Clubs wanting to reward their players of all ages and levels for their hard work and dedication on the pitch. Great savings can be made if you visit both between January and March 2010. Take a behind-the-scenes guided tour through the dressing rooms, players' lounge, pitch side and media centre of the fourth largest stadium in Western Europe. Afterwards enjoy extreme thrills and raging water adventures in the AquaZone at the National Aquatic Centre, which hosts Europe's biggest and best rides.

Check out www.nac.ie and www.gaa.ie/museum for more information or contact: Maria Gorman, Bookings Executive, Tel- 01 8192374 or email tours@crokepark.ie.

Handball's Unique 125 Celebration
In 1884 Handball was included in the GAA Charter as one of the sports to be promoted by the new Association and 125 years later the game has evolved into a truly international game under the Gaelic Games umbrella. To close conclude the GAA 125 celebrations, players from all codes will come together at the Irish Handball Centre in Croke Park on December 5 for the GAA Handball Showdown.

According to the 1932 census, Handball was the most widely played sport in Ireland. Sadly the game dwindled in numbers in the middle of the last century. The reasons for this fall away are lost to memory and are now largely speculative. However, Handball is the slumbering giant of Irish sport and early next month, top hurlers, footballers, camógs, ladies footballers and rounders players will come together to test their skills in the alley.

The Showdown involves pairing high-ranking handball players, such as Cavan's Paul Brady, Dublin's Eoin Kennedy and Cork's Tony Healy, with athletes from other codes

within the GAA. Some of the players, such as Mayo's Andy Moran, Cork's Donnacha O'Connor and Kilkenny's Tommy Walsh did play in their youth but many of the pairings will be made up of an expert and a novice. It promises to be an exciting day of Handball action.

Changes to membership rules and registration rules for 2010
Clubs are reminded that all clubs must complete the registration of Full and Youth members before April 1. Registrations must be completed electronically, through the Association's online player and member registration system (rule 2.2 of the Official Guide). This is now the only acceptable method of registration in the GAA.

Clubs should also be aware that the closing date for the acceptance of membership fees in order to entitle a person to the privileges of membership, including the right to vote at the club AGM, is on a date prior to March 31 (rule 6.2 of the Club Constitution). Therefore, the old date of August 1 is no longer in use.

Training for the new online registration system will take place in all counties in early 2010. Many counties are already on board the online system, with 960 clubs having used the system to register in 2009. Clubs will be receiving further communication on this in due course.

Games Development
The GAA Games Development Conference took place in Croke Park last Friday and Saturday, November 20th-21st. Over 650 delegates from all 32 Counties as well as delegates from Europe and North America attended the two day event. Speakers at the event included Liam Sheedy (Tipperary Hurling Manager), Mickey Ned O'Sullivan (Limerick Football Manager), Aidan O'Connell (Trainer Cork Senior Football Team), Enda McNulty (Sports Psychologist), Rod Thorpe (University of Loughborough) and John Considine (Cork Minor Hurling Manager). Topics such as Technical Development, Tactical Awareness in Hurling and Gaelic Football, Nutrition and Sports Psychology were discussed, and delegates had an opportunity to quiz speakers throughout the day. It is possible to download the presentations made at the Games Development Conference from - http://gamesdevelopment.gaa.ie/page/games_development_conference_2009.html.

The Conference was streamed live in conjunction with RTÉ sport. It is possible to watch the video files of the Key Note addresses from the Games Development Conference 2009 on the RTÉ media player. Click on the link below:
http://www.rte.ie/sport/gaa/championship/2009gaagdc_archive.html.

The Games Development Conference has grown from strength to strength over the last 7 years and planning for the 2010 event has already begun.

Ticketing
Supporting your County has never been so easy.....

The 2010 GAA Season Ticket is fantastic value for the true GAA fan. At a starting price of €75, the GAA Season Ticket is available for football or hurling. It includes entry to all your County's Allianz GAA National League matches and your County's opening GAA Championship match in your selected code. In addition to this, Season Ticket holders get a €5 discount on entry for their county's subsequent Championship matches (excluding Provincial & All-Ireland Finals where no discount applies) in their selected codes.

For further information or to purchase see www.gaa.ie.

Scór
The winter is upon us shorter days and longer evenings that are less conducive to our field games. However, our cultural activities in the form of Scór, provide a suitable alternative and Scór na nÓg has already reached the county final stage.

The Provincial Scór na nÓg Finals dates are as follows:
Ulster - 16th. January, 2010 - Galbally, Co. Tyrone
Leinster - 17th. January, 2010 - Ballymore, Co Westmeath
Connacht - 23rd. January, 2010 - Banada, Co. Sligo
Munster - 31st. January, 2010 - Ballybunnion, Co. Kerry

The All-Ireland Finals are in Athlone IT Hall on Saturday, 20th. February, 2010 at 3.00 p.m.

Scór Sinsear will be starting up early in the New Year and we would encourage all clubs to make every effort to participate in what is a most enjoyable GAA activity and who knows – there might be an All-Ireland in it!

Eolas ó Máire Ní Ghráham, Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Páirc an Chrócaigh, Baile Átha Cliath 3.
Ríomhphost: moira.graham@gaa.ie Fón: 018658683.