

MARCH 2020
MÁRTA 2020
NUACHTLITIR



FOR NEWS, VIDEOS AND FIXTURES www.gaa.ie



A MESSAGE FOR GAA CLUB MEMBERS

A chairde, We are living in the most extraordinary times.

The Coronavirus pandemic has changed almost everything about our world and has impacted upon so much of what we thought was normal about our lives.

Like all sport, Gaelic Games have gone into hibernation.

But it is a source of enormous pride to us that what has not disappeared or become dormant has been the spirit and the passion for community that is the life force of the GAA in every corner of this island.

Clubs big and small and across towns and rural parishes are doing what the GAA has been proud to do for 136 years – and that's be a light and a standard for the people who they represent.

We have always said that the GAA ultimately, is all about People – People working together for a goal.

We have a common goal now like never before.

Our goal is to help the island of Ireland push back against the spread of this virus and give the people of Ireland the best chance possible of limiting its impact and being able to hopefully, some day in the not too distant future, come out the other side.

This community spirit is also prominent among our hundreds of GAA clubs overseas who are such a vital support network for our Diaspora.

To the people posting skills drills for stuck at home players, keep up the good work.

To all of those who have been able to offer help to the vulnerable in their communities, we extend our sincerest míle buíochas and urge you to stay safe while doing so and follow all the advice and guidelines from the health and statutory authorities.

From the outset of this crisis the GAA has been working closely with the HSE and we have made all of their guidelines available to all of our clubs.

Their request for our support has deepened in recent times.

The large car parking facilities at Croke Park have been made available for staff working in nearby hospitals.

We have made part of Croke Park available as a drive through test centre for people with symptoms of Covid-19. Cars arrive by prior appointment and drive into the Cusack Stand tunnel where they are tested by doctors in their cars and they then drive away out the other side.

It is all conducted under full medical supervision.

It is an opportunity for GAA HQ to play its part and mirror what is being done by so many of our members elsewhere.

Similar testing facilities are now in operation at several other GAA county and club venues around the country - all of them playing an important role.

Sport is not a priority at a time of a national emergency.

But when the time comes again for the boots to be laced, hurleys to be gripped, nets to be hung and the pitches to be marked and when the time comes for men and women, and boys and girls to run out into the air and play the games they love, sport will be more important than ever before.

We are planning for that day – whenever that day may be.

In the meantime, we can help make that day come quicker if we do what we are being asked to do by the people who know what they are talking about.

Stop, look and listen to all of the advice that is there on how we beat this common foe.

Washing our hands, personal distancing and if needs be self-isolation are the weapons that we have.

Keep safe, keep thinking of others, keep fit and healthy in body and mind.

As that great son of Derry, Seamus Heaney wrote:

*“So hope for a great sea-change
On the far side of revenge.
Believe that further shore
Is reachable from here.
Believe in miracles
And cures and healing wells.”*



Ar son Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, go raibh maith againn

Seán Ó hÓráin
Seán Ó hÓráin
Uachtarán

Tomás Ó Riain
Tomás Ó Riain
Ard-Stiúrthóir

“WHEN OUR GAMES STOPPED, OUR PEOPLE DIDN’T”

GAA COMMUNITIES RALLY AGAINST COVID-19 IMPACT

By Colin Regan,
GAA Community & Health Managers



Sport is regularly put into perspective by life and death, but never in living memory on such a global scale. The coronavirus Covid-19 has put everything into perspective.

Games such as those provided by the GAA and our sister Associations, Camogie and the LGFA, play an important role in society. As clinical psychologist Colm O'Connor explained during a fascinating workshop at the GAA Coaching Conference in 2017, sport elevates us from the horizontal plane of everyday life to the vertical plane of creativity, passion, and potential. (Colm's full talk is accessible here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3lQxVZ_Jng).

The spread of Covid-19 has grounded us all. The weight of its consequences is tangible but together is how it can be shouldered.

Stories of what GAA clubs and members have been doing on behalf of their communities have helped to lift us onto that vertical plane once again. They punch little holes of light in what could otherwise be overwhelmingly dark days.

We all have a role to play in this crisis in bringing into the world as much light and love as we can muster. With a caveat: we must do so within the parameters of the individual and collective behaviour recommended by the public health professionals who are working around the clock to save lives. To do otherwise is to do a disservice to the health workers putting their lives at risk on the front line and is also a threat to the most vulnerable members of our communities.

Andrew Nikiforuk is the author of two best-selling books on epidemics: 'The Fourth Horseman' and 'Pandemonium', both published by Penguin Books. "They (epidemics) paralyse and disrupt. They reveal and renew," he explains. As soon as the GAA announced it was shutting down all activity, the response from our club network was immediate. Each planned and random act of kindness reveals the best of the GAA as a community association and helps renew our faith in humanity.

When the St. Oliver Plunkett Eoghan Ruadh's club in Dublin 7 identified that their local pharmacy was struggling to deliver vital medicines and prescriptions to isolated members of their community, 25 club volunteers quickly made themselves available to take up this task. This is nothing new to the club. Through their work in the GAA Healthy Club Project, the club runs an array of activities throughout the year, from fitness classes to last year partnering with AWARE to make available to the community a 6-week stress control programme.

Across the four provinces, from the Gortletteragh GAA club in Leitrim, to Dunderry GAA in Meath, from the

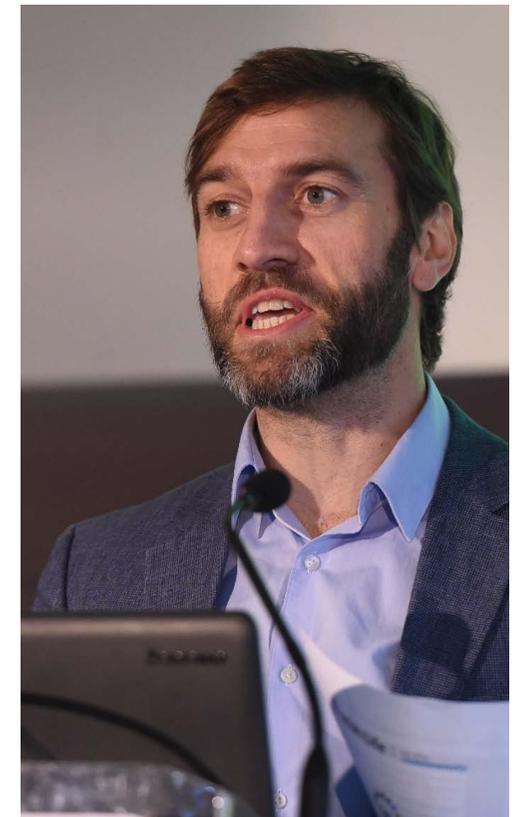
Buncrana club in Donegal, to Milltown St. Joseph's GAA in Clare, community and empathy has come to the fore in these challenging times. There are countless other examples on social media driving a sense of connection, purpose, and solidarity. Offers included simple but essential daily tasks that some vulnerable members of our communities can no longer manage: shopping, making visits to chemists, carrying out repair work on homes, the provision of transport to primary care centres, the feeding of farm stock, the list goes on. GAA coaches are also busy posting exercise and skills challenges to help keep the little ones (and mums and dads) occupied in a healthy way while camped up at home.

Ballinderreen GAA's online community quiz on Lá le Pádraig tried to maintain some normality on our national day of celebration. Fellow Galway club Cárna Caiseal offered their assistance as gaeilge so their Gaeltacht community is linked in.

Through my work on behalf of the GAA in coordinating responses to critical incidents in clubs and counties I have witnessed countless examples of GAA volunteers taking on leadership roles when wounded communities and families needed them most. This week we have seen that replicated on a national scale. The impact of the coronavirus Covid-19 will reverberate for years to come; families will mourn lost loved ones, an economic recession is inevitable. But the outflowing of humanity prompted by the crisis will, I hope, remind us all of what is truly important in this life.

For years we have known that the GAA's true value lies in its community roots and identity. Our games are

special and precious only because they bring meaning and joy to our members. When our games stopped, our people didn't.



LET'S CLUB TOGETHER TO HELP THE COMMUNITY



Centra

SuperValu

A Chara,

The GAA is partnering together with SuperValu and Centra to help feed Ireland's elderly and the most vulnerable in communities across the island at this most challenging time.

SuperValu & Centra are long-standing supporters and sponsors of the GAA.

We are asking your club to partner with your local SuperValu or Centra and get involved. Through our network of GAA volunteers we will help SuperValu and Centra stores feed the elderly and most vulnerable members in our communities across Ireland. As more elderly and vulnerable shoppers are being advised to stay at home, we want to help to get much needed shopping to more of these members of the community. GAA clubs across the country are already doing excellent volunteer work to help those most vulnerable. We want to mobilise more of our volunteers to help all SuperValu & Centra stores.

How this will work:

- **If you think your club can help then nominate a lead person for the club along with a team of volunteers from the club who are willing and able to do grocery shopping and deliver it.**
 - **Working with our local authorities, SuperValu/Centra will communicate to our club leads the details of those customers who need assistance in the community.**
 - **The club lead allocates these customer details to volunteers daily and liaises with them to make sure they can do the shop.**
 - **Volunteers then call customers for orders, do the shop and deliver it back to customers' homes.**
- This service will only be for the elderly and vulnerable in the area, who otherwise have no way of getting food.**
- **The nominated lead person in the club should contact and partner with their local SuperValu or Centra store and give them their name, telephone number and an email address.**

This partnership will be communicated to the public on TV, across press, radio and social media, highlighting the great work GAA clubs, SuperValu and Centra are doing and encouraging those that need it to sign up.

To sign your club up to this initiative please contact your local SuperValu or Centra store today.

Is Muidne le Meas,

Seán Ó hÓráin

Seán Ó hÓráin
Uachtarán

Tomás Ó Riain

Tomás Ó Riain
Ard-Stiúrthóir



A TIME FOR VOLUNTEERS

In light of the recent escalation of public health measures designed to limit the spread of Covid-19 and flatten the curve of those infected the GAA is announcing the complete closure of all club and county grounds other than those being used as testing facilities in partnership with the public health authorities.

To minimise any potential disruption to the massive volunteer effort that is being coordinated by GAA units and members across Ireland, the GAA is working with Volunteer Ireland (ROI) and Volunteer Now (NI). These agencies have been recommended by the respective crisis response teams in both jurisdictions as the best equipped to coordinate the volunteer response necessary for the duration of the Covid-19 emergency.

Persons that register on the links below will be matched with approved community groups or projects that have sought volunteers. Community groups that are coordinating local responses to COVID-19, including GAA units, may also register a need for volunteers should such a necessity exist or arise.

If the closure of your GAA club does not impact any Covid-19 responses that your club is coordinating or facilitating, please continue to support your community while adhering to the following points:

- **Strictly adhere to all public health guidelines (social distancing, personal hygiene measures, etc)**
- **Ensure that any volunteers are suitably vetted**
- **Notify the GAA Insurance department or Marsh Ireland in the normal manner of any activities your club is proposing to co-ordinate or support before any activity commences to ensure cover can be extended. Where insurance cover is extended a specific exclusion applies and there is no indemnity in respect of any claims arising from the contraction of the infection or illness COVID 19.**



- **The crisis could continue for weeks or even months so be mindful of volunteer burn-out and the sustainability of your efforts.**

This bank of Covid-19 resources has been produced to assist volunteers at this time

- **Register your club activity with Volunteer Ireland (ROI) or Volunteer Now (NI).**

If the closure of your club does impact your ability to coordinate any ongoing community volunteer efforts, please register with Volunteer Ireland (ROI) or Volunteer Now (NI) to either make yourself available in another voluntary capacity or to seek assistance in maintaining your existing service.

If your club is not involved in any community response but members are keen to contribute in some way, please direct them to register with Volunteer Ireland (ROI) or Volunteer Now (NI) at the links provided.

To register with one of Volunteer Ireland's local centres covering each of the 26 counties [click here](#)

To register with Volunteer Now in NI [click here](#)

LOOK AFTER YOUR MIND AS WELL AS YOUR BODY



By Colin Regan,

You will hear a lot of recommendations to look after your mental health during these uncertain and unusual times. But what does that mean?

Firstly, it is important to realise that your mental health is something we all have, every day. It is impacted by our relationship with ourselves, with others, and the world around us. Our mental health isn't a fixed thing – it is on a scale and constantly shifting. Good mental health doesn't mean the absence of low periods or difficult times. Challenges are part of life, and some days are better than others. It's how we respond to and manage life's challenges that matters. Importantly, there are things we can do to mind our mental health and that of those around us.

The GAA's Community & Health department has been working with Jigsaw - National Centre for Youth Mental Health – for some months to adapt their mental health training workshops to the GAA setting. Much of Jigsaw's work is based on their research with UCD School of Psychology. Their 'My World Survey' is Ireland's largest and most comprehensive study of young people's mental health and wellbeing. The take-away message is the importance of 'One Good Adult' in the life of a young person – someone they can turn to in times of need for support and guidance.

(See www.jigsaw.ie for more details, including the additional services Jigsaw offer young people in Ireland.)

Based on this research Jigsaw has worked with the GAA Community & Health Department in Croke Park to adapt their 'One Good Adult' training to better fit the GAA context. As a result, we are delighted to jointly launch our new '**One Good Coach**' training module available on the GAA's E-Learning platform.

The 45-minute interactive module should prove interesting and informative whether you are a coach, a Healthy Club Officer, a parent, a young member, or just interested in the topic of wellbeing. It is intended as an introduction to mental health with the evidence-based content designed to increase awareness of your own wellbeing and how you can better support the mental health of those around you. We hope you enjoy it!

The GAA last year also celebrated the fifth anniversary of our partnership with Samaritans, the GAA's official mental health partner. During these uncertain times, we can all benefit from a friendly, non-judgemental ear, especially those of us living alone or in self-isolation. Samaritans 24-7 freephone call line – 116123 – is available free of charge across the 32 counties and is manned by trained volunteers who are happy to discuss whatever happens to be on your mind. As the old saying goes, it's good to talk.

Finally, mental health is a holistic thing, intrinsically linked to your physical and social health. Consider it a three-legged stool. If one leg isn't balanced, it gets wobbly. If one leg isn't working at all, it can't function properly.

Be mindful of getting enough fresh air and exercise these days (while ensuring you adhere to the public health advice regarding social distancing, public gatherings, and health hygiene.)

Maintain strong social connections via phone and social media if you can't physically meet up with friends and family, but don't overdo screen time especially before bedtime. Watch your alcohol intake, get plenty of good sleep (8-hours is recommended), and regular healthy meals.

(For more information www.yourmentalhealth.ie is a very useful website).

In these unprecedented times, we are beginning to recognise that our health really is our wealth. Be sure to mind yours. Physical activity and good sleep hygiene were clearly linked with

better mental health. The findings also showed that many young people reported engaging in appearance-altering strategies which were linked to lower body esteem.

IT'S OK
TO NOT
BE OK

TAKING CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

During this time of uncertainty surrounding Covid 19, as we are all keeping our social distance, it is important that we look after our own wellbeing and the wellbeing of those around us.

These tips aim to support you in doing just that.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Keep active and create a simple exercise routine; get lots of fresh air

Encourage children to use this time to practice skills in the garden/yard/park

Ensure that you are getting enough sleep, limit use of devices at night

Maintain a healthy diet and keep hydrated (include fresh foods that will boost your immune system and help fight off colds and flus)

Be mindful of your alcohol intake – alcohol weakens your immune system and can have a negative effect your mood and mental health

Visit:
www.askaboutalcohol.ie

MENTAL HEALTH

Take a little personal time-out each day and practise some deep breathing

Sign up to a free course and refresher coaching course at <https://learning.gaa.ie/>

Limit your time on social media and your consumption of Covid-19 news stories

Sign up to your local library [HERE](#) or download Apps (e.g. Headspace/Calm), Podcasts or Audio Books that promote positive mental wellbeing

Continue to spend time outdoors, by yourself or with your children – walking and playing in open spaces are both safe; but maintain social distancing.

For mental health supports and services visit:
<https://www2.hse.ie/mental-health/>



SOCIAL HEALTH

Stay connected with others through calls, texts, video chat etc.

Facetime, Skype or even WhatsApp calls can be invaluable when trying to keep up social interactions

Check in with those more vulnerable in our communities and support them where possible, whilst still maintaining social distancing and hygiene etiquette

Set challenges for you and your family/friends; explore new activities/hobbies and share your experiences

If working from home, check in with colleagues regularly

Only rely on information from trusted sources (such as the [HSE](#) or [PHA](#))

The Samaritans is the GAA's national mental health partner and can be contacted any time for a friendly chat on: **116123**

Community and Health information, club stories and resources are available on the GAA community website www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/community-and-health/



COACH DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS SCHEDULED

To help coaches through this difficult period, the GAA, An Cumann Camogaíochta and the LGFA have created a series of coach development sessions to take place over the coming weeks. The sessions will run every Tuesday and Thursday at 7.30pm, beginning on March 26th.

The sessions will be along two separate formats. Every Tuesday there will be a live Questions and Answers session with a coach. Any participants in the Q and A will have an opportunity to view the coach delivering a session from the GAA Games Development Conference over the last couple of years and submit their questions via twitter for the coach to answer live.

Every Thursday there will be a live webinar presented by a coach or coach developer. The webinar will be a 30 minute presentation followed by a live Q and A with the presenter.

The first schedule of sessions is listed below:

Week One Thursday March 26 at 7.30pm

WEBINAR: One to One mentoring – Brendan Harpur

Week Two Tuesday March 31 at 7.30pm

LIVE Q AND A: Values Optimise Potential – Paudie Butler

Thursday April 2 at 7.30pm

WEBINAR: Putting together a sustainable coaching programme – Niall Corcoran

Week Three Tuesday April 7 at 7.30pm

LIVE Q AND A: Expression and Freedom for Learning and Development – Let Them Be Children – Owen Mooney

Thursday April 9 at 7.30pm

WEBINAR: Transitioning from Defence to Attack – Gerard O'Connor

All sessions will be advertised through the GAA Learning site – learning.gaa.ie and across all of the social media channels.

To access the sessions, any participants can simply click on the link directly from the GAA Learning Site page.

For more information visit:
<https://learning.gaa.ie/gaacoachwebinar2020>

or email: gamesdevelopment@gaa.ie

Laois hurling selector Niall Corcoran will deliver a webinar on 'putting together a sustainable coaching programme' on April 2.



WEXFORD GAA'S EIGHT STEP SKILLS CHALLENGE

By Cian O'Connell

Wexford GAA Football Development Administrator, Anthony Masterson, has designed an interesting skills challenge.

A distinguished performer during his own senior inter-county career, Masterson was part of the Wexford team which reached the 2008 All-Ireland SFC Semi-Final.

Now, though, Masterson is focused on developing Gaelic Football in Wexford with the Peil 4 All initiative so opted to put a skills test together for young players throughout the country.

"In our work our hands are a bit tied with how much we can do," Masterson admits. "Really our job entails going to schools and clubs, doing workshops in the evening.

"Bar the bit of administration work we are trying to be creative and inventive. It is just something to try to get the kids out of the house, they are all looking for games.

"I suppose kids aren't as used to free play as our own age group would have been growing up. We spent a lot of time outdoors. It was just a little idea to get people out and about."

Masterson recalls working at Cúl Camps in previous years when the totemic Wexford hurling custodian Damien Fitzhenry attended to offer advice and tips.

"It was just a little challenge I came up with," Masterson says. "I was actually inspired by Damien Fitzhenry when I was coaching on the Cúl Camps years ago.

"Damien Fitzhenry used to call around to the Cúl Camps, he would do things where you had to tip seven or eight different parts of the hurl with the slotar.

"All day everyday the kids would be practising it.

Obviously my job is as a football development officer in schools so I came up with this a few years ago.

"I've only been doing it in primary schools in Wexford so people around Ireland mightn't have seen it. Really it is just for a little bit of fun, something for the kids to be trying.

"They seem to enjoy it, so I decided to put a video up for people to try over the coming weeks."

Anthony Masterson @antomasterson1 · Mar 18, 2020

Be in with a chance to win a brand new signed @Zurich_Irl @OfficialWexGAA Jersey if you take part and complete the @Peil4All 8 step challenge. Get out and get practicing . Video of the challenge to follow.....



Anthony Masterson @antomasterson1

It's here..... The #Peil4All 8 Step Challenge. Looks like we're going to be at home for a while so let's see how far you can get. Send in your videos and Pictures . Make sure to tag and follow @Peil4All to be in with a chance of winning a new Wexford Jersey #skills



79 8:42 AM - Mar 18, 2020

53 people are talking about this



BYRNE TWINS VIDEO OVER 100 ACTIVITIES AND FUN CHALLENGES FOR YOUNG GAA PLAYERS

By John Harrington

Twin sisters and Dublin GAA Games Promotion Officers, Emma and Louise Byrne, have risen to the challenge of keeping young GAA players active at a time when no collective training is allowed.

They've produced three videos detailing over 100 activities incorporating athletic development movements and fun challenges.

Little space or equipment is required for the activities, just plenty of energy to burn.

"The idea came around that we can't physically coach children at present, but using the cameras and video equipment in the corner of our room decided to create this resource to encourage everyone to get out in the back garden and get active and put a smile on peoples faces," Emma Byrne told GAA.ie

"It also gave us a break from the cabin fever too and we had as much fun doing the games ourselves as anything else!

"It's very important to keep their minds and bodies active so these exercises should hopefully give our young players a bit of fun too. They can do them with their siblings and parents and it will hopefully put smiles on their faces.

"There's so much you can do in the back garden and if it's raining you can do an awful lot of these games inside as well if you clear a space in the dining-room or wherever and just let them at it."

Talented footballers themselves with local club Corduff Gaels in Monaghan, Emma and Louise have been Games Promotion Officers for the last four years in Dublin with the St. Vincent's and Skerries Harps clubs respectively.

Their roles involve coaching children in local feeder primary schools, delivering coach education/workshops, running and organising various camps along with nursery activities and games development initiatives.

The dynamic duo are also performance analysts with the Kilkenny senior hurling team and have set up their own business, Byrne Performance, offering clubs and teams various services including video analysis, fitness testing and GPS analysis.

Their initiative to keep young GAA players active over the coming weeks is just one of many being implemented by Games Promotion Officers, coaches and clubs over the country.

In difficult times, the Association's coaching community has risen to the challenge.



The Byrne twins, Emma (left) and Louise, are talented footballers for Corduff Gaels in Monaghan.

"It's great, everyone is helping each other and sharing ideas and resources," says Byrne. "The more we can do to help keep everyone active and busy, the better."

The three videos that the Byrne sisters have produced can be viewed below.



Lunge



Target practice

2020 NATIONAL CLUB DRAW WINNERS ANNOUNCED AS CLUBS RAISE MORE THAN €1.5M

The GAA's National Club Draw has been hailed as another outstanding success with more than €1.5m raised by clubs across the country.

Clubs who take part get to keep all of the proceeds which they raise from the sale of tickets with all of the prizes being sourced and supplied by Croke Park. Organised and run by the GAA's Finance Department and now in its seventh year, the 2020 NCD was made on March 12 at Croke Park by John Horan, Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael and which was independently observed by Mazars.

This year's Draw raised €1,568,200 for GAA Clubs nationally.



National Club Draw Prize Winners:

- All-New Renault Clio**
Selina Troy, Portroe GAA, Co. Tipperary
- Travel Voucher to the value of €2,000**
Jennifer & Tony Gallagher, Scoil Uí Chonaill GAA, Dublin
- All-Ireland Hurling & Football Final Package 2020**
Diarmuid Boyce, O'Callaghan Mills GAA, Co. Clare
- All-Ireland Hurling & Football Final Package 2020**
Caitríona Devlin, St. Judes GAA, Dublin
- All-Ireland Hurling & Football Final Package 2020**
Mary Kenny, Carrigallen GAA, Co. Leitrim
- Two Tickets to a Concert in Croke Park**
Mairead Frost, O'Callaghan Mills GAA, Co. Clare
- Blue Book Voucher €750**
Shauna Moran, Boyle GAA, Co. Roscommon
- €1000 Shopping Voucher – Retailer of your choice**
Deirdre Ryan, Geevagh GAA, Co. Sligo
- €1000 Shopping Voucher – Retailer of your choice**
Paul Mc Carron, Sean MacCumhailis GAA, Co. Donegal
- All-Ireland Hurling Final Package 2020**
Paddy Keane, St. Fintans GAA, Co. Wexford
- All-Ireland Football Final Package 2020**
Timmy Lynch, Laune Rangers GAA, Co. Kerry
- €500 One4All Voucher**
Eamon Mc Greal, Balla GAA, Co. Mayo
- €500 SuperValu/Centra Voucher**
Mary Madigan, Cappagh Handball, Co. Limerick
- All-Ireland Hurling Final Package 2020**
Pat McGrath, Portroe GAA, Co. Tipperary
- All-Ireland Football Final Package 2020**
Rory Ferguson, Enniskillen Gaels, Co. Fermanagh
- €500 One4All Voucher**
James Roche, Cordal GAA, Co. Kerry
- Blue Book Voucher €500**
Mike Battles, Cappagh Handball, Co. Limerick
- €500 One4All Voucher**
Jamie Brosnan, Gneeveguilla GAA, Co. Kerry
- €500 SuperValu/Centra Voucher**
Mike Hampson, Stars of Erin GAA, Dublin
- Shopping Voucher to the value of €350 at a retailer of your choice**
Brian Leahy, Ballinderreen GAA, Co. Galway

Club Specific Draw:

Clubs who won €5,000 in the National Club Draw

- Club 1: Ballybrown GAA, Co. Limerick
Club 2: Kilfian GAA, Co. Mayo
Club 3: Aghnamullen GAA, Co. Monaghan

Clubs who won €1,000 in the National Club Draw

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Mayo | Claremorris GAA Club |
| Sligo | Coolera Strandhill GAA Club |
| Galway | Headford GAA Club |
| Roscommon | Athleague GAA Club |
| Leitrim | Carrigallen GAA Club |
| Kildare | Rheban GAA Club |
| Carlow | Kildavin Clonagal GAA Club |
| Dublin | St. Mary's Saggart GAA Club |
| Louth | Lann Léire GAA Club |
| Laois | Camross GAA Club |
| Kilkenny | Fenians GAA Club |
| Offaly | Edenderry GAA Club |
| Meath | Duleek Bellewstown GAA Club |
| Longford | Mostrim GAA Club |
| Wexford | Crossabeg Ballymurn GAA Club |
| Wicklow | Coolboy GAA Club |
| Westmeath | Turin GAA Club |
| Kerry | Moyvane GAA Club |
| Limerick | Cappagh Handball Club |
| Tipperary | Loughmore Castleiney GAA Club |
| Waterford | Ballygunner GAA Club |
| Cork | Ballyclough GAA Club |
| Clare | Whitegate GAA Club |
| Fermanagh | Belcoo O'Rahillys GAA Club |
| Donegal | Glenfin GAA Club |
| Antrim | Gort na Mona GAA Club |
| Armagh | Clan na Gael GAA Club |
| Down | Loughlinisland GAA Club |
| Monaghan | Monaghan Harps GAA Club |
| Cavan | Mountnugent GAA Club |
| Derry | Swatragh Michael Davitts GAA Club |
| Tyrone | Glenelly St. Josephs GAA Club |

The clubs who had the highest ticket sales in each province:

Connacht

Micheál Breathnach GAA, Co. Galway
Sold: 1707

Munster

Blarney GAA, Co. Cork
Sold: 1030

Leinster

Na Fianna GAA, Dublin 9
Sold: 1792

Ulster

Naomh Mhuire Convoy GAA, Co. Donegal
Sold: 2500

Sean MacCumhailis GAA, Co. Donegal

Sold: 2500

GAA DEVELOPMENT FUND

The GAA Development Fund is open for both Deposits and Loans to all GAA Clubs.

The application form and criteria to apply for a loan from the GAA Development Fund can be obtained from the National Finance Department in Croke Park.

All loan applications and their supporting documentation should be approved by the County Committee and a recommendation provided by the Provincial Council before submitting to the Financial Management Committee for review.

Any loan applications received prior to the 30th March will be reviewed and loan allocations will be decided upon in April.

DEPOSITS

- Clubs are encouraged to deposit money into the GAA Development Fund.
- The variable interest rate a Club can earn on their deposit is 1.9%
- Clubs who support the fund are given priority when applying for a loan.
- Forms for depositing funds can be obtained from a member of the National Finance team in Croke Park.

LOANS

- A Club can make a loan application to the GAA Development Fund for purchasing new property or development of Club property.
- Bar facilities or renting out of facilities are not covered by the fund.
- The interest rate applicable is a variable interest rate, currently 1.9%
- Funding is only available to clubs with property vested in the GAA.
- Loan term is a maximum of 10 years.
- The maximum amount available to one club is €100,000 or £100,000.
- All loans must be guaranteed by the County Board and a recommendation provided by the Provincial Council.



2001 – WHEN TYRONE GRAPPLED WITH FOOT AND MOUTH SHUTDOWN

By Michael Devlin

These are unprecedented times of course, but the current GAA shutdown does slightly resonate with the Foot and Mouth crisis of 2001 that wreaked havoc on the Gaelic Games calendar for several months.

Go back 19 years ago and Tyrone were still in search of their first national senior football title, but minor and U-21 All-Ireland success saw the Red Hands go into the new millennium with fresh hope of making the big breakthrough at senior level.

That year of 2001 Tyrone were going well in the then Allianz Division 1A and a spot in the league semi-final was in sight, only for their campaign to come to an abrupt end.

An outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in south Armagh at the end of February saw the immediate postponement of all inter-county GAA fixtures, and when another case arose in Ardboe, Co. Tyrone, in mid-March, that adjournment was extended until the start of April.

In the national interest of protecting the agriculture industry and economy in the face of a potential catastrophe, Tyrone were thereby excluded from taking part in the league, and their semi-final spot went to Roscommon.

A case was also identified in Louth, thus also ending their league campaign prematurely. The newly promoted Wee County had made a solid start to life in Division One including a win over Páidí O'Sé's reigning All-Ireland champions Kerry.

Like Tyrone though, they were unable to take part in the remainder of their campaign, which eventually ended in a relegation play-off with Donegal eight months later in October.

The GAA season resumed on April 1st and the league

played to its conclusion without Tyrone in the final four, and Mayo beating Galway in the final.

"I suppose at that time we might have had a bit of a chip on our shoulder about it all," says the then Tyrone joint-manager Eugene McKenna, "but from our point of view it was very much, 'get over it and start working on the next match'. We didn't dwell too long on it."

"We had a brilliant young team coming, that U-21 team with the likes of Brian McGuigan, Owen Mulligan and the late Cormac McAnallen were coming through, Sean Cavanagh was coming through from minor, so we were building."

There were to be more disruptions to the GAA season however, when another case of the disease popped up in Cushendall, just two days after the Ardboe outbreak.

It would have ramifications on Antrim's opening Ulster SFC fixture with Derry the following month. A 30-day exclusion period was imposed on the Saffron footballers, while Derry players within close proximity to the Ardboe outbreak were not allowed to link up with the county team for the same period of time.

"I remember a picture of Paul McFlynn and Johnny McBride sitting in the stands for a league game because they weren't allowed to play," says Brian McGuigan, from the Ardboe club.

"We have social media now and we can see everything all the time, whereas then you were really going on phone calls and what you were seeing in the newspaper."

A young McGuigan was a rookie in McKenna and Art McRory's senior squad at the time - but was also a key part of the Tyrone under-21 team, managed by Mickey Harte, that were due to play Fermanagh in the Ulster final that month.



He recalled: "I was involved in the U-21s, so I wasn't training with seniors. When the U-21s were cancelled, I didn't even train with the seniors then. Only when the ban was lifted I went back to training. The lough shore ones - me, Chris Lawn and Martin Conway from Moortown - were involved in the Tyrone setup and we weren't allowed to go back to train."

The defence of their provincial U-21 crown against Fermanagh was put into jeopardy when the Ardboe outbreak emerged.

"I can mind the U-21s going well at the time, but the whole thing came to a standstill," says McGuigan. "At that time we had a good team and we knew we had the chance of winning an All-Ireland. Everyone was

thinking, 'Right we'll go on ahead without them', but Mickey put up a good fight and it got postponed.

"People were saying Fermanagh should advance to the All-Ireland semi-final, and play the Ulster final at the end of the year, which didn't really stand well with us because if you win the Ulster final you want to go on and represent Ulster in the All-Ireland series. Mickey got his way, the Ulster final was put off and we went on to play in the All-Ireland."

Tyrone would go on to retain the Clarke cup in October of that year, defeating Mayo in the final. The seniors meanwhile, won the Ulster title, but bowed out in the All-Ireland quarter-final to Derry, who they had beaten on the way to the provincial title. Club football went ahead in Tyrone during the crisis,



seat, and the rest is history, with the Red Hand County winning their first ever Sam Maguire that summer.

From the despair of the 2001 shutdown and exclusion, inside two years Tyrone had not only recovered, but won their maiden Allianz League Division 1 and All-Ireland championship crowns – a quite remarkable comeback.

“Did the respite, not jokingly looking at it, but did it drive us on after that?” wonders Donnelly.

“You never know if that would have been the fuse that lit it.”

The 2001 Foot and Mouth epidemic devastated Ireland’s farming community, but it pales in comparison to the chaos currently being caused worldwide by the Covid-19 virus.

GAA activity has been suspended at all levels, but the importance of the club couldn’t be more prescient, with many offering help to those in their communities who have been severely impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic.

Across the country clubs are going above and beyond to assist those in need, and it’s that civic responsibility and willingness to help that Donnelly believes is the GAA’s strongest suit.

“The clubs are absolutely flying as far as trying to do things within their community. They are the leaders in their communities. Every club are out offering their services and helping people. They are absolutely brilliant in times like this,” he said.

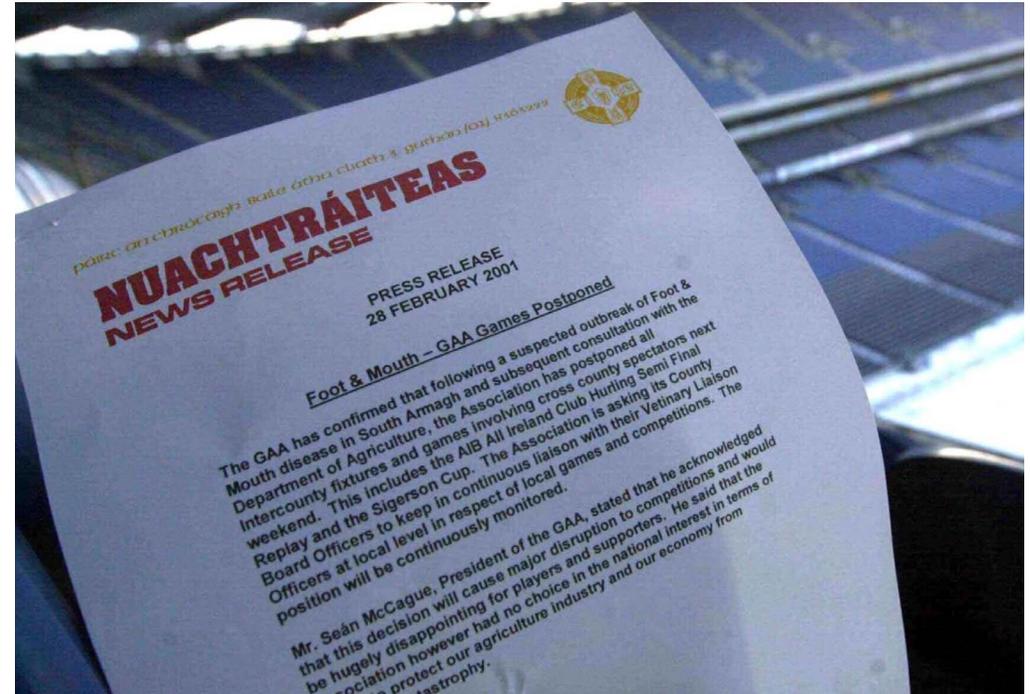
with the exception of ties involving clubs from the 10-kilometre exclusion zone around the outbreak in Ardboe.

The Tyrone county chairman at the time, Cuthbert Donnelly, was in close consultation with Croke Park on a daily basis as to how to implement the safest way of running club football in the county during the crisis.

“Clubs at the time weren’t allowed to travel into those infected areas,” recalls Donnelly. “I remember going through these exclusions zones. You had to pull in, there were disinfectant mats there and you had to get out and wipe your feet on the mats. It was a very serious situation at the time.”

The Foot and Mouth crisis came to pass and normal life resumed, and while League and All-Ireland glory eluded Tyrone for another season, a long-awaited first senior national title came a year later in 2002 with a nine-point victory over Cavan in the 2002 Division One final.

In 2003, Mickey Harte moved into the senior hot-



“Here in Tyrone, the work of the Health and Well-Being Committee have seen them helping people, advising them what to do and where to go.

“With the help of God, the people will do what they can and it can be controlled. I’m not a medical person but I think that if we do what we’ve been advised to do, it will be controlled, added Cuthbert.”

Brian McGuigan, a father with a young family, is encouraged by how GAA clubs are reacting to the situation. “When the outbreak first came out for the Coronavirus, your first thought

was how GAA would be affected. But now it’s much bigger, and I think we are all really looking for calm,” says McGuigan.

“You don’t mind doing all these measures, as in two months’ time we all hope that everything is going to be ok and the fatalities are going to be as low as possible.

“It’s good to see all the clubs are rowing behind it. You just hope that helps us overcome this, because we do have great community spirit in Ireland. Maybe other places aren’t as lucky as we are that we have such a tight-knit community.”

LANDMARK CLEAN SWEEP GIVES NAAS HURLERS PLENTY OF OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE

By Damien Lawlor

2019 was a very fruitful year for Naas GAA.

In football, their under-17s, 18s and 21s all won county championships. Their senior footballers also won the Kildare SFL. Naas CBS had a fine season too, reaching the Hogan Cup final.

The new ground that the club's hurlers broke was just as rich and fertile, with a famous clean sweep achieved last winter as the Naas senior, intermediate and junior teams all won county honours.

Out of the 48 senior and intermediate players who received medals at a subsequent awards night, 46 came through the club's hurling nursery, ran principally by one of their greatest volunteers, John Holmes, a former St Vincent's club man who settled in Naas decades ago and devoted every bit of spare time to promoting the small ball game in the town and parish.

Holmes, the late Denis Hanley, Jim Sheridan, Morgan Lawlor and others were and still are long time promoters of the game in the Kildare suburb. During the 1980s, however, it was hard to get young hurlers out, with only 10 turning up some weekends. That's in stark contrast to current times when their nursery is packed and thriving, and their underage teams feature extremely healthy numbers. There are close to, if not over, 300 kids at the club's camps each summer and Easter.

All the hard work is paying off.

There is little talk of the clean sweep of county titles, just a longing to work harder and achieve more. The senior football team, too, have ambitions to make a championship breakthrough.

But when the under-21 hurlers landed the 2019 county

title – for the fourth consecutive time – people from the outside started to sit up and take notice. That win meant Naas had become the first club in the county to win all hurling championships from minor to senior in the one year. At juvenile level they also won the under 14 and 16 titles.

The senior win was a seismic one. After huffing and puffing for so long, failing to win a county title for 17 years, they finally ground out a win over Coill Dubh in the Kildare final in a tense and sometimes blunt affair.

It was fitting perhaps that, before the game, members of the winning team of 1994 were guests of honour on the day with names like Richie Coyle, Eamonn Denieffe, Jimmy Kinlon and the Borans there to cheer the team of 2019 on.

Another nice touch was how the Naas under-9 team provided a guard of honour as the side ran out onto St Conleth's Park. If ever a snapshot into the club hurling fraternity's past, present and future was required, this was the perfect one.

The secret? Hard work, huge enthusiasm for the game, and, as with the club's football set-up, many willing volunteers, administrators to coaches.

At the turn of last year, Tipperary's captain and 2019 Hurler of the Year, Seamie Callanan, was on hand to present medals to the underage teams and was taken aback by what he saw on the night – in terms of numbers, silverware and the reception he received.

"The game is absolutely thriving there," he says. "You can see it by the numbers and the interest around the place.

"I would just say to the young players stay practising," the multiple All Star advised. "Stay hitting the ball every day. By doing that they can improve and do great things in the future if they all stick at it."

The number of hurling initiatives the club presents also shows a determined approach to mark Naas out as one of the country's most fertile hotspots.

A few years ago, the club won the under-16 Kilkenny shield, defeating Ballyhale Shamrocks in the final. They play underage league hurling in Dublin and are more than holding their own in that company. David Herity has a sizeable Naas contingent on his Kildare squad, captained by Brian Byrne, an excellent role model.

It's the personal touches that count in any club and Naas is no different. From the biscuits and orange juice provided for the nursery and underage players at training every Saturday morning to the special booklet that under-9 manager Declan O'Rourke and his coaches presented to their team last Christmas, detailing all the work and fun times they had together, to the man-management employed by the likes of Shane Donnelly, Neil Swan and Brian Begley as the Naas juniors also won a much-sought after county title last year.

The likes of John Holmes have played a pivotal role in breathing new life into the game of hurling in Naas, but now at every level they have determined workers, family members, coaches and volunteers driving things on.

There is momentum and there is ambition too. Amid the uncertainty of



Covid-19 and its aftermath, the resumption of GAA activities in Naas is eagerly-awaited, not just by the players, but by the army of volunteers overseeing their affairs.



ÁR GCLUICHÍ, ÁR LAOCHRA #10 – RICHIE HOGAN

Le Jamie Ó Tuama

Cad is féidir a rá faoi Richie Hogan, laoch mór Dhún Feart agus Chill Chainnigh, nach bhfuil ráite cheana féin?

Tá Craobh an Domhain buaite aige sa liathróid láimhe. Tá ocht gcinn de Chraobhacha Laighean buaite aige, ceithre cinn de Ghradaim All-Star agus seacht gcinn de Chraobhacha Uile-Éireann. Ainmníodh é mar 'Imreoir na Bliana' sa bhliain 2014. Ní gá aon rud eile a rá! Seo mar a d'fhreagair Richie ár gcuid ceisteanna san eagrán is deireanaí seo den tsraith 'Ár gCluichí, Ár Laochra'!

Ainm: Richie Hogan nó Risteard Ó hÓgáin

Aois: 31

Slí bheatha: Bainisteoir Tráchtála

Club: Dún Feart

Contae: Cill Chainnigh

An scannán is fearr leat? Training Day
An banna ceoil is fearr leat? Mick Flavin
An áit is fearr leat? Glinnte Aontroma
An bia is fearr leat? Stéig agus sceallóga

An chéad chuimhne CLG atá agat:
Ag imirt le mo dheartháir i mo bhunscoil
An t-imreoir ab fhearr leat nuair a bhí tú óg:
DJ Carey
An chéad uair ar imir tú le do chontae:
2008 in aghaidh Aontroma
An t-imreoir is fearr a d'imir leat:
Tommy Walsh
An t-imreoir is fearr a d'imir i do aghaidh:
Padraic Maher

An cluiche is fearr a d'imir tú riamh:
Cluiche Ceannais na hÉireann 2014

GLUAIS / GLOSSARY

Dún Feart – Danesfort

Craobh an Domhain – World Championship

Gradam – Award

Imreoir na Bliana – Player of The Year

Eagrán – Edition

Sraith – Series

Bainisteoir Tráchtála – Commercial Manager

Glinnte Aontroma – Glens of Antrim

Scileanna Bunúsacha – Basic Skills

Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do chontae go dtí seo:

An chéad uair a d'imir mé i gCluiche Ceannais na hÉireann leis an bhfoireann shinsearach sa bhliain 2007

Buaicphointe do shaoil imeartha le do club go dtí seo:

Cluiche Ceannais an Chontae i 2006

An duine is mó a raibh tionchar aige/aici ar do shaoil imeartha go dtí seo:

M'athair Seán

Aon chomhairle agat do imreoirí óga?

Bí ag cleachtadh na scileanna bunúsacha an t-am ar fad.

Aon chaitheamh aimsire eile?

Liathróid Láimhe nó a bheith ag imirt gailf ó am go ham



GAEILGE SCÓR

When you begin to say “every year is a milestone” and “it seems no length since last year’s final”, you know you’ve been around the block for a considerable period of time! For those of us that have lost this beginner status, Scór Caoga has urged us all to reflect on the past, both inside and out of the cultural circle.

As I look back on my participation and involvement in the Association to date, I do so with great happiness and in many cases with humour! A question I’m often faced with is “did you play for long?”

My first experience as a player was at under 10 football on a Saturday morning with our then Parish Priest, Fr. Denis Killion (R.I.P.). Despite much encouragement from Fr. Denis, my new sporting pastime soon dwindled and the end result was inevitable! However, all was not lost; I was introduced to the “ash plant” during my primary education in the rural school of Rahara in South Roscommon.

For those of you who know me well enough, you’ve surely a different perception, but for the purposes of this article, it was hurling!

I continued to play hurling for my final years of primary school and indeed for a period during secondary school at C.B.S. Roscommon, where we were coached at that time by Galway’s, Cathal Moore. This was also a second chance for a link with the club. Similar to my football experience, I was always given a great welcome by our coaches Joe Connaughton, Micheál Cox and Pronsias Killion.

While my hurling time was short it was considerably longer than my football career. The old seanfhocal “Cuir síoda ar ghabhar agus is gabhar i gcónaí é” came home to roost! The men did their best, I enjoyed every second, but I came to appreciate the purpose of a spectator stand!

My final attempt as a club competitor was through Scór where I joined up with two other club men, Michael Egan and Michael Finneran (current Roscommon LGFA Manager) to form a team for the Tráth na gCeistenna. Unfortunately, we never achieved much success, but for me it was the start of many new friendships and hours of enjoyment to be spent up and down the country.

One of the many doors Scór opened for me that seems to have remained opened with a strong wedge, was the area of administration. Having served as Oifigeach Cultúir agus Teanga in both my club and county, I now hold the position of Rúnaí Scór Chonnacht and am also honoured to serve once again on Coiste Náisiúnta Scór.

This administrative beginning in Scór has served me well and given me a solid foundation as I took up other onerous positions in the Association such as Club Chairperson, and County Development Officer but to name a few. In later years, I spread my wings getting involved with Club Planning and Club Officer Training, roles I continue to enjoy immensely.

While I have gained much experience, I’ve learned many lessons but I’ve also come to realise and appreciate that there is a role for everyone in Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

I applaud the Association for recognising this and promoting it in its manifesto – “Tá áit dúinn uilig ann”!

Bainigí sult agus taitneamh as Scór!

Tomás Ó Muirí (Ros Comáin)



MAHER AND STEEDE CLAIM OVERALL PRIZES AT AIB GAA CLUB PLAYERS' AWARDS

Corofin's Ronan Steede and Borris-Ileigh's Brendan Maher have been announced as the AIB GAA Club Players of the Year in football and hurling.

The overall prizes were announced on Friday March 6 at a special function to honour all of the players named on the AIB GAA Club Players' Awards team of the year in both codes.

Ronan Steede saw off competition from clubmate and previous winner Liam Silke and Kilcoo's Darryl Branagan to claim the overall football prize.

Having formed a formidable partnership with Daithí Burke, Steede was a thorn in the side of opposition teams right throughout their campaign, with his ability to storm forward from midfield and support the attack proving a real asset for the All-Ireland three-in-a-row winning Galway side.

There was no fairytale AIB GAA All-Ireland club hurling final ending for Brendan Maher, but that still does not take from the phenomenal season enjoyed by the Borris-Ileigh man.

Right throughout their Munster and All-Ireland campaigns it was the timely and often eye-catching interventions of the versatile Maher that so often provided the inspiration that Borris-Ileigh needed. The Tipperary star saw off stiff competition from Ballyhale Shamrocks duo TJ Reid and Evan Shefflin to claim the overall award.

The awards were judged by a team of national GAA media from across, print, digital, TV and radio and were presented at Croke Park at a function hosted by Uachtarán CLG John Horan and AIB's Head of Consumer Management Denis O'Callaghan.

AIB GAA Club Hurling Team of the Year

1 James McCormack	(Borris-Ileigh)
2 Paddy Stapleton	(Borris-Ileigh)
3 Joseph Holden	(Ballyhale Shamrocks)
4 Darren Mullen	(Ballyhale Shamrocks)
5 Evan Shefflin	(Ballyhale Shamrocks)
6 Brendan Maher	(Borris-Ileigh)
7 Shane Cooney	(St Thomas)
8 Dan McCormack	(Borris-Ileigh)
9 Christopher McKaigue	(Slaughtneil)
10 Brendan Rogers	(Slaughtneil)
11 TJ Reid	(Ballyhale Shamrocks)
12 Jerry Kelly	(Borris-Ileigh)
13 Dessie Hutchinson	(Ballygunner)
14 Colin Fennelly	(Ballyhale Shamrocks)
15 Martin Kavanagh	(St Mullins)



AIB GAA Club Football Team of the Year

1 Bernard Power	(Corofin)
2 Aaron Branagan	(Kilcoo)
3 Kieran Fitzgerald	(Corofin)
4 Liam Silke	(Corofin)
5 Kevin O'Donovan	(Nemo Rangers)
6 Robbie McDaid	(Ballyboden St Enda's)
7 Darryl Branagan	(Kilcoo)
8 Daithí Burke	(Corofin)
9 Ronan Steede	(Corofin)
10 Gary Sice	(Corofin)
11 Paul Devlin	(Kilcoo)
12 Seán Gannon	(Éire Óg)
13 Colm Basquel	(Ballyboden St Enda's)
14 Martin Farragher	(Corofin)
15 Conor Laverty	(Kilcoo)



CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Due to the unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves in, all scheduled Club Officer Training has been cancelled for the month of March and beyond as of now.

It has been a very successful rollout for the CLDP in 2020, albeit cut short prematurely, with some 1682 Officers (at the time of writing) receiving training across 36 events. Almost every county had events completed or scheduled, and while it's disappointing that we won't be able to fulfil the remaining scheduled face-to-face events, it is clear that a real demand exists from club officers for learning and development in their roles.

2020 was the initial phase in the alignment of training across the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Associations. While this will be an ongoing process, the overall feeling is that this was a real success.

Coordinating all Club Officer Training under one umbrella is undoubtedly the way forward and will see all three associations reap the benefit down the road. The Officer Development function in Croke Park worked closely with representatives from the LGFA and Camogie Associations throughout the rollout and together, were able to tailor much of the module content and arrange for volunteers to be present in workshops where specific queries might arise.

2020 also saw the unveiling of a suite of 18 modules for counties to choose from. Many of these have proven extremely popular and beneficial – Getting Work Done in Office 365, Creating a Safe Club and Good Governance chief among these. In addition, the traditional core modules for role specific officerships – Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and PRO remain popular. It is hoped that the suite can continue to be extended and more counties will branch out from the core modules to add more topical courses in the future.

This season also saw an initial trial in both online training and remote webinars. All Club Officers have been encouraged to sign up to the **GAA's Learning Portal** where they can register for face-to-face modules, complete online modules and track their own training over time. There was great interest in the Upholding Disciplinary Rules & Procedures webinar, conducted by the Rules Advisory Committee, as well as the Games Management System webinar, and it is envisaged that this method of distance learning will be expanded in the future.

It is planned that further remote webinar Club Officer Training modules will be made available in the coming weeks, given the current situation. Contact will be made via County Development Officers with details on modules available, dates and times, as well as detailed information on how to access courses. These will be delivered live and can be accessed from any location with a strong broadband connection.

Club Officer Foundation Certificate – Four counties have been identified to pilot the Club Officer Foundation Award this year – Cork, Kerry, Offaly and Mayo. Fortunately, all have already completed their main face-to-face workshop, and so it is still hoped that there is sufficient time available in the latter part of the year to conclude the 8 hours of learning required. Contact will be made with Development Officers to ensure all new Club Officers have the opportunity to complete the award, which ends with a tangible certificate and a full dinner service experience in Croke Park for next year's Club Finals. Participants are asked to ensure they have an account on the Learning Portal, have registered for modules completed or intend to attend and complete the two online modules – Club Officer Foundations and Leading Effective Meetings. Following on from this, when face to face or other remote webinars become available, participants may register their attendance

CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



at these which will log their hours for the Certificate programme.

We'd like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank all the Associates who facilitated or shadowed on courses this year, Development Officers who proactively organised and promoted events among clubs, County Executives, Provincial Councils, the

LGFA, Camogie Association and GAA, as well as the Club Officers themselves. Without the buy in and commitment from all stakeholders, the programme would be unable to make the impact it currently does. We will have updates very soon on more remote learning opportunities – stay tuned to the Learning Portal social media channels, as well as those of your own county.

CLUB MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

Summary

- Clubs must register their players and members for the 2020 season
- A review of key Club information called an Annual Club Update is required
- A review of System access privileges is required
- Step-by-steps guides to logging-in, resetting passwords and registering players and members are available
- A dedicated support desk (e-mail and phone) is available for Clubs

Registration

Clubs are reminded that they must register their players and members for the 2020 season on the GAA Management System (GMS) which can be accessed by visiting people.gaa.ie

Annual Club Update

Club administrators are requested update key Club information, a process known as the annual club update, when they log in to the GAA Management System (people.gaa.ie)

This process has been broken down into six simple steps across three broad categories. When these steps have been completed, the club administrator will be able to proceed to the system as normal. To access further information, click [here](#)

Accessing the GAA Management System

If you are a new Registrar that will be doing registrations for your Club, your Club Secretary, through their official GAA e-mail account must contact gmssupport@gaa.ie to update the Registrar details on the GAA Management System. This will ensure that you can access the system.

When logged on, the designated Club Administrator (Secretary or Registrar) should go to the 'Register Members' page and complete the necessary steps. This page will contain the details of all those people who have been registered with the Club in previous years. To add new members to the Club, go to 'Add and View Members', click on the 'Add' button, select 'Member' and complete the necessary steps.

Please note that anyone whose name is in red on either the 'register' page or the 'add and view member page', is unregistered for the current year.

Only a Full Member who has paid his annual Club subscription by the due date set by the Executive Committee of the Club (which shall be prior to March 31st) shall be eligible to vote at, nominate for, or seek election to the Executive Committee at any following General Meeting of the Club in the membership year.

GAA Management System Support

The GMS Support contains a GAA Membership Training User Guides and FAQ explaining the system. To access this information, click [here](#)



For any queries on access to the system, or on the system functionality, please e-mail or call the Helpdesk via the following details:

- Email: gmssupport@gaa.ie
- Phone: + 353 (01) 865 8632

Support Times

The usual support times are:

- Monday to Friday: 9a.m. – 5p.m.

CLUB PLANNING RESOURCES

Given the current global situation, it just shows the importance of having a plan in place. Whether it be a short term action plan or a more long term development plan, it is important to have goals to reach. Clubs are encouraged to be forward thinking and with that in mind, perhaps now is a good time for your Club to start thinking about a plan.

All Club Planning resources are available on the **GAA Learning Portal**

Background

Over the past decade, the Official GAA Club Planning Programme has helped approximately 1,000 Clubs develop strategic plans.

Planning can help Clubs to:

- Reflect on why it exists, what it aspires to be and what it believes in.
- Decide on the areas of activity that it wants to pursue or needs to focus on.
- Agree on the key projects it will pursue.
- Devise a practical Club Development Plan for carrying out these projects.

How a Club Can Get Involved

Any Club can get involved in the programme. The Club will need to fill out an Expression of Interest Form (EOI) available on the Club Planning section of the GAA Learning Portal.

The EOI is then submitted to either the County Development Officer, Provincial Coordinator or National Coordinator.

For more information please **[click here](#)**



WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

My Favourite Place

By Caoimhe McKay, Pearse Óg GAC U16s

Where is my favourite place? Why is it my favourite place? What makes it so special? Well, Ballycrummy may not be the most eye-catching, breath-taking sight (in fact, if you blink you may even miss it), but it's still my favourite place.

Hidden behind the staggering hills of Mulacreevie and Legar Hill, defined by greenery, lies Pearse Óg Park, also known as Ballycrummy. The grounds act as a base for the young footballers in the town who choose to sport green and gold. Where time stops and fastens, where an entire community has grown to call it home: Pearse Óg Park.

You may be profoundly puzzled as to why exactly a football pitch is my favourite place: why not a holiday destination? Or a leisure centre? Well... let me dive deep into an explanation.

Ballycrummy is like a home-away-from-home, a safe-haven, it comforts me like a mother's hug, and although it may be as cold as Antarctica out there, the sun always shines on us.

The 2000's is when Pearse Óg GAC first claimed Ballycrummy as their own. They adapted the grounds to have the same dimensions as the beloved Croke Park, floodlighting, training facilities and changing rooms. I can still recall a time when the changing rooms were nothing more than khaki coloured containers with a few benches and dim lighting. Things have certainly changed.

There is now a completed clubhouse with walls painted as vibrant as the smiles of past-players permanently captured inside of photo-frames. The grounds host not only a playing field but a designated training pitch as well.

With regards to the training pitch (when the site wasn't as fashionable) sandbanks decorated the top end of the field

and due to the active amounts of rainfall within the area, it was almost as if we had our very own beach right there: and prior to reaching double digits, myself and my friends would actively topple down the sandbanks for hours on end -- it was like time had halted itself for us to enjoy ourselves.

Striking the ball with effort and might, Pearse Ógs secured so much success on the site. A particularly iconic U14 panel saw themselves winning not one, not three, but FIVE trophies! As well as that, the 2009 Senior panel became county-final champions, training immensely hard throughout the year on that field.

In more recent times however, last year's U14 boys team secured a place in the Féile and made it all the way to the semi-final! The U16 girls soared all the way through to the championship final, as well as being league runner-ups. The U12 girls chimed in vastly on the success of the club, winning both the championship and the league!

The current senior panel won the league, with the minor boys joining in on the celebrations by winning the minor-shield. All these countless wins only make me love the grounds more: frankly, it motivates me to put in my best effort. Knowing that I am playing on the same pitch as some of my favourite past-panels only adds on to my adoration.

Under the floodlights, in the pouring rain is when I feel most productive in Pearse Óg Park.

Playing against not only my teammates but the weather makes me feel accomplished when training is over. Despite leaving the pitch with a wet and muddy kit, my head-space feels refreshed, clean and organised -- imagine somewhere bright and clinical, that's what my mind resembles after a strenuous session of football.

The early Sunday mornings, with the sun slowly bronzing

me, is when I feel most at ease: it is often only myself and the ball, so it serves as immensely helpful alone time. In contrast however, the more crowded the pitch gets, the more nervous I grow: because of the fact that the pitch is open for everyone, this can become a catastrophic con for the likes of myself.

Additionally, Ballycrummy has grown to become my favourite place because of its distance from me -- yes, its distance! Living in the town centre means a walk to and from the site can become a mammoth task for me, but it provides good exercise!

In opposition however, there is a slight downfall in regards to the freakish amount of frogs that visit the site alongside their furry friends (rabbits). These can be such a sight when unexpected and usually have all of the girls shrieking like banshees whereas the boys treat the frogs like a foreign species, totally fixated on them with bewildering eyes. Another con that seeps through my memory though is the recollection of retrieving thousands, if not MILLIONS of flaming footballs from the trees and banks surrounding the site.

Annually, the Donal Powell tournament is held in Pearse Óg Park: active members of the club (both young and old) chime in to help run the tournament smoothly. I enjoy the event immensely and often look forward to it taking place, although I will admit that my favourite part of the day is in-fact lunch-time. Hot-dogs are provided to all teams participating and in order to make sure there are enough hot-dogs for all of the teams, the volunteers aren't generally supposed to eat them (not to worry though, we have sandwiches for days!). However, myself as well as many other youngsters can thank Annemarie Valley Powell for sneaking us a hot-dog or two when nobody is watching, and we are thankful, they taste absolutely delicious!

As you can see, there aren't many things to hate about the site. I feel full of immense pride that Pearse Óg Park is my favourite place, prideful of the previously achieved success (and future success) of the club on our home grounds, prideful of the transformation of the grounds, prideful of hearing others utter the simple words "Ógs have a good pitch" and prideful of the fact that I get to pursue my love of Gaelic football on the site all-year round.

Sighing softly, relaxing my shoulders: I can now say that I have explained to you why I cherish Pearse Óg Park so dearly. Amiably, I have shared countless childhood memories that truthfully, I haven't actually thought about in donkeys i.e the sandbanks, the invasion of the frogs... and so forth. I hope that you were as enthusiastic to read this as I was to write it and can only hope that you appreciate Pearse Óg Park for its minuscule beauties if you ever have a chance to visit it, despite what team you're supporting. The site is somewhere I can only imagine my younger self in as much as my own home... so it does mean vast amounts to me, and I feel a warmth radiate from my core when thinking back on the endless memories I have there.



Na Piarasigh Óga Abú!!

A huge thank you to all of the young writers who responded in such huge numbers to our call for essays about what their club means to them. The pride and passion of our young members for their clubs and what the GAA, LGFA and Cumann Camógaíochta means to them was inspirational. Over the next few newsletters we will showcase a number of our favourite submissions and will contact prize winners directly. Owing to space we will have to make some alterations. As the offices in Croke Park are currently closed it will be a number of weeks before we dispatch prizes. *Anyone who would like to, is still encouraged to send a 500 word GAA Club-themed essay to clubnewsletter@gaa.ie*

WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

My Club is my Home

By Tess McKenna, Errigal Ciarán GAA, Tyrone

My club is my home.

It is a place where I have built bonds and friendships with people whom I now couldn't live without.

It is a family, a community, there to provide help and support through the good times and the bad. Gaelic is my favourite hobby, something I look forward to every week without fail, but not only do I love the sport, I love the people who I get to share my sport with.

Firstly, my teammates - the girls who catch and kick, give pep talks when you are in need, help and improve you day in, day out. They are the girls who continue to put a smile on my face no matter the weather.

Next, my managers, although sometimes they bug me with the amount of sprinting they make us do they are the heartbeat of the club. They give up their time and their energy to help me and my team mates improve. They devote their free time to us, and sometimes we don't make it easy for them, but they never give up on us - they give us the hope and drive that we live and breathe. The hope and drive for success.

Lastly, for everyone who helps to make sure the clubhouse doors remain open. No matter how big or small of a role they play I will be forever thankful to each and every one of them because they provide me with the gift to do what I love. They all have made an incredible difference to not only my life but to the lives of others whom I share this sport with.

My club has provided me with amazing opportunities, and there is one that I will have the dearest memories of till the end of time. In 2019 I had the pleasure of representing my club, Errigal Ciarán in the ballad group section of Scór na

nÓg. A ballad group which went on and became Tyrone county champions and later progressed to the Ulster semi-finals which we unfortunately were not successful in.

However, on reflection, I now realise that we were the most successful ballad group to step onto the stage, not because we won but because we found each other. I have made lifelong bonds to these people because of Errigal, because they care. This is an experience I will never forget. Our club provided great support and enthused us with confidence and empowered us to do our best.

Errigal Ciarán has not only helped me improve my football skills, it is where I have been able to better myself as an individual and has reminded me to be kind and thankful in every situation. The world is a big place but in all its beauty and glory my favourite location will always be Errigal Ciarán because I know that it is a place that will always help me create amazing memories.

For 14 years this place has given me the freedom to be myself and surround myself with the most amazing people. My family was a blow-in to the club. I had no family history with the club, no past uncle or aunts who had played for them, just little old me. But I was never made feel as though I was an outcast, I've always felt at home in this glorious club and after all of the above I think it's safe to say I love my club. It saddens me deeply that given the circumstances I am unable to play Gaelic with my club at this time of uncertainty, but I know when the time is right we will be able to return and we'll see every single club across our country return to its full glory, and I can't long for that day to arrive.

#theonlywayiserrigal!!!



My Team - My Club - My Family!

By Joseph Langton (12), Young Ireland's GAA, Kilkenny

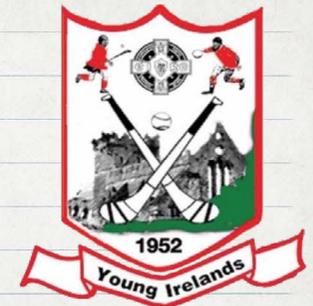
My team is Young Ireland's U13 hurling team. Our Club colours are Red and White, which is great as those colours look good on me and Red is such a powerful, strong colour! Think about it, Liverpool wear red, as do Arsenal! Bayern Munich are another example as researchers say wearing Red means you have more passion and stamina.

My team certainly has lots of these traits and more! We are an outstanding hard-working team who never give up. We are a Kilkenny country team with around 25 players at under 13. We have two teams so everyone gets to play. I'm on the second team but my older brother who is a year older than me is on the 1st team. The 1st team is in Roinn B and the 2nd team is in Roinn C. We are a competitive team. We have future all-stars on our team if we keep up the work. We train hard once a week and have challenge games regularly and often have blitzes and tournaments.

The "big" tournament in our club is The Young Ireland U12 Hurling Tournament. It's usually on in May and this year should be MY year to participate. About eight teams come to our club for the day and we play each other. There are two finals, the Shield and Cup. Last year we won the Cup, beating Danesfort in an epic final (I got to play corner back and I played a stormer, blocking a last ditch attempt by them to try to score a goal - it was probably the "winning" of the game - in my opinion!!) Our club brings everything and everyone together, it's amazing what a GAA club can do. We have a country music festival in Gowran Park every year to raise money to finish building the new pitch and clubrooms that we built four years ago. It's nearly done now.

We also have a dog night at the dog track in Kilkenny.

We are a very lucky club as once a year one of our teams get a chance to play at Croke Park. Sometimes we get to the Leinster Final on a bus if Kilkenny are in it.



Last year four buses went up to Croke Park from our Club. We stopped off to play a Dublin team en route - it was great as we got away from our parents and had some craic on the bus! We even stopped off at Supermacs on the way home. The only bad thing about that day was Kilkenny lost to Wexford - so it was "Back-door" for us.

I love playing with my team and I love playing hurling. I can't wait to get back because:

My team isn't just a collection of people I see a few times a week.

It's my family, regardless if I like all of them or none of them.

I can't choose my team like I can't choose my family. Even if I go through drama, by the end of the day my team will be there for me and I will always be there my team.

If a stunt fails it's no person's fault. Everyone should try harder.

You win or lose as a team.

Rise or fall together they never forget.

That's what I love about my team.

WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

Coinnigí ag cleachtadh

By Aoife McAllister, Ruairí Óg, Cusendall Under 8s

I play for the u8 Camogie team at Ruairí Óg, Cushendall. My coaches Danielle and Collette are very funny, encouraging and kind. I love going to the blitzes all over the county. I have played against my cousin Clare from Dunloy and Emma Rose from Portglenone as we are the same age but we always have time to chat and play!

My favourite blitz was in Glenarm because there was a coffee morning at the same time and I got talking to some other players. My favourite position is midfield like my mammy used to play years ago. She always tells me about the year her U16 team won the Feis cup after 10 years. She said they had a great team that year. She loved Camogie too, and we go out together to practice in the garden. I want to be as good as my cousin Amy, she is a brilliant player.

I look forward to seeing my friends again and playing matches! I am practicing at home, especially hitting in the air and solo running.

I hope we can have a presentation this year as last year it was awesome, the food was yummy. I got a gold medal and the selection boxes were a surprise! We are very lucky to have a nice club to look after us so well. Oh and the dancing was good too!!!

I also go to the Irish classes at the club, Ann Marie runs it, I miss the fun on a Monday night but I use the lessons they put up for us to learn. I hope that all my friends are safe and we can run, play and chat soon in the Summer sun.

Coinnigí slán sábháilte gach duine.

Coinnigí ag cleachtadh !!!



Chliuin Eo Uí Rathille

By Sorcha Ní Chuillín

Is breá liom mo chlub. Tá cairde iontacha agam ann agus imrionn muid le chéile gach uile sheachtain nuair a bhíonn cluichí nó traenáil againn. D'imir mo dhaid, mo sheanathair agus mo dheartháireacha leis an chlub agus tá aithne againn ar fad ar a chéile.

Tá an club sean go leor ach bhí go leor uaireanta glórmhara againn thar na blianta. Is breá liom na cluichí i gcoinne ár gcomharsana Na Fianna, Oiléan An Ghuaill, agus Doire Locháin. Bíonn géaríomaíocht ann, a thosaigh mar gheall ar chomh gar agus atá na clubanna dá chéile, ach ag deireadh an lae tá aithne againn ar fad ar a chéile agus bainimid taitneamh as an gcuideachta.

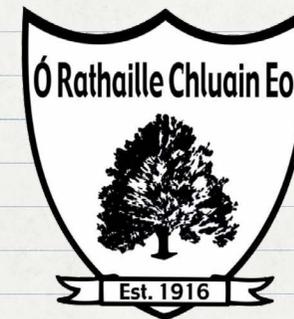
Chuidigh mo sheanathair le Craobhchomórtas 1958 a bhuachan i gcoinne Naomh Colm Cille, an Charraig Mhór. Ba é an scéal ab fhearr liom faoi ná gur rith alsáiseach trasna na páirce chun an liathróid a bhaint amach.

Ainmníodh an club i ndiaidh Michael O'Rahilly, a throid in Éirí Amach na Cásca. Lámhachadh é ar shráid inar scríobh sé litir chuig a bhean lena fhuil féin sna nóiméid dheireanacha sula bhfuair sé bás. Go gairid ina dhiaidh sin d'ainmnigh siad an tsráid ina dhiaidh. I 2016 rinneamar ceiliúradh ar 100 bliain don chlub agus thugamar cuireadh dá gharmhac, Francis, aníos as Ciarraí chun dealbh a fuair muid i gcuimhne air a nochtadh. Gach Nollaig bíonn oíche óige againn chun na héachtaí a bhain muid amach le linn na bliana a cheiliúradh. Tugann an club trófaíthe amach do na daoine is fearr a d'imir le linn na bliana.

Téann cuid dár n-imreoirí ar aghaidh ag imirt ar son an chontae. Le blianta beaga anuas tá 5 imreoirí againn ag dul agus ag imirt ar son an chontae. I 2018 d'imir triúr dár n-imreoirí i gCluiche Ceannais Uile-Éireann i gcoinne Átha Cliath.

Gach cúpla bliain, téann fir agus mná as a mbealach agus téann siad ar rothair chuig áiteanna áirithe ar fud na tíre. Nuair a fhilléann siad, cuireann a dteaghlach agus a gcairde fáilte mhór abhaile rompu le cóisir ollmhór. Don chomórachd 100 bliain, chuaigh baill ár gclub go Ciarraí ar rothair, agus thug siad cuairt ar uaigh Michael O'Rahilly. Thóg sé cúig oíche agus sé lá chun rothaíocht ann agus ar ais.

I gCluain Eo, déanaimid go leor tiomsuithe airgid, mar shampla ceolchoirmeacha, díolacháin bácála, bricfeastaí, maratóin agus seachtainí peile, áit a gcaithimid seachtain ag déanamh cleachtaí peile agus druileanna chun cabhrú linn dul i bhfeabhas. Bhí sé i gceist againn a bheith ag óstáil na féile i mbliana ach chuir ráig COVID-19 ár seans ar ceal. Tá mo chlub an-tábhachtach domsa mar is é an áit a bhfásaim féin agus mo chairde le chéile. Tá ceangal cruthaithe againn a mhairfidh go deo mar tá rudaí ann atá comónta dúinn uile.



Tá tri bhonn chraobhchomórtais buaite ag mo sheanathair le Tír Eoghain agus trí dhuais chraobhchomórtais i ndiaidh a chéile leis an gclub. Thug sé seo spreagadh dom a bheith i mo imreoir níos fearr ar an pháirc agus amuigh ón pháirc. Spreag sé mé chun imirt níos fearr ná riamh agus mo chomhimreoirí a spreagadh ar an bhealach céanna. Is fada liom uaim peil a imirt le mo chlub agus cleachtadh a dhéanamh gach seachtain ionas go n-éireodh go hiontach lenár gclub agus iarracht a dhéanamh aon chluiche a tháinig inár dtreo a bhuachan. Is fada liom uaim é sin.

Fan slán agus folláin.

WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

A time to say thank you to my club

By Emily Wiseman (13) Ardclough GAA, Kildare

Ardclough is a GAA club in county Kildare. It is one of the best places that makes me feel happy in my life. If you are having a bad day and you then go to Ardclough to play some camogie or Gaelic you will most likely come out with a smile on your face.

Ardclough has given me so many opportunities in camogie. Imagine being able to play during the All-Ireland camogie finals! That was a memory that I will never forget. It was one of the best days of my life.

The coaches put all their effort and time into making sure we have fun, never looking for anything back. They support you even if you make a mistake which is very hard because making a mistake can be very frustrating but all the coaches make you feel better and make you persevere and eventually fix the mistake.

In 1920, the area of Ardclough had a football team. But unfortunately the land on which the pitch was situated was taken over by the land commission in 1932 and this resulted in the disbandment of the club and until 1937 there was no team. But Ardclough's greatest days were still to come.

In the mid thirties the late Father James O'Brien decided to sponsor an u14's in the Ardclough district of the parish, and the foundations of it great tradition of allegiance to our native games were solidly laid.

For a good few years there was no club in Ardclough. The footballers of the area were forced to join neighbouring clubs and it was a common occurrence to see brothers playing each other with different teams.

The people of the area with strong leanings toward GAA talked this sad situation over and they agreed that an effort should be made to provide Ardclough with a football club and Dan Graham, Johnny O'Grady were the first people to consider the formation of a football club.

A meeting was called for all those who were interested and this historic gathering took place in the work rooms of Lyons, kindly made available by another Fine Gael, Mick Treacy.

A difficult task confronted this band of football enthusiasts. No pitch, no jerseys, no football, no funds. After a long discussion it was finally agreed that a club would be formed if all those things were available before January 1937. And they were! So the Ardclough we know today was founded affiliating a junior side.

I have been a member of Ardclough GAA Club for eight years now. I am thirteen years old and I started when I was 5 years old. My coaches name is Liz Graham. She has put all her effort into teaching me how to play camogie. She has taught me so many wonderful things. Liz is one of my favourite coaches. She is so inspirational and I am so lucky to have her as my coach. She is so easy to talk to and I consider her as one of my friends. She is the best and she is such a wonderful person. Another coach of mine when I was younger but is still one of my favourite coaches is Clare Curtis. She was the one who believed in me. She told my twin sister and I that we should try out for the Kildare team. So we did! And we are here playing camogie for the u14's Kildare camogie team.

My twin sister and I have been the trouble makers of Ardclough club. Everyone there knows our name. Our wild personalities are definitely challenging for everyone but they handle it. I have made so many good memories playing for Ardclough. It has made me so happy to play for this club and this is my way of saying thank you. I know this is not nearly enough of a thank you but I want Ardclough club to know that they have made the past eight years of my life so good. Every Tuesday night I would look forward to going to my camogie training. Every Saturday consisted of matches which I loved and I would not miss one. Ardclough club is the best and the people from the community are all so nice and caring.

I am looking forward to going back to Ardclough club after this virus stops. I miss everyone from the community and hope I can start playing there soon.



For the Love of the Jersey

By James Casey, age 11; Kildysart GAA, Co Clare

I started playing football for Kildysart when I was five years old. I always enjoyed going to blitz's in different clubs, but particularly Kildysart. I love the pitch and I remember the old clubhouse painted blue and yellow. Our coaches taught us all the skills and made training really fun. I always loved football and Kildysart G.A.A. more than the other sports I did, you just couldn't beat football.

My dad brought me and some of my friends to all the Kildysart and Clare matches and still does. I always loved going to watch my favourite players. My dad always brings me outside and plays football with me and helps me with my left and right foot and to become a better player. I love going to football training and playing football and meeting my friends. I've had great coaches up along the years and they have helped me get better.

I love putting on the blue jersey and playing for Kildysart. I also love when other Kildysart teams that I don't play on win, it's unreal to see a Kildysart team celebrating. I love meeting up with my friends in the summer and going to the pitch to play. I enjoy the annual fun day and Cúl Camp. I like going outside kicking the ball against the wall and practicing. I like playing with my neighbours too. I like going to matches out of the county. One of my favourites was going to Sligo to play in the Aiden McGowan Memorial Tournament. We met clubs from Sligo, Donegal, Tyrone, Mayo and more. We even played the Corofin team from Galway. I also liked playing in a blitz in Kerry in UIO.

One of my favourite Kildysart victories was the U21-B Final against Wolfe Tones. Our journey from Ennis back to Kildysart was great as we were out the windows and beeping the horns. Hopefully when I'm older we will win something like that or better.

I can't wait to get back training and playing matches when the corona virus is gone. I would also like to see

the Intermediate team get over the line and win the championship, after all the years of hard work it would be nice to see them win it.

I've met loads of new people through football from Coolmeen, Labasheeda and more. It's a long stretch but it would be amazing to win a senior championship as the last one we won was in 1889. Kildysart G.A.A. means so much to me and the community even if you don't play football. It's nice to win, but you can't win everything and you have to take the losses. The wins will come with training, practice, dedication and hard work.

I like G.A.A. because it isn't for money or fame it's because you have a passion for it. I like observing the players and how they play and trying to mimic them while practicing trying to get better. The G.A.A. are helping the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers are available to help with deliveries from local businesses. It's great being involved with such a great club.



WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

Coming Together As A Community

By Cillian Boggan, Faythe Harriers, 6th Year St Peter's College, Wexford

The origins of Gaelic hurling and football can be traced back centuries, best evidenced by UNESCO granting hurling and camogie world cultural heritage status in 2018. But the foundation of the GAA as a sporting body was comparatively recent in 1884, as a rejection of British oppression and to promote and protect the values of nationalism and independence which remained at the core of the GAA for decades.

That is why it was ironic and historic in equal measure that the GAA, working in partnership with the IRFU, were one of the key players in staging the now celebrated Ireland V England rugby game in Croke Park in 2007, a watershed moment in the repair of our fractured relationship.

The GAA are specialists in creating moments of national and international significance for Irish people living domestically and abroad. More recent examples include, the GAA allocating the newly renovated, world class Páirc Uí Chaoimh as the venue for the Liam Miller tribute match, and the commemoration of the 99th anniversary of Bloody Sunday where headstones were unveiled for victims who had until then remained in unmarked graves.

However, the GAA have not become the largest amateur sporting organisation in the world, with a membership of hundreds of thousands and more than 2,000 clubs based on purely symbolic acts. The GAA is an expression of our national identity and is at the heart of communities urban and rural, across the island of Ireland. While the respective championships for the Liam MacCarthy and the Sam Maguire best capture the imagination of the wider GAA community, the GAA is preserved by its grassroots - the clubs.

One of the most exciting periods in the career of any player, is the opportunity to represent your county at the annual, highly prestigious Féile championships. In 2016, I had this opportunity when I was captain of my club team Faythe Harriers when we won the national Féile na nGael hurling championship held in Tipperary and Waterford.

It was the first time Wexford team had won the competition since Oulart The Ballagh in 2001. Our club had been deprived of meaningful success for 15 years not having won a senior championship since 2001.

Taking into account our relatively young age, it was impossible for us as a group of players to comprehend the positive effect this would have on our club or the sometimes over-whelming expectation that we inherited to perform at the highest level for the duration of our underage careers. But it was equally impossible to foresee an imminent fundamentally traumatic and turbulent period which would be utterly life changing.

The weekend itself seemed to flow seamlessly. Myself and my close friend Liam Cassin, were warmly welcomed by our host family, the Duff's from Toomevara.



Toomevara is perhaps best known as the club of 2001 All-Ireland winning Tipperary captain and player of the year Tommy Dunne. The games came at a relatively steady pace, beating Kilruane McDonagh's and Cork's Glen Rovers on our first afternoon.

The next day, we beat our host club Tommevara, Roscrea and later that evening Waterford's Ballygunner in the Féile semi-final at Semple Stadium, in the most highly competitive game I have ever been involved in. On Sunday, we again faced Glen Rovers in the final, winning comfortably. In the hours and days after this, the predominant feeling was one of unrivaled joy.

However, that joy - if not evaporated, was certainly diluted, when just three weeks later Mickey Shiel a highly-respected Wexford town business person, a loving husband, and father to my team mate Josh Shiel, who played a key role in winning Wexford's first minor Leinster championship win since 1985, and a coach who had been working with us since the beginning of our hurling careers, was found dead in tragic circumstances.

Mickey's passing which occurred without warning was devastating for us as a group of players, and for

our wider club community. What has been inspiring, is how our club understood the need to come together to support each other emotionally during the days and weeks after Mickey's passing.

Even more pressingly, during the intervening period from Mickey's passing until now, there has been a conscious effort to ensure that his long-standing work and his legacy, is not lost or forgotten.

I often speak with fellow students of mine at St. Peter's College, who are members of St. Anne's or St. Martin's, traditionally more rural clubs, who seem to argue with me that our pure designation as an urban town club results in an unconditional decrease in community associated with our club.

There is an element of truth to this. Unlike a GAA club in a village setting, Faythe Harriers are not the heart of the community in Wexford town.

However, I can rebuke that argument based solely upon my own personal experiences and how our club banded together during the most difficult circumstances, to celebrate Mickey's life and to protect his legacy. Faythe Harriers are a growing club, with an ambition to replicate outstanding and unprecedented underage success, at senior level.

After winning the Féile championship, that same team captured two consecutive Premier Minor Championships in Wexford, winning the club's first in 18 years in 2018.

This season, former Waterford manager Derek McGrath joined our senior management team in an advisory capacity. Although his contribution to the team is limited, having the opportunity to work with a coach of his caliber has been a valuable learning opportunity.

WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

Hurling Is My World

By Colm Óg Breathnach, age 9, Gaelscoil Adhamhnáin, Co Dún na nGall

"I believe hurling is the best of us: one of the greatest and most beautiful expressions of what we can be" (Dónal Óg Cusack - Cork Hurling Goalkeeper)

I live in Letterkenny, Co Donegal. The town is steeped in the tradition of our local saint - Saint Eunan or Naomh Adhamhnáin. The cathedral is named after him. My school is named after him. And my club is named after him - Club Naomh Adhamhnáin or St Eunan's Club.

Our club colours are black and amber, and our club crest has the symbol of St Eunan's Cathedral on it. My club was set up in 1930 and we are based in O'Donnell Park. The club is very successful in football, and we have 14 senior county titles. We won our only senior hurling title in 1972 - but this is shortly going to change.

My dad and mum moved to Letterkenny in 2001. My dad is originally from Co Waterford and he says that it was the club that welcomed them to the town. The St Eunan's club gave him a group of like-minded friends instantly, and within a month they were made feel right at home in this town 450km away from his homeplace.

Dad and mum introduced me and my siblings to the club when we were barely able to walk, and we have been constant members since. St Eunan's GAA club is a place of comfort, happiness and sport for us and we love coming down for training, matches and get-togethers.

Even in today's strange world, St Eunan's have given over their club grounds to the HSE to be used as a testing facility for Covid-19. Members of my club are also helping old and vulnerable people in our town by collecting and delivering groceries, and relieving loneliness by having chats with them... albeit at a distance of 2m or more obviously! Donegal is renowned for its Gaelic Football. I love playing football and practising my skills. But my dad is a hurler. Even when hurling was finding it hard to survive here, he just kept



on hurling. I am proud that he got a chance to lift the Lory Meagher Cup for Donegal in 2011 - a chance that was made possible for him by our club St Eunan's.

Hurling is my world. I eat, sleep and breathe hurling and wait patiently all week for Friday evening to come.

I come from a long line of hurlers. My favourite hurler for my club is Sean McVeigh the present Donegal captain. The coaches are nice, funny and very good hurlers. They greet us with smiles and jokes, and we leave them with huge smiles and great memories every week. They will work out what your weaknesses are and tell you how to work on your weaknesses at home. They are also very quick to praise, encourage and improve all of us. When I score a point or score a goal there is a special feeling that feels magical. You make your parents really proud of you. Meeting my friends or new friends is just extraordinary. Learning new skills that you can use in matches and the pride of playing for my town is an amazing feeling. The bus trips are class because you get to talk, sleep, read and anything you want on the way back or to the match.

My name is Colm Óg. The G.A.A. has witnessed several "Óg's" who have displayed huge talent and skill on the field including Seán Óg and Dónal Óg. Was I named after one of these inspirational giants of the GAA? No. Do I have the same passion and dreams that they possessed? Yes.

I aspire to be a great hurler one day, and my club St Eunan's gives me all the opportunities and experiences I need to make my dream achievable...watch this space!

I leave you with a quote which I found in an old song in my grandmother's house in the Gaeltacht of An Rinn, Co Waterford:

"Is binne glóir mo chamán féin"

A big year for our club

By Seán & Tomás Murray, Grangemockler-Ballyneale, Co Tipperary

Our names are Seán and Tomás Murray. We are 7 and 5 years old. We also have two smaller brothers called Aidan (3) and Eoghan (1) and we love our local GAA Club Grangemockler/Ballyneale.

I (Seán) play U8 and my brother Tomás started training last year with the U6's. We have made many special friends over the last few years playing both Hurling and Football. I love going training because we have really nice and fun trainers. We really love playing Blitzes against all the other local clubs in South Tipp and sometimes we even get treats afterwards! We also look forward to the GAA Cúl Camps and Easter Camps. They are always great fun.

Both Tomás and I attended the All-Ireland Hurling Semi Final in 2019 along with numerous other Tipp matches. I was super lucky to be at the All-Ireland Hurling Final with Daddy, Granddad and Auntie Denise in 2019 when Tipperary won against Kilkenny. That was one of the best days of my life (Granny wasn't as happy as she is from Kilkenny!). I even got to go on a big bus with loads of supporters from our local Club which was great fun and we sang Tipperary songs the whole way home.

Our Club means a lot to everyone in our Community. It keeps us fit and healthy. It brings the people of the two villages together and we get to make friends with young and old. We really love going to matches with Daddy and Mummy. My Granny and Granddad always go to them as well.

There is one very special lady who is friends with Granny called Bea who washes the Club Jerseys and has done for the past 35 years - Bea always has sweets for my brothers and I so we always look forward to seeing her!

Last year, 2019 was a very big year for our Club as we won the County Minor A Football Title, bringing home the Michael Hogan Cup for the first time ever along with an



U21 Hurling B South Title. It was great to win in cups in both Hurling and Football.

Both my Daddy and Granddad played for our Club. They are always telling me stories of matches before I was born and talking about the history of the Club.

I am extra proud to be part of Grangemockler/Ballyneale because of its history and this year we are looking forward to celebrating the 100th anniversary of our past club player Michael Hogan who was shot in Croke Park in 1920 and the Tipperary Team were wearing our club colours on the day. The Hogan Stand in Croke Park is named after him and his home place is just over the road from my house.

I am really looking forward to getting back to training as I miss all my friends. Both Tomás and I are outside practicing our Hurling every day. Seamie Callanan called to our school with the Liam MacCarthy Cup in November 2019 so I am looking forward to seeing him again when they win the All-Ireland in 2020. I hope to play for Tipperary when I am older and it will be very special when I get to play alongside my brothers for our Club and hopefully win some more cups for our Club and the people of our little Parish in the future.

WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

Is mise Ireland's biggest GAA fan

By Sinead Cuggy, St Brigid's GAA, Dublin

I play Camogie and Gaelic Football with St. Brigid's GAA club. In 2018, my Camogie team won Dublin Feile and represented Dublin at the National Feile in Galway. I have great passion for all things GAA, playing with my club, supporting my club, and working with young players at the weekly nursery. I have played GAA since I was 5 years old.

Words cannot describe how I feel about GAA, shivers go up my back, and I get a lump in my throat, my heart pounds and all I can feel is joy. You could offer me the Caribbean, or lotto wins but I would still prefer the GAA. When we go on holidays, we bring our jerseys and hurls and often that is how we meet other Irish and often had to teach the locals Gaelic games. I have missed many events for hurling, but I love it and it's not a chore for me. There are four young boys from our club living beside me and I train with them every day. I love coaching and watching them develop. I have an autograph book I got in Croke Park in 2010 when I was six years old. I have used it ever since and now I am almost 16 and it is full of famous hurlers signatures. It is my prize possession. I think I have met every hurler under the sun. All I have got for the last 16 years for Christmas and birthdays is GAA gear. I don't know what it is but the GAA means everything to me it's what I go to sleep dreaming about

From Christmas Bingo to fundraiser quizzes, to my first disco, to Feile Christmas Tree collection fundraiser, the GAA gives more than just playing the games. I bring GAA into all aspect of my life. Attending the GAA Youth event, I saw it as a great opportunity to make relationships with like-minded people. My TY Student Enterprise project has a big GAA focus to produce a cheap easy to use Match Performance statistics for GAA clubs. I was so lucky I got to complete TY Work Placement with Dublin GAA at Parnell Park and DCU Sports Department. I was in my element and loved every moment of the experience. My career ambition is to work with the

GAA in some capacity. I love the GAA, it gives me so much in terms of my social friendships, health and wellbeing and my personal development. I think the profile of Ladies games are improving all the time and I want to be part of it on both the playing fields but also helping the GAA to reach its potential.

GAA is in my DNA; it is what I love; it's what I do. I have so much passion for GAA. I am involved at a very high playing level. I am passionate about women at the forefront. It's the one thing that makes me proud to be Irish. The GAA is continuing to provide great opportunities and I want to be part of it. I love going to Inter County matches and getting on the pitch after the game, getting photos and autographs with the players. On my way home, I feel so inspired and motivated to play hurling to my best. At some point in the future, I would love to write a book of the GAA in some capacity.

I was at the 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018 and 2019 All-Ireland Finals, trying to emulate my Dad, who has missed only one All-Ireland final in the last 52 years.

My GAA story is exactly that - my story. I could pick a momentous occasion or significant goal but instead my story reflects the week in week out inspiration and encouragement I get at club level. My Grandad was the reason I am the GAA fanatic and when he was alive after every game I played he would say "did you score 2 goals?" and because I was a forward, he always knew I'd never score less and it was a bonus if you scored more.

My Grandad played in the 1949 All-Ireland minor final for Kilkenny. He also worked as a Stiles man in Croke Park for

35 years. I think the GAA is a lifelong connection. I am lucky to have a few Inter County players that are my cousins - Eoghan O' Donnell (Dublin) and Kevin Kelly (Kilkenny). Eoghan helps at my club training days sometimes, which makes me so proud. I have massive pride for St Brigid's, Dublin and Kilkenny. My family 'slag me' about my bedroom and they call it a GAA grotto with all the posters and sliotars in it. Last year the 2019 All-Ireland semi-final between Kilkenny and Limerick was the proudest moment. Tears sprung to my eyes when the Feadog blew. While also sad tears flowed when the Cats couldn't hold off the Blue and Gold, but that drives me on to 2020.

Due to coronavirus crisis, I am disappointed about missing my favorite time of year: the GAA Summer. I hope that the country will return to normal soon, but it is very understandable that the health of all our citizens is secured. We open our Family 7-seater to all the cousins and drive all over the Green Isle following Dublin and Kilkenny singing "Rose of Mooncoin" and "Molly Malone". I am still training just not with my team. I am developing my game so when we return, I will be ready.

The phrases below echo all Club sentiments. Eat, sleep, study, hurl, repeat is now my new Coronavirus daily routine. Rebounder out the front and rebounder out the back. As hurling skill comes from your wrists, I have daily wrist exercises.

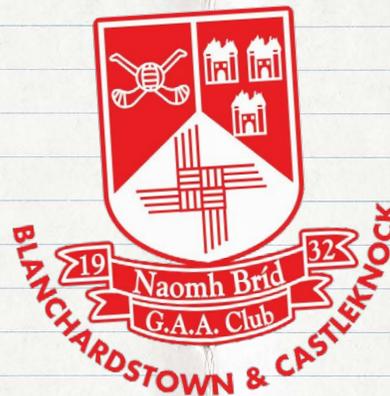
"Eat, sleep, study, hurl, and repeat"
"Do it for the love of the club"

'Great players work hard even off the ball'
"There'll always be next year"
"Wristy hurler"

You get cuts, bruises, injuries but to me these are badges of honor. When I was 14 I played an U16 Club match, I was half forward and I came off after the game and my hand was bleeding but I was smiling, I had seen my idol TJ Reid after a game with his knuckles cut and I felt like TJ. I started out my hurling journey in forwards and scoring was my thing. I was well known for it. I then moved to backs where I was able to play moving forward style of game and still have the odd score but Tommy Walsh's line appeals to me. Recently I have moved to midfield as my stamina improved. I have been captain of my team a few times and I love representing my Club.

The Club powers my passion to do these things. GAA envelops my whole life. I persuaded my Dad to bring me to the Super 11's Hurling Classic in New York; got a chance puck around in Gaelic Park and then cheering my favorite County in the New York Mets Citi Field Stadium. While there, the Kilkenny goalkeeper handed me his jersey, which is another of my prize possessions. I got to attend RTE's 'Up for the Match' before the 2019 All-Ireland Football Final. My summer project last year was collating a one-minute video clip highlighting why I was Ireland's Biggest GAA Fan. I got to attend the great Tommy Walsh's retirement celebration in Kilkenny and was lucky to meet many of the Kilkenny great in the green room. Disappointed with the postponement of my Referee's course due to Coronavirus crisis, it is a small price to pay. I attended my first match in Croke Park at three months old and met the great Tony Doran from Wexford. When I come home from school, I count down the hours until my Team Camogie and Football training.

I am Sinead Cuggy, I love my club St. Brigid's, and I love my two favourite counties Dublin and Kilkenny. I am Ireland's Biggest GAA fan and that is my story. Here's to a GAA filled future.



WHAT MY CLUB MEANS TO ME

Club is Family

By Aisling Murray, age 13, Caltra GAA, Galway

My name is Aisling Murray and I come from a small club in the east of Galway called Caltra. My Club means a lot to me, I am very passionate about football and I am very lucky to get to play with a club like Caltra with such great history.

There are many reasons why club is very important to me - but the key reason is probably my family.

Caltra is a small rural club like many others all over the country so families are very important to the running and success of small clubs like mine. My family have been heavily involved with the club for three generations now so it is only natural that I would play football also. My family have made huge contributions to Caltra over the years both on and off the pitch. My Grandad Paddy Murray was a past treasurer and is now the president of the club. My father and all of my uncles and aunty played football with Caltra and now my dad is the current chairman of the club.

Now my two brothers, sister and I are playing football for Caltra. I really don't know what Caltra would do without people like my father who work so hard for the club to make sure that we (the players) can play to the best of our potential and have the facilities there to train on. I hope that when I am older and it is my turn to take on one of these roles that I will have the work ethic and the dedication that my father gives to the club.

Like all GAA clubs the community plays a huge part in supporting a club and in Caltra it is no different. Football means a lot to our community and the majority of the families in the parish play or have contributed in some way towards the club. The community always get behind everything that Caltra does like in 2004 when we were in the All-Ireland Senior Football Club Final - when the

community came out in force and Croke Park were shocked when 45,000 people turned up outside the gates to go in and watch Caltra take on An Ghaeltacht.

In our Community we are blessed to have some top-class players like the Meehan brothers who have represented both club and county with distinction. In 2010 Caltra took the decision to buy 18 acres of ground beside the village to provide new facilities for the entire community. Thanks to the hard work of the club and the support of everyone within the community we now have a new pitch, new dressing rooms, a community centre, playschool, playground all in place on this development with a training pitch and walking track due to be installed this year. Caltra GAA club means everything to our community and this is very evident in the excellent new facilities which we now have.

Caltra have had many great wins over the years but the 2004 All-Ireland Football Club Final just has to be the best as the small rural club from Galway put their name on the map. We had just won our first Senior County title and after that, little did we know, we were on the road to further glory, we went on to win the Connacht title and before we knew it we were in the All-Ireland Football Club Final. We were up against a tough Kerry side with five county players, but we did not fear because we went up there with our heads high despite being written off by everyone outside the club. People doubted us and said that we wouldn't win but in the end we proved them wrong.

After a tough game we had come out as victors by the slenderest of margins and we had won our first ever All-Ireland Football Club Final title and once again the Meehan brothers had played a huge part kicking 12 of our 13 point total.

Caltra were the first ever team to win their first ever Senior County Title and then go on to win the All-Ireland

in the same championship. I may not have been born at the time but from the stories I have been told there was plenty of celebrating afterwards.

I can't wait to go back to training after all issues with Covid 19 have been resolved because I haven't been able to train since the 28th of February after I picked up an ankle ligament injury while training. When I got the injury and was put on crutches, I was very disappointed as it meant that I was going to miss the Féile competition which was due to be played at the end of March.

Then Covid 19 struck which closed down all GAA activity and now a decision has been made to cancel Féile for this year so none of us will get to play in it which is a pity as most of my team will be overage next year.

I can't wait until my ankle is better and everything with Covid 19 is solved so that I can go back training, running around and to have fun with my team mates again.

I love my team very much and I can't wait to go back playing football again and having fun with my teammates!

These teammates are my best friends and without football I might not even know them. Due to my ankle injury at first and now Covid 19 I have realised how much the GAA and my family mean to me.





Football

Hurling

Club

General

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to this month's edition of the GAA Club Newsletter. Your feedback is welcome and any comments, suggestions or queries should be directed to clubnewsletter@gaa.ie.

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