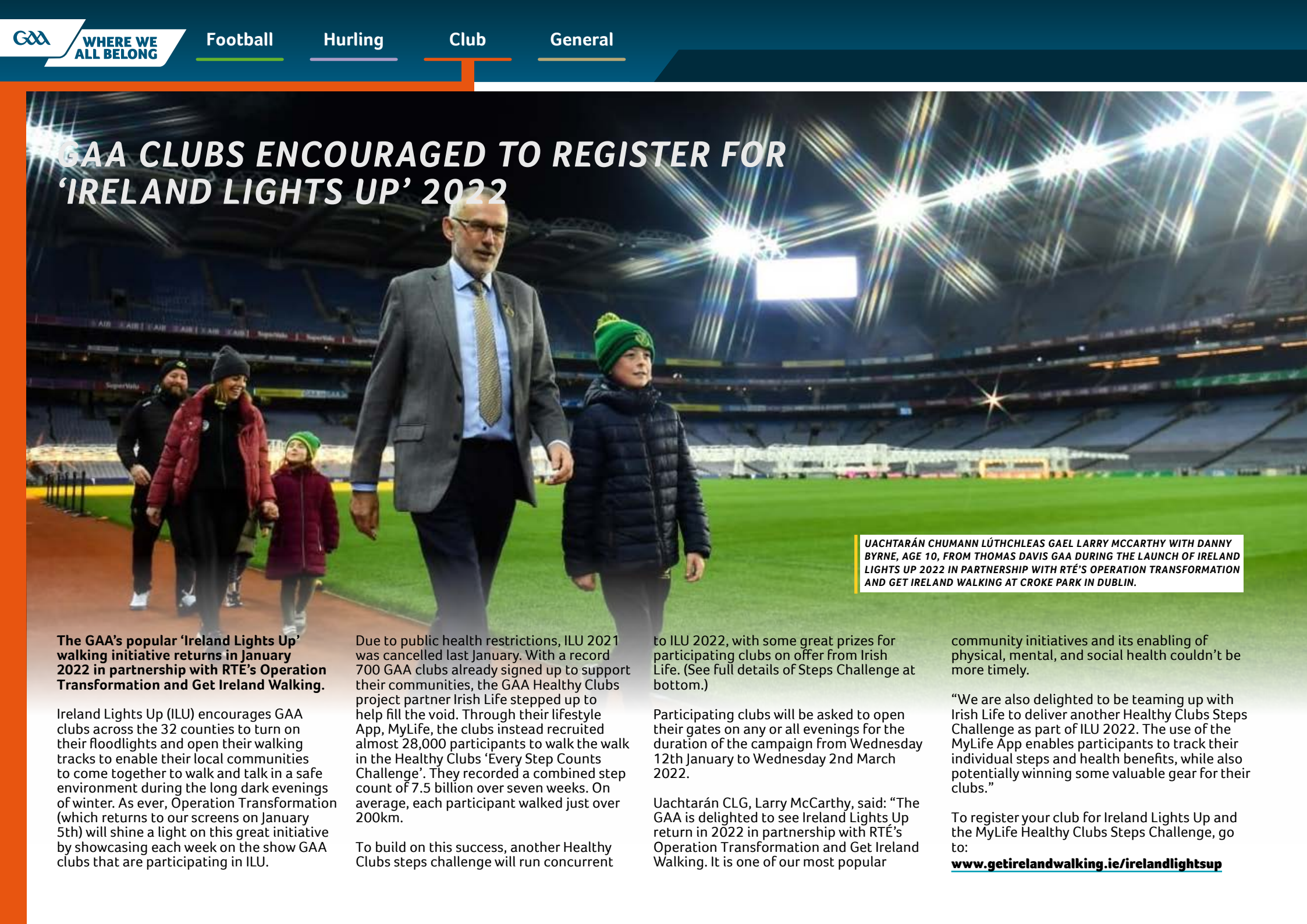


DECEMBER 2021  
**NUACHTLITIR**  
NOLLAIG 2021



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# GAA CLUBS ENCOURAGED TO REGISTER FOR 'IRELAND LIGHTS UP' 2022

UACHTARÁN CHUMANN LÚTHCHLEAS GAEL LARRY MCCARTHY WITH DANNY BYRNE, AGE 10, FROM THOMAS DAVIS GAA DURING THE LAUNCH OF IRELAND LIGHTS UP 2022 IN PARTNERSHIP WITH RTE'S OPERATION TRANSFORMATION AND GET IRELAND WALKING AT CROKE PARK IN DUBLIN.

**The GAA's popular 'Ireland Lights Up' walking initiative returns in January 2022 in partnership with RTE's Operation Transformation and Get Ireland Walking.**

Ireland Lights Up (ILU) encourages GAA clubs across the 32 counties to turn on their floodlights and open their walking tracks to enable their local communities to come together to walk and talk in a safe environment during the long dark evenings of winter. As ever, Operation Transformation (which returns to our screens on January 5th) will shine a light on this great initiative by showcasing each week on the show GAA clubs that are participating in ILU.

Due to public health restrictions, ILU 2021 was cancelled last January. With a record 700 GAA clubs already signed up to support their communities, the GAA Healthy Clubs project partner Irish Life stepped up to help fill the void. Through their lifestyle App, MyLife, the clubs instead recruited almost 28,000 participants to walk the walk in the Healthy Clubs 'Every Step Counts Challenge'. They recorded a combined step count of 7.5 billion over seven weeks. On average, each participant walked just over 200km.

To build on this success, another Healthy Clubs steps challenge will run concurrent

to ILU 2022, with some great prizes for participating clubs on offer from Irish Life. (See full details of Steps Challenge at bottom.)

Participating clubs will be asked to open their gates on any or all evenings for the duration of the campaign from Wednesday 12th January to Wednesday 2nd March 2022.

Uachtarán CLG, Larry McCarthy, said: "The GAA is delighted to see Ireland Lights Up return in 2022 in partnership with RTE's Operation Transformation and Get Ireland Walking. It is one of our most popular

community initiatives and its enabling of physical, mental, and social health couldn't be more timely.

"We are also delighted to be teaming up with Irish Life to deliver another Healthy Clubs Steps Challenge as part of ILU 2022. The use of the MyLife App enables participants to track their individual steps and health benefits, while also potentially winning some valuable gear for their clubs."

To register your club for Ireland Lights Up and the MyLife Healthy Clubs Steps Challenge, go to: [www.getirelandwalking.ie/irelandlightsup](http://www.getirelandwalking.ie/irelandlightsup)

By Cian Murphy

## CARPE DIEM FOR CLUB SEASON LET'S GIVE THE SPLIT SEASON A CHANCE

**A SHORTER SEASON WITH GREATER CERTAINTY ON WHEN THERE WILL BE GAMES AND MORE CERTAINTY ON WHEN THERE WILL BE COUNTY PLAYERS AVAILABLE FOR THEIR HOME CLUBS WILL BE THE KEY BENEFITS OF THE GAA'S NEW SPLIT SEASON.**

But Croke Park's Feargal McGill is still urging clubs not to make snap judgements and believes that it could be two or three years before we see the full benefits of the dramatic calendar shift which arrives in 2022.

Feargal, who is the GAA's Director of Player, Club and Games Administration, says that at national as well as club and county level there will be lessons learnt as the Association embarks on the new format.

He said: "I would urge clubs not to make any snap judgements because it is likely to take two or three years before we make a firm judgement on the impact of the split season."

"I would predict that in every county, how they administer fixtures in year one of the split season will be different to how they run games in year three.

"You never know the unintended consequences until something is put in practice and even at national level, we will take a broader view and I would feel we can't properly judge the impact until at least three years' time.

"If we go back to where we were five years ago, we very often had a club season beginning in February and it was not

finished until the following November or December or possibly ran into the next year.

"Getting certainty around fixtures is something club players want. There will now be a shorter season with a definite fixture calendar. Club players should know that come July and August they will be busy and there will be club championships on but they are unlikely to have club championship before then and can plan weekends away, holidays, weddings.

They should have more certainty in when they have games and there will be more certainty for clubs with county players who will know when they are available."

The 2022 inter-county GAA season will resume competitive action in January but will be fully completed with All-Ireland hurling and football finals completed by the end of July.

Barring the counties involved in those senior finals, the calendar will be club only from July and most definitely August onwards.

Shifting to this new programme will take time. Some counties already have ultra-competitive leagues and cup competitions outside of the county championship and elsewhere there will be counties who will need to provide this type of games programme in the spring months when county players are unavailable.

In other counties they already operate a staggered league programme that awards different points for games played with or without county players.



This is part of the new and innovative thinking that Feargal McGill believes will take place more widely in the years to come.

He added: "Counties will come up with new plans and there will be issues like managing hurling and football within that. This is another reason why we feel it is important to recognise that this change will take time. However, the potential benefits are

significant for players."

"Our advice to fixture makers is always to talk with people on the ground and to not be dismissive of their views and look at the big picture. Rather than look at the impact of the changes on one or two games or, on one or two clubs, they need to ask themselves are they serving the needs of the vast majority of clubs well."

## HOW GREEN IS YOUR GAA CLUB?



- ENERGY • WATER • WASTE
- BIODIVERSITY • TRANSPORT

### WHY NOT BEGIN YOUR JOURNEY TOWARDS MAKING YOUR CLUB A MORE SUSTAINABLE PLACE AND CHECK OUT THESE

#### TOP TIPS FOR A GREENER CLUB

**Before you get going considering starting up a club Green Team – c. four members with a range of ages and experiences is a great mix**

#### TOP TEN GREEN CLUB TIPS FOR 2022

1. **Biodiversity:** Plant a pollinator-friendly flower bed in your club colours.
2. **Biodiversity:** Reduce mowing of non-playing areas to let wildflowers survive and thrive. See examples from other clubs at <https://pollinators.ie/sports-clubs>, this

3. **Waste:** Carry out a survey of your club's rubbish bins and bills to make sure you are segregating and recycling to the max.
4. **Waste:** Identify club teams to lead the way in eliminating single-use plastic

bottles from training and matches. Depending on your club location, check out [mywaste.ie/business](http://mywaste.ie/business) for signage and posters for your club or contact [christine.chambers@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org](mailto:christine.chambers@keepnorthernirelandbeautiful.org) for a Keep NI Beautiful Tackling Plastics Toolkit.

5. **Water:** Conserve up to two litres per flush by placing low-cost cistern bags in all older toilet cisterns in your clubhouse.
6. **Water:** Team up with other community organisations to identify risks and actions for water quality in your catchment area.

Depending on your club location, the Community Water Fund Development Grant is open until 8 February 2022 for local water projects big and small or visit [getwaterfit.co.uk](http://getwaterfit.co.uk) for free water saving tips and devices.

7. **Energy:** Understand your energy use by taking regular meter reads and carrying out a simple club energy audit. Start by completing the survey [here](https://forms.office.com/r/nMmVd103yG). <https://forms.office.com/r/nMmVd103yG>
8. **Energy:** Consider joining an energy community through the **SEAI's Sustainable Energy Communities Programme** or by contacting [greenclubs@gaa.ie](mailto:greenclubs@gaa.ie)
9. **Transport:** Use team communication apps to encourage players and parents to choose active travel and, where public health advice allows, car-sharing options. Visit <https://www.transportforireland.ie/plan-a-journey/to-help-plan-your-journeys> to help plan your journeys.

10. **Transport:** Carry out a survey with club members to identify challenges to and options for more sustainable travel to and from the clubs.

<https://learning.gaa.ie/be-sustainable>

The Green Club Programme is a partnership between the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association and local authorities across Ireland. This partnership has its origins in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Champions Programme organised by the Dept of Environment, Climate and Communications.

Both the GAA and Carlow County Council were among the 12 inaugural SDG Champions and initial informal discussions led to the establishment in January 2020 of the Green Club Pilot Programme.

Phase 1 of the Programme includes approximately 45 clubs – big and small, rural and urban – from across the four provinces plus a small selection of county and provincial venues.

Phase 1, which is modelled on and held in collaboration with the GAA's Healthy Club Project, will run up to June 2022 with the objective of developing a Green Club Toolkit to be shared, further tested, and refined as the programme expands beyond the initial phase. All resources, case studies, and learning developed throughout the pilot programme will be made freely available to all Gaelic Games units.



# THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS GIFT

## THE COMPLETE HANDBOOK OF GAELIC GAMES

The comprehensive statistical record of GAA activity at national level since the inauguration of the All-Ireland Championships in 1887.

## GAA CROKE PARK ANNUAL

History, highlights and heroes of renown - it's all packed in here in the GAA Croke Park Annual 2020/2021



HURLING | GAELIC FOOTBALL | CAMULOG  
LADIES FOOTBALL | HANDBALL | COLLEGES | UNIVERSITIES  
RESULTS | TEAMS | STATISTICS

## “IT’S MONEY FOR JAM!” GAA’S NATIONAL CLUB DRAW HAILED AS A HUGE BOOST FOR CLUBS



THE CASTLEGAR GAA CLUB IN GALWAY USED THE GAA NATIONAL CLUB DRAW TO HELP RAISE FUNDS FOR THEIR MAGNIFICENT INDOOR ARENA



**WANT TO RAISE VITAL MONEY FOR YOUR CLUB BY OFFERING THOUSANDS OF EURO WORTH OF TOP PRIZES THAT ARE PROVIDED FOR FREE BY CROKE PARK? THEN THE NATIONAL CLUB DRAW IS JUST THE TICKET AND PLANS FOR THE 2022 DRAW ARE STARTING NOW.**

The GAA's National Club Draw has been in place for the last nine years and in that time has allowed clubs raise millions of euro in vital funds.

All the prizes for the NCD are provided by Croke Park who also handle the management of the draw. Clubs sell tickets at €10 each and ALL of the money raised by the club is retained by the club. Last year alone clubs across Ireland raised €1,464,670 through the NCD.

In Galway, the Castlegar club are financing an impressive new development featuring an indoor arena that will be one of the finest of its kind anywhere in the country and has been used by Galway county teams for training sessions.

Club secretary Majella Nic An Rí says the club seized the opportunity presented by the GAA's NCD to help raise funds for the project.

She said: “It’s not costing the club anything and that is a big incentive. Also, the price of the tickets at only €10 makes them easier to sell. If people want to go halves, they can and then there will be some people who will be able to throw you €20 for two.”

“It’s not costing the club anything other than to get out and sell the tickets and we were fortunate that our treasurer Matthew Conroy really drove it for us. With the prizes sorted you just need to sell and with the GAA doing everything else it is money for jam for the clubs.”

There isn’t a club in the country that isn’t trying to come up with ways of fundraising. With a brand new car, cash and multiple All-Ireland final weekend packages among some of the top prizes offered by the NCD it is a prize fund that takes one headache away from fundraising committees.

“You’re hitting the same people all the time year in year out and for clubs that are not in towns and cities there are not the same number of businesses to look to for support. My message to clubs looking at this draw is to grab it. A lot of the hard work is done and you just have to sell,” added Majella.

Tickets for the 2022 draw go on sale this month and clubs can sell up to a maximum of 2,500 tickets at €10 each and all of the money raised by the club is retained by that club so offering the opportunity to secure €25,000.

The top prizes for the next draw have been confirmed as:

A new car, namely, the all-new Dacia Duster Essential TCe100 BiFuel, €2000 cash prize and All-Ireland Football and Hurling Final Packages.

And there’s more...:

- A draw will take place whereby 3 clubs will receive €5,000.
- Another draw will take place whereby 1 club in each county will receive €1,000.
- The club with the highest ticket sales in each province will receive €1,000

If you have any further questions, please contact [eoghan.maguire@gaa.ie](mailto:eoghan.maguire@gaa.ie) or [nationalclubdraw@gaa.ie](mailto:nationalclubdraw@gaa.ie)



THE WINNER OF THE TOP PRIZE IN THE 2021 NCD WAS A RENAULT CLIO WON BY CHRISTY PHILIPS VIA CLAREMORRIS GAA, CO MAYO

**SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CLUB**

Opportunity for your GAA Club to raise up to €25,000





By John Harrington

## 50 YEARS OF ALL-STARS CELEBRATED IN NEWLY PUBLISHED BOOK

**A TREASURE TROVE OF STORIES AND STATISTICS ON 50 YEARS OF THE GAA ALL-STARS SCHEME IS NOW AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC THANKS TO THE PUBLICATION OF A NEW BOOK, 'ALL-STAR GAZING: 50 YEARS OF THE GAA ALL-STARS'.**

This was a real labour of love by its two authors, Moira and Eileen Dunne, daughters of Mick Dunne, who along with fellow journalists Paddy Downey, John D Hickey, and Pádraig Puirseál got the All-Stars scheme up and running in 1971.

Using their father's meticulous records from covering the All-Stars for 25 years as a starting point, the Dunne sisters have really brought history to life thanks to a series of revealing interviews carried out with over 100 All-Stars winners.

There's something for everyone in this book which combines statistics, entertaining yarns, and evocative photography to paint a vivid social as well as sporting picture.

GAA.ie spoke to co-author Moira Dunne this week about the genesis of the book, and the considerable effort that went into producing it.

**GAA.ie:** Congratulations on the book, Moira. I understand it was a chance discovery that ultimately led you and Eileen down the path of writing it?

**Moira Dunne:** Absolutely. Our Dad's office is still in situ in our home because our mother is still alive. She's 93. In 2010 we gave all Dad's match records over to the GAA museum, so the office was quite depleted. A few years ago I was in the office looking for something GAA related for a player who had done me

a favour. I couldn't find what I was looking for but instead came across a dusty old box underneath the shelf on the floor.

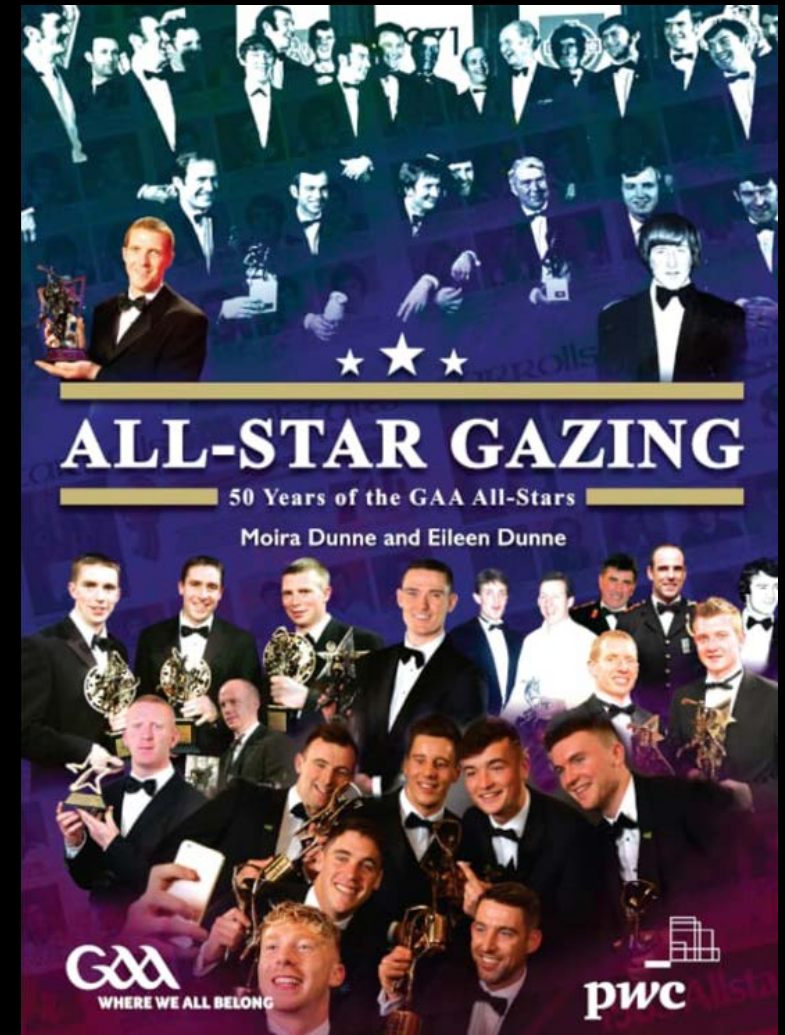
I pulled it out and it contained 25 files covering the first 25 years of the All-Star scheme. It was information we didn't know we had. The particular player I was meeting had just received their first All-Star, so I was thinking there might be something here that's relevant. Then I looked back 40 years to see who won the awards that year. I discovered letters from Jack Lynch and Seán Ó Siocháin and handwritten letters from many great players. There was also the official documents with minutes of the first meeting, et cetera. So, I thought, 'there is something worthwhile here'. I remember texting Eileen to tell her that I had found a lot of information about the All-Stars.

We realised that in a few years time it would be 50 years since the scheme started. We knew we should do something with the information and joked about which journalist we would give the files to. Soon after, I was telling my good friend Marie about the discovery and she suggested that we do something with the records ourselves.

And it kind of went from there really.

**GAA.ie:** Talk to me a little about your Dad. He was obviously madly passionate about the GAA, so I'd imagine you were all caught up a bit in that as kids?

**MD:** Totally, yeah. His legacy was his passion for the GAA and his enthusiasm and excitement was infectious. And that's what I remember so clearly. I think the fact that there were three girls and no boys in the house meant that we were brought to





FORMER RTÉ SPORTS JOURNALIST, MICK DUNNE.

more matches. My mum is very genuinely interested in the games as well. Sunday family days out would be trips to the Munster Final, the Ulster Final, the Connacht Final. So we were all very caught up in it.

And then Dad was so involved with the All-Stars itself. When we were growing up I remember all the excitement and the build up to the banquet in particular. Mum and Dad getting all dressed up and going off to this big glamorous banquet. We used to be so excited about that.

Then the next morning we'd see the menu cards signed by all the players and all the little gifts that Carroll's used to leave on the table. They are very vivid memories. Then as we got older, we got the chance to go to some of those banquets ourselves through the '80s and into the '90s. So, yeah, he just had a passion for GAA and the scheme

and he passed that on to us. We've always followed the games through the years since then, as well.

GAA.ie: Talk to me about the work that has gone into this book because it's obviously been considerable.

MD: Yes, it has. We started out a number of years ago. We drew up a list of players to meet. As there are almost 800 players who've won the 1500 All-Stars awards over the 50 years, we couldn't meet everyone. We focused on the records, the players who had won the most awards, and the family connections - fathers and son pairings and brothers who have won All-Stars. We also met some players who were the first one to be chosen in their county or who might still be the only All-Star. It was fascinating meeting those players because you could see how much the award meant to them, their

[CLICK HERE FOR 1971 HIGHLIGHTS](#)

THE FIRST ALL-STARS FOOTBALL AND HURLING TEAMS WERE PICKED IN 1971.





MAYO ACE ANDY MORAN DELIVERING A COACHING SESSION ON AN ALL-STAR TOUR

family, their clubs and within their county.

Initially we did a lot of research to pull the All-Star stats together and reviewed Dad's files. Then we headed off on our own All-Star tour of Ireland. We just got such a fabulous response. Everybody was so keen to get involved and really delighted to be part of this. It was fantastic. We worked chronologically, starting with the older players, and it was like piecing together a jigsaw. You'd get a little nugget from one player or sometimes you meet two or three together and the stories would spark and then that would feed into the next meeting that we'd have, so that's the way it evolved.

We soon realised that there was more of a story to it rather than just a list of stats and who had won what. It gave us a very personal view of the players, a side of them that we don't normally see. They talk about the excitement of going on trips and going shopping, stuff like that that you don't hear them talking about because the focus in interviews is usually on the matches, the scores and the performances. We felt people would find that interesting, just to see a

different side of the players.

GAA.ie: There are some great yarns in the book.

MD: Yeah, there really are. They're all very simple tales really, certainly the ones we were told anyway. We are aware there's probably a whole other book that could not be written about those tours! It was just guys delighted to be away together, having good fun. What was very clear to us when we started talking to the players, was how much it meant to get that recognition, particularly in the early days, at a time when there really was very little player recognition.

That's what they loved about the All-Stars, because they felt they were being appreciated. Even getting free kit and jerseys and jackets was very new to them at the time. But then even with the younger players it came through how much it meant to them to be still recognised, to be joining the legends on the list, the All-Star Roll of Honour, particularly within their county. You'd have younger players going, 'Wow, I can't believe I have more All-Stars than this

player who's so famous'. So, it was lovely to see how the appreciation was still there through the generations.

GAA.ie: With all the stories that are in the book about All-Stars trips around the world through the decades and how times have changed, it's a real social history as well as a sporting one. How the Irish migrant community reacted to the All-Stars when they visited the USA really gave you a flavour of a time now passed.

MD: Hopefully, yeah, that's what we were trying to do. Through people's stories and memories you do get that feel for, as you say, what it was like being abroad and how much it meant at different stages. There's certainly a lot in the 50 years.

GAA.ie: There's a fantastic article your Dad wrote at the time about how the All-Stars scheme first came in to being, and how the first All-Stars Tour to America unfolded. Speaking of social history, that's a wonderful document to have, isn't it?

MD: It really is, and we weren't sure whether to put it in. I took all the files home and went through them over Christmas and New Year. I found that article on carbon copy sheets. Dad had obviously typed it out, handed the article itself into a magazine.

So I transferred it into a Word document. We weren't sure where it had been published. Then at a later point when I started going through all the Gaelic magazines I found the article. So, yeah, we were thrilled to let him introduce the whole story. It seems fitting.

GAA.ie: It's a fantastic legacy that he has left with the All-Stars scheme, isn't it?

MD: It is really and we're very conscious that he was one of four journalists who started it so we very much want to make it about the four of them. We're going to have representation from the other three families at the launch on Thursday night, that's

important to us. Yes, they did leave a legacy.

What was interesting as well was when we're talking to some of the younger players they asked, 'Oh, did your Dad work for the GAA?'

And I said, 'No, no, he was a journalist, the journalists started the scheme'. Many younger people would think it was a scheme initiated by the GAA. So, I think it's nice, even for today's journalists, that we establish that it very much was a journalists' scheme and still is today. That four journalists started it. I think that's important to have that written down and established.

GAA.ie: You're due to get the finished book into your hands for the first time tonight (Wednesday). I'm sure that will be a very satisfying moment, and that your thoughts will turn to your Dad?

MD: Actually, we are planning to present it to our mum this evening. She didn't want to see it until we could hand her the physical copy. Our third sister, Una, who lives in America, arrived in this morning so we're going to all get together. I am planning to pop into Dad's office, place a copy of the book on his desk, and then the circle will be closed.

### COMPETITION – WIN A COPY OF ALL-STAR GAZING

We are delighted to have a copy of All-Star Gazing to give away.

Simply answer the question below and email your answer with your name and full address to [clubnewsletter@gaa.ie](mailto:clubnewsletter@gaa.ie)

Closing date is January 10, 2022.  
Editor's decision is final

**Q: Name the first ever player to be awarded an All-Star?**

## O'DONNELL'S CONCUSSION ANOTHER WAKE-UP CALL

**THE RECENT REVELATIONS FROM CLARE STAR HURLER SHANE O'DONNELL AROUND THE EXTENT OF HIS STRUGGLES WITH A SERIOUS CONCUSSION INJURY SERVES AS A TIMELY REMINDER AROUND THE NEED FOR CONSTANT CARE AND ATTENTION WHEN IT COMES TO HEAD INJURIES IN GAELIC GAMES.**

O'Donnell spoke candidly of his struggles in a wide-ranging interview with the respected journalist and hurling goalkeeping coach Christy O'Connor in a piece recently featured in the *Irish Examiner*. You can read the full piece here: <https://www.irishexaminer.com/sport/gaa/arid-40753707.html>

The impact of the concussion was so prolonged and severe that at one point he was resigned to not being able to play again. As things stand, he has already reached an agreement with Banner boss Brian Lohan that his return to full availability will be carefully managed into 2022.

All this from a concussion that occurred in training in early June – an event that he is still not able to remember, and which ended his season.

“It happened on a Thursday. By the time the following Wednesday came, it was absolute car crash stuff. From that point on for about two weeks, I was about eight out of 10 on nausea for the entire time. Just sitting down, I could have got sick at any stage.

“I had nine out of 10 symptoms just sitting

on the couch. My primary symptoms for the first four weeks or so were nausea and pressure in my head. Then it was sensitivity to light and sound but the whole gambit was there,” O'Donnell told the *Irish Examiner*.

As well as the nausea, O'Donnell – the hero of Clare's 2013 All-Ireland senior hurling final replay victory – was also hugely sensitive to the light from a mobile phone or a tv.

For most players and coaches in Gaelic games these next few weeks will be a down time and a chance to regroup and reenergise.

For GAA Player Welfare Manager Eoghan Tuohy it should also be a chance for all involved in playing and mentoring teams at all levels to be fully educated on concussion.

He said: “There is a greater level of awareness around concussion in sport now than in previous eras and far more information is available, but it is important that everyone makes themselves aware of it, be they players, parents of younger players and coaches.

“Shane O'Donnell's concussion was obviously very severe and had dramatic effects. But it is also important to know that concussion is not always a knockout incident but can come on players gradually and impact them differently.

“The decision to approve the use of a concussion substitute in Gaelic games to allow for the adequate treatment of



CLARE'S SHANE O'DONNELL IN ACTION AGAINST CORK'S SHANE O'NEILL IN THE 2013 ALL-IRELAND SENIOR HURLING FINAL REPLAY AT CROKE PARK

suspected concussion in matches is a significant development.

“There is a greater acceptance now that a head injury is like any other type of injury – it needs to be properly diagnosed, monitored and treated to make a full and lasting recovery.

“The key to this is education and awareness. The GAA has invested heavily

in these resources and in making them widely available and it is important for all of those involved in our games to be aware of them.”

Key information on managing concussion, awareness stories, access to the eLearning course and other important resources are available on the GAA Learning Portal here – <https://learning.gaa.ie/concussion>

## SUSPECTED HEAD INJURY

- Concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by an impact to a player's head or body
- Over 90% of concussions occur without a loss of consciousness, therefore recognition of other signs and symptoms is crucial

**"IT'S NOT ALWAYS A KNOCK-OUT"**

## OBSERVATION

### INITIAL SIGNS:

#### *The nature of the impact:*

- The speed of the impact / collision
- Was the player braced for impact? (Did they see the impact coming)
- Was there any rotational (twisting) motion of the head / neck caused by the impact?

### INDICATORS:

#### *Player's reaction:*

- Did they lie motionless for any period of time?
- Were they unsteady on their feet?
- Did they clutch their head?

### RED FLAGS:

#### *Urgent medical attention:*

- Possible neck or spinal injury –player should not be moved
- Prolonged Loss of consciousness
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Convulsions / Seizures
- Vomiting
- Double Vision
- Disorientation/Confusion
- Severe or increasing headache
- Abnormalities of balance or coordination
- Slurred or incoherent speech
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs

## A SIMPLE **TWO-STEP** PROCESS SHOULD BE APPLIED:

### 1. **RECOGNISE** -

the signs and symptoms

### 2. **REMOVE** -

the **player** from the **field** of play

**Remember,**  
**if there is any suspicion of concussion, the player should be removed from the field of play:**

**"IF IN DOUBT,  
SIT THEM OUT"**

By John Harrington

## PLAYING RULE CHANGES LEAD TO MORE SCORES AND LESS FOULS

**THE STATISTICS DON'T LIE, THE NEW PENALTIES FOR CERTAIN AGGRESSIVE, OFTEN DEEMED CYNICAL, FOULS IN HURLING AND FOOTBALL RATIFIED BY GAA ANNUAL CONGRESS 2021 HAD A PROFOUNDLY POSITIVE IMPACT ON BOTH CODES IN LEAGUE AND CHAMPIONSHIP.**

So successful were the new deterrents proposed by the Standing Committee on Playing Rules (SCPR) in reducing cynical fouling and increasing scoring rates in both hurling and Gaelic football that Central Council will bring a motion to GAA Annual Congress 2022 proposing they be retained for another two years with some fine-tuned amendments.

Before we delve into exactly what those amendments are, it's worthwhile first reminding ourselves what the new penalties for aggressive and cynical fouling in both hurling and football were in 2021, and the measurable impact they had in both codes.

The temporary rules in question were Rule 5.46 (Rules of Hurling) and Rule 5.42 (Rules of Football).

In hurling, if a player with a goal-scoring opportunity either inside the 20-metre

line or the semi-circular arc that extends from the 20-metre line was pulled down, tripped, or struck with a hurley in a careless manner, then a penalty was awarded, and the offender sent to the sinbin for 10 minutes.

If the foul committed was a second caution or one that merited a red card, then the offender was ordered off for the remainder of the game including any extra-time to be played.

Similarly, in football, if a cynical foul was committed on an attacking player with a goal-scoring opportunity inside the 20-metre line or the semi-circular arc, then a penalty was awarded to the team affected.

So, what impact did these new rules have on hurling and football in 2021? The statistics compiled by Gaelic Stats, who have been analysing GAA matches for over a decade, would suggest a significant one.

Let's look at football first. In 2021, the League scores per game (36.4pts) was the highest on record while the Championship scores (37.3pts) was the second highest in Gaelic football since 1887.

Drill deeper into those scoring statistics, and you find that the number of goals scored in the 2021 All-Ireland SFC was the most since 1990, notwithstanding the different formats that have existed in the intervening period.

As teams became accustomed to the new rules, the incidence of fouling reduced from an average of 44 during the League to 35 in the Championship.

In hurling, the 2021 Championship scores per game (59.2pts) was the highest yet in the history of Championship hurling while the goals per game (3.5) was the highest in the championship since 2012.

Cynical fouling fell significantly from 1.4 per game in 2020 to 0-4 per game in 2021, which Chairperson of the SCPR, David Hassan, believes is directly attributable to the new sinbin/penalty punishment.

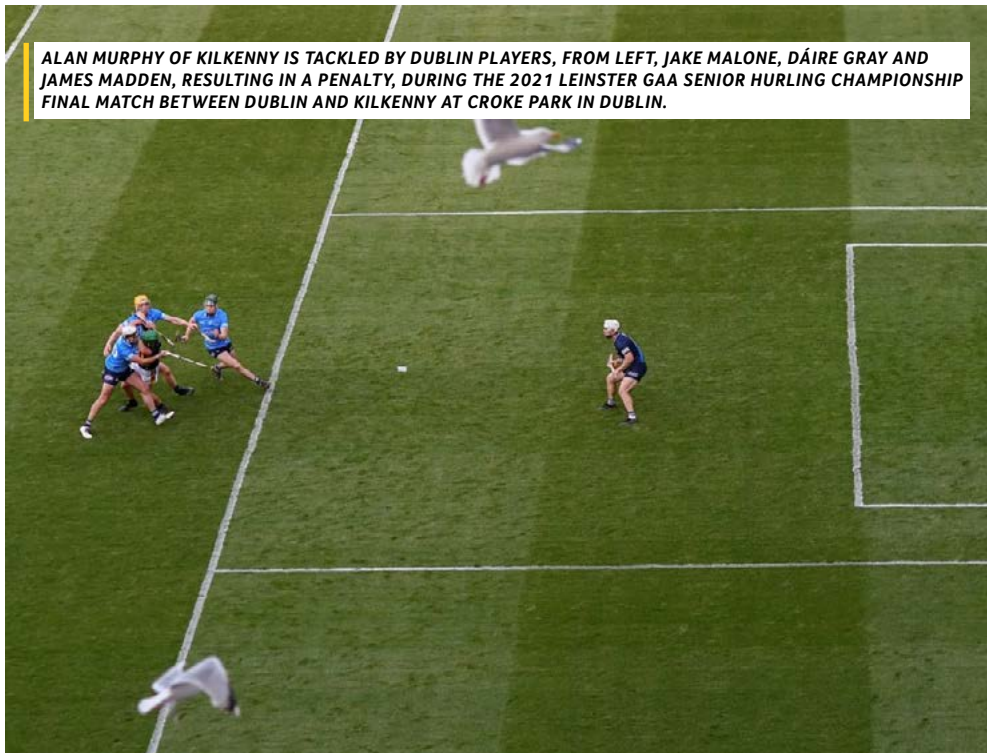
"We were aware that 75% of all fouls defined as being cynical in hurling took place inside the opposition's 20-metre line and the adjoining arc. With the introduction of a sanction that supported the principle that if a goal scoring opportunity is denied it should be reinstated, alongside the need for some

form of contemporary penalty designed to encourage behavioural change on the part of the player who committed the foul, there was now no benefit to the team or the individual concerned to commit these sorts of fouls, which in some cases had directly altered the outcome of games," Hassan told GAA.ie

"The deterrent was now greater than any benefit that might be derived from committing the foul – it no longer paid to foul in other words. I think that's an important point because you almost have a self-correcting process whereby players amended their own behaviour without the referee, in many cases, having to sanction this activity."

"The fact that the 2021 hurling championship was the highest scoring championship in the history of the game is testimony to the remarkable advancements made by players and the standards they can now achieve.

"Likewise, the increase in the number of goals scored – the highest number in almost a decade – is also significant in the sense that there was a concern that there were somehow fewer goals being scored in our games or that it was harder to actually



ALAN MURPHY OF KILKENNY IS TACKLED BY DUBLIN PLAYERS, FROM LEFT, JAKE MALONE, DÁIRE GRAY AND JAMES MADDEN, RESULTING IN A PENALTY, DURING THE 2021 LEINSTER GAA SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL MATCH BETWEEN DUBLIN AND KILKENNY AT CROKE PARK IN DUBLIN.

score a goal than in previous years.

“The fact that you’ve had more goals scored in the 2021 Football Championship for more than two decades is also notable. Not since Cork won the All-Ireland in 1990 have more goals been scored in a football championship year.

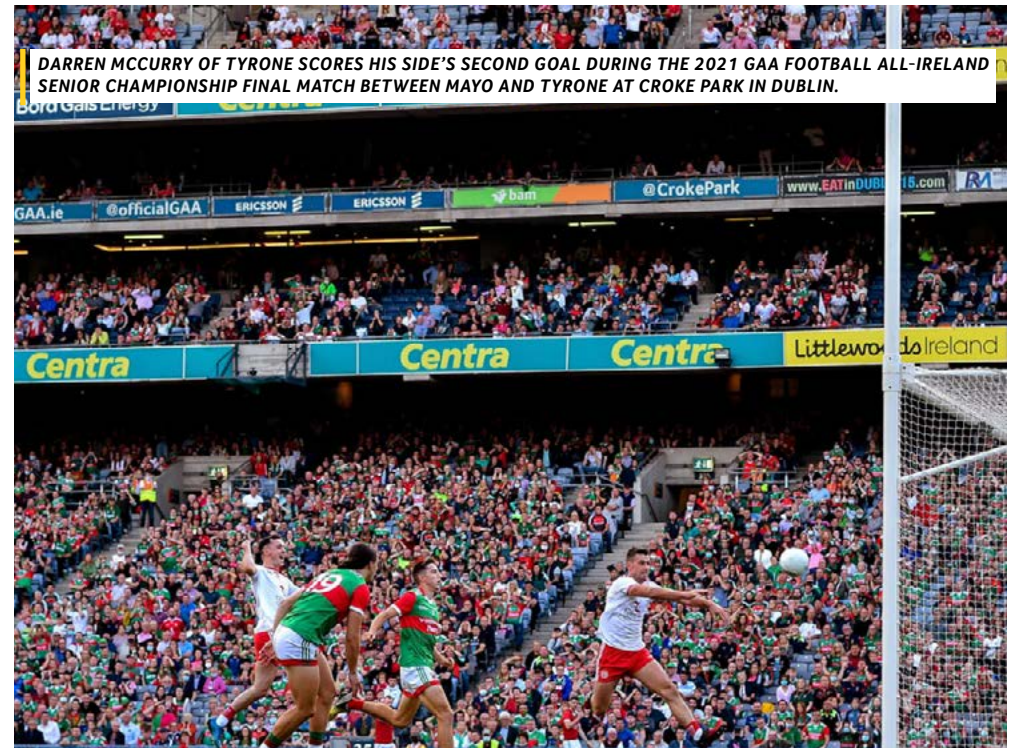
“If people want to see scores and if scores, at least in some way, equate to overall entertainment value, then, yes, I think both the hurling and football championships can be regarded as having been a success, notwithstanding – it should be recognised – the ongoing debate around competitive balance, which

is an important one for the Association to have.

“All things combined, however, there’s definitely a rising tide in both sports.”

Last weekend Central Council ratified the SCPR’s proposal to retain the rule deterring forms of cynical foul play while also improving it by supporting a definition of what is meant by the denial of a goal-scoring opportunity.

Firstly, it does this by defining it (i.e., the denial of a goal-scoring opportunity) in terms of location, i.e. within the semi-circular arc or inside the 20-metre line, but



DARREN MCCURRY OF TYRONE SCORES HIS SIDE’S SECOND GOAL DURING THE 2021 GAA FOOTBALL ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL MATCH BETWEEN MAYO AND TYRONE AT CROKE PARK IN DUBLIN.

as a ‘rule of thumb’ not within 25 metres infield of each sideline.

Secondly, the proposed rule would stipulate that a foul to deny a goal-scoring opportunity must be on the player in possession of the ball, whilst, thirdly, the rule would ensure that the judgement of the referee is retained in terms of adjudicating whether the foul that was committed was one of those identified in the temporary rule and that it had denied a goal-scoring opportunity.

“What we can say with certainty is that having analysed a random selection of 27 senior championship hurling matches

in 2020 and 2021, that in those games only one goal was scored from outside the 20-metre line or in area further away from the goals (i.e., left or right of either goal post) than 10 metres,” revealed Hassan.

“And that one goal was scored from the semi-circular arc, which is why we have retained that as far as the enhanced motion is concerned.

“We have a very detailed understanding of where goals are directly scored from in hurling, so that’s why we have sought to narrow the part of the field inside the 20 m line where the denial of a goal scoring opportunity becomes a factor.



By John Harrington

## LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY'S LOAVES AND FISHES MIRACLE

**OUTPOURINGS OF EMOTION ARE COMMON AT THIS TIME OF THE YEAR AS COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS ARE WON AND LOST, BUT THERE WAS STILL SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT SPINE-TINGLING ABOUT THE REACTION TO LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY'S TIPPERARY SHC FINAL REPLAY VICTORY OVER THURLES SARSFIELDS.**

Players, managers, and supporters alike exploded with joy as the rural Mid-Tipperary club completed a remarkable double of county hurling and football titles after 17 consecutive weekends of playing matches.

Both county finals were won by a point, the same margin that Loughmore-Castleiney lost them by in 2020.

Noel McGrath's emotional devastation after his team lost that 2020 Hurling final to Kiladangan after conceding a last-gasp extra-time goal lived long in the memory.

So, to see him celebrate yesterday's redemptive victory with such joy did the heart some good. According to Loughmore-Castleiney club chairperson, Brendan Meagher, it's a joy everyone in the community is sharing in.

"The emotion was just for everybody," he told GAA.ie "Anybody who was there saw how the players, management, the spectators, it was just everybody together, it was just pure magic. It wasn't alone for the players or management, it was everybody together.

"I've been lucky enough to be following these players since they were U8, U10, and U12 and we have just had the most fantastic journey with them. I think central to it all is, and I sincerely say this, they're genuinely a lovely bunch of lads.

"They really are examples of what the GAA is about and the enjoyment they get from it and the friendships they've made and we've all made through it.

"It was just a real culmination of all of those factors together in terms of the emotion and it still hasn't fully sunk in."

Loughmore-Castleiney's Tipperary double, their second in eight years, is a real loaves and fishes sporting miracle.

Their hurling team first choice XV is virtually identical to their football team first choice XV so County Final replay win





THE MCGRATH FAMILY, FROM LEFT, JOHN, PAT, NOEL AND BRIAN CELEBRATE WITH THE TROPHY AFTER THEIR SIDE'S VICTORY IN THE TIPPERARY COUNTY SENIOR CLUB HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL REPLAY MATCH BETWEEN THURLES SARFIELD'S AND LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY AT SEMPLE STADIUM IN THURLES, TIPPERARY.

was a 17th match in as many weeks for most of their players.

Needs must. The population of their parish is a little over 1,000, so Loughmore-Castleiney have always had to make the most of what they have.

"Absolutely," says Meagher. "One of the important factors is that we need everybody. So when you go down to the field training, be it football or hurling, you know you're needed. Even if you're not brought on, you're needed."

"It does give you that little lift as a player. To know that you're needed in this group of players and you have a role to play."

"They've spoken a lot over the years, especially this year, about the panel."

"We've brought in subs every day to do different jobs and it wasn't just to get a score, it was to chase and harry and work. It's really just about a whole group of players together."

Despite the small population of their parish, it's a testament to the vibrant culture within the club that they were able to field three adult hurling and football teams this year.

Not only that, their third team won the Mid-Tipperary Junior C Hurling Championship in October and had a panel of more than 30 players.

"It was brought up at an AGM two years ago about putting in a Junior C team and the only concern we had about it was whether we'd have enough players,"

says Meagher. "Pat Cullen, a stalwart of Loughmore-Castleiney, managed it and put a lot of work into it."

"He brought back a lot of lads who had retired and they literally just loved it. They loved being back involved. I was in Templetuohy the night we won the Mid Final and it was such a happy group of players."

"One man said to me I didn't come training enough when I was a young lad, but now I'm loving it and can't wait to get down training."

"These are people who are hugely committed now again. The circle has gone full-tilt again."

Loughmore-Castleiney are as well-

organised off the pitch as they are on it. For the past number of years they've raised considerable funds to develop their club grounds with the addition of a hurling-wall and Astro-turf training area.

Their local community has been hugely supportive of all fundraising initiatives and plans for further developments are already in place.

"We're lucky enough that we developed a five-year plan and most of the people who were involved in it came from the juvenile club so these were people with an eye to the future so it made the buy-in to the five-year plan much, much easier," says Meagher.

"Once everybody does a little, nobody has to do a lot and that gives a real sense of community too. It is what it's about, that sense of being together for the same cause and having a bit of craic too."

"I went up picking stones there one day in the field and I think we had something like 35 people who volunteered their time. Small things like that just make a difference and give you the encouragement to stay going."

"We have a huge Astro-turf now and the lights will be going on it this week and the next stage is that we have to redevelop the actual pitch itself. We have to do a walkway around it and lights and stuff like that."

"All these jobs are very expensive and we have a very small base from which to draw our money."

"The parish I think only has population of between 1000 and 1100 from the youngest to the oldest. And I think we've already over €300,000 spent and we're not much in debt. That's a huge, huge achievement by our finance committee."

“We’ve people on the finance committee who are expert in that field and they’re giving us top-class guidance from a financial point of view.”

It’s fair to say that Loughmore-Castleiney are popular double-champions in Tipperary this year for a couple of reasons.

Losing both Finals last year made it easy for neutrals to root for them this year, and there’s also a lot of admiration in the county for how they go about their business as a club and are such a tight-knit community who make the most of what they have.

Meagher is aware they’ve gotten a lot of support from outside the parish this year, but knows too that they’ll have a target on their backs in 2022.

“I’d always urge caution about popularity,” he says. “Popularity is a very short-lived thing and we were very aware this year that we were popular winners. But come the first of next January, we will be the ones that people will be trying to knock off the pedestal.

“We do realise that there was a lot of goodwill out there towards us. I’ve been getting a lot of text messages in the week leading up to both matches and the only word I’m sending back to everyone now is thanks, thanks, thanks.

“They’re all sincere and genuine, but, for the same token, I know a lot of clubs will be planning their training regime coming up to Christmas and the one team they’ll want to knock off their pedestal will be Loughmore-Castleiney.

“We’re delighted to be in that position, but we’re well aware that all these teams

will be gunning for us next year in the healthiest possible manner.

“One thing I really want to do is pay a compliment to both Clonmel Commercials and Thurles Sarsfields. I don’t think there was a dirty stroke in either of those matches. And I think that is a highlight of those county finals for us as well.”

The adventure still isn’t over for Loughmore-Castleiney.

On Sunday they play Clare champions Éire Óg Ennis in the AIB Munster SFC Quarter-Final, then the following weekend it’s Waterford champions Ballygunner in the AIB Munster SHC semi-final.

You’d wonder just how much they have left in the tank for those matches after playing 17 weekends in-a-row in Tipperary, but such is the character in their team that you’d be foolish to write them off.

“Look, even if it comes to a stage someday where they literally collapse with exhaustion on the field, every supporter will know they have given everything,” says Meagher.

“I know for the younger players coming in, they have bought into that ethos that you just keep going until there is nothing left.

“And if there’s nothing left in the tank then they take you off and there’s no disgrace in that. You buy into that, it’s an automatic buy-in.

“We’ve been sometimes disappointed for that team in terms of the results, but we were never, ever once disappointed in them. They have always delivered as much as they can deliver and it’s what we’ve come to expect of them.”



LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY PLAYERS CELEBRATE AFTER THE TIPPERARY COUNTY SENIOR CLUB FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL MATCH BETWEEN CLONMEL COMMERCIALS AND LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY AT SEMPLE STADIUM IN THURLES, TIPPERARY.



LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY CAPTAIN NOEL MCGRATH LIFTS THE CUP WITH HIS TEAM AFTER HIS SIDE'S VICTORY IN THE TIPPERARY COUNTY SENIOR CLUB HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL REPLAY MATCH BETWEEN THURLES SARSFIELDS AND LOUGHMORE-CASTLEINEY AT SEMPLE STADIUM IN THURLES, TIPPERARY.

By Martin Fogarty

## CONNACHT GAA AIR DOME BRINGING HURLING TO NEW HEIGHTS

HURLERS FROM THE BALLINA STEPHENITES AND MOYTURA GAA CLUBS PICTURED IN THE CONNACHT GAA AIR DOME.



**IN MY ROLE AS NATIONAL HURLING DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, I HAVE PAID NUMEROUS VISITS TO CONNACHT OVER THE PAST NUMBER OF YEARS. ONE 'STANDING ORDER' USUALLY AT THIS TIME OF YEAR (OCTOBER/NOVEMBER) WAS AN OUTDOOR COACHING WORKSHOP IN EACH OF ROSCOMMON, MAYO AND SLIGO/LEITRIM.**

The running joke between myself and coaching colleagues Damien Coleman (Connacht), Proinsias Killion (Roscommon), Adrian Hession (Mayo) and Darragh Cox (Sligo/Leitrim) was how many sets of rain gear and how many layers of insulation I would need for the trip!

We figured we would be lucky if it "only

snowed". Such was the weather sometimes that the Sligo hurling people were going to name a storm after me! On one particular visit to Mayo when Adrian Hession took me on tour, I got soaked three times in the same day and for the main event later that evening I had to choose the "least wet" of my three sets of gear.

Happily, those days are in the past (if only!) as recently I experienced what could only be described as a coaching highlight of my career. I was deeply honoured to have the opportunity to coach in the magnificent facility that is the Air Dome in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence. To describe this as a world class facility would not come near to doing it justice and what a wonderful occasion it was.

THE COLÁISTE POBAIL ACLÁ HURLERS FROM ACHILL ISLAND PICTURED IN THE CONNACHT GAA AIR DOME.



A full pitch, covered and even heated for us (to make up for all the previous exposures to the elements) was the setting. A seating capacity for 600, I believe, meant that our largest attendance at such an event yet, looked like the crowd at a minor All-Ireland in Croke Park, a large crowd but when spaced out in such a large stadium looked like the stadium was empty. We had I believe almost 200 coaches from the four counties in attendance but when spread out at a safe distance, for covid purposes along the sidelines and seated area one could just dream of three or four thousand people gathered around for a key game and the atmosphere it would create.

Provincial secretary, John Prenty, and Connacht Games Manager, Cathal Cregg, gave us a wonderful reception and the coaching went on for 90 minutes where the focus of the evening was looking at the essential elements of hurling coaching, with emphasis on the great need to master the basics or essentials of Rising & Catching, Hooking & Blocking, Striking & Handpassing and First Touch.

Martin Kennedy, who is newly appointed to the game's development staff in Croke Park, was also in attendance and took the opportunity to liaise with clubs and coaches. Martin's role will involve coach and player development, and everyone looks forward to him bringing his great experience to our clubs and coaches.

Martin has huge experience, having been involved with both Dublin Hurlers and Footballers as well as a long spell as National Talent Athletic Development Lead with the IRFU.

The session was made extra special with the participation of Mayo's two new teams, Ballina and Moytura. Both clubs fielded at Junior level this year after an absence of many years. This is a sign of the ever-increasing interest in hurling in Mayo and is testament to the hard work of Games Promotion Officer Adrian Hession and many other people. Hurling needs more clubs in all these counties and when one notes that two new teams also participated in Fermanagh this year the

signs are good for hurling.

One player in a tweet after the session said it was "his best ever sporting occasion" so that is a great summary of the night we had in Bekan!

Earlier on in the day I was privileged to assist Damien Coleman and Adrian Hession in coaching another brand-new hurling unit. Coláiste Pobail Acla (Achill Island) have just commenced hurling and they were granted a session in the Dome to further encourage their interest in our national game. They were all quite happy to make the four-hour round-trip to get the opportunity to play in this wonderful facility and their enthusiasm

was infectious.

I'm not sure if any of them had to row a boat to get over like the legendary footballer Mick O' Connell had to do from his home on Valentia Island to play with Kerry. If so, then that would certainly cover the S&C part of their programme! Again, the session, expertly conducted by Damien and Adrian, emphasised the importance of mastering the basics.

So, what does the future hold for hurling in the developing counties? Well, with facilities such as in the Connacht Centre of Excellence it can just be onwards and upwards. Five full sized floodlight Prunty Pitches (we met Mr. Prunty also)

and a full sized floodlight Astro pitch were phenomenal facilities already, but the addition of the Air Dome is just mind blowing so a massive congratulations to all involved in its development.

Finally, it does not always rain in Connacht, just in winter like everywhere else. To play our native game looking over at Benbulbin or down at Our Lady's shrine in Knock, not to mention places like Easkey or Westport is a wonderful privilege indeed. To the coaches in these and other counties, keep up the wonderful work you are all doing. We look forward to having a few pucks out on Achill Island in the not too distant future (weather permitting).

**CLICK  
HERE  
TO  
WATCH**



# GAA GENERATIONS SEEKS 12-21 YEAR-OLDS TO HELP IN ORAL RESEARCH PROJECT

**WE ARE OUR STORIES, AND WE TELL THEM WHILE STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US.**

Ireland boasts a rich tradition of passing our stories from one generation to the next. To honour that, and to capture a better understanding of what the GAA means to its members, we have launched 'GAA Generations' oral research project.

What is GAA Generations?

The idea is simple – we are inviting young GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association members aged 12-21 to record on their mobile phone a conversation with 'One Good Adult'; someone who they look up to and admire in the 55+ age bracket. It could be, for example, a parent/grandparent, a coach, or a teacher, past or present, that saw and nurtured your potential.

Older participants will also be given the opportunity to quiz their young interviewees on their GAA experiences and how it may have impacted their understanding of who they are.

What's the purpose of the project?

GAA Generations aims to recruit between 500-1,000 young GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association members (aged 12-21 years-old) who will receive online training in conducting an interview with a person of influence in their life aged 55+. The conversations with their selected 'One Good Adult', recorded on a smart phone along with a photo of the participants, will be stored on the GAA's eLearning platform and published as part of the GAA archive. For taking part, you will receive a UNESCO



Chairs/GAA Youth Researcher Certificate of Participation.

How can I get involved?

If you are a young GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association member aged 12-21 years (inclusive) and would like to participate in this research project please complete the **expression of interest form**.

For further information contact

**[gaagenerations@gaa.ie](mailto:gaagenerations@gaa.ie)** or Blánaid Carney at +353 (0) 1 819 2387

You can also learn more via the following video link: <https://youtu.be/2PvvVjl-Hbc>

***GAA Generations has benefitted from funding from the HSE Mental Health division via the National Office for Suicide Prevention. Depending on the volume of applications received, it may not be possible to facilitate everyone due to the analysis of the data required.***

***Be part of the GAA Generations project and conduct and upload your interview by Jan 14th to be in with a chance to win a GAA half-zip top.***



**GAA Generations**



## 'THE FAITHFUL WILL NEVER DIE!'

**THE STRENGTH OF THE GAA HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CALIBRE OF THE PEOPLE WHO DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION. ONE OF THE BEST EXAMPLES YOU'LL GET IS SHAMROCKS' CLUBMAN BRENDAN MINNOCK WHO STEPS DOWN SHORTLY HAVING SERVED HIS TERM AS OFFALY COUNTY PRO. A GREAT ADVERTISEMENT FOR ALL THINGS GAA AND PART OF THE FANTASTIC WARM WELCOME SYNONYMOUS WITH BNM O'CONNOR PARK; WE ASKED HIM TO REFLECT ON HOW THE ROLE HAS CHANGED SINCE HE FIRST GOT INVOLVED AS A CLUB PRO 25 YEARS AGO AND ABOUT HIS PASSION FOR THE JOB...**

The Faithful Will Never Die! This defiant message underneath the final score line comprised Offaly GAA's most popular tweet of 2021, posted just two seconds after the Leinster U20 football final in July. Some might argue that was a second too slow! But it's not easy for a County Board PRO to keep a steady finger on the Twitter trigger when a neighbour's child has just helped your county pull off one of the shocks of the season.

Obviously, nothing can compare with contributing to a memorable victory on the field of play, but there's no point denying the personal satisfaction when social media posts, video clips and photographs generate goodwill from thousands of Gaels at home and abroad. It's a far cry from the duties I was assigned when first becoming Club PRO almost 25 years ago. Through all that time, the title has remained the same, but the world – and the world wide web – keeps changing.

Stapling the local lotto results inside the pub door was once one of the main jobs each weekend, whereas now questions are asked if the live streaming service isn't up to the standard of Sky Sports. Perhaps that is why anecdotal evidence suggests the PRO role is one of the most difficult to fill in the Association.

At the same time, not having the necessary skill set to master all aspects of the position shouldn't be a deterrent. Training for Club Officers has been delivered by the GAA in recent years to offer assistance and promote best practice, particularly for newcomers to a role. As part of this initiative, I presented some workshops to PROs and always began by saying my primary wish was they would leave the event feeling more enthusiastic and confident, rather than insecure or overwhelmed.

Instead of ignoring a particular social media platform, for example, it's far better to issue a cry for help. There's bound to be someone in the locality willing to come on board, or at least provide a crash course. Remember, it's second nature to most of the younger generation. Less than two years ago, Offaly GAA's Instagram account had a measly 1,800 followers, but thanks to the expertise of a couple of my (younger) colleagues, it's going to break through the 10,000 barrier soon.

Of course, if someone is trusted with log-in details and a password, then it's crucial they are familiar with the 'dos and don'ts'. The GAA's Social Media Guidelines are an excellent resource which should be downloaded, studied and, needless to say, adhered to.



ON A CROKE PARK HIGH; OFFALY PRO BRENDAN MINNOCK CELEBRATES AT THE FINAL WHISTLE OF THE FAITHFUL'S EIRGRID ALL-IRELAND U20 FOOTBALL FINAL TRIUMPH

Indeed, I've often felt the word 'Public' in PRO could be replaced by 'Positive'. So much negativity exists in cyberspace that we need to portray our Clubs, Counties and the Association in the best possible light. An old legal adage that 'Justice must not only be done but be seen to be done' is worth pondering by PROs – what's the point of good news if we don't let everyone know it's happening? And it's not just about highlighting who scores the winning point. Events such as Scór and initiatives like the Healthy Clubs, to name but two, deserve recognition also.

Thankfully, some of the traditional duties remain relevant for an effective PRO. Notes in the local paper and the church bulletin still provide an important service.

Remember also to stay in touch with your sponsors and ensure their contribution is highlighted when appropriate.

Over the years, I've also learned it pays off to have a lot of relevant 'pet hates'. Only publish names when you've checked the correct spellings (is it Eoin, Eoghan, or Owen?) and frown on players who don't wear the correct socks and togs. Have a quiet word at a committee meeting the pitch isn't marked, or the image of the Club or County Board is affected by some other oversight. I've harped on long enough about all these things and many more. Now that I'm unable to hide behind the PRO tagline any longer, it's probably time I started painting the clubhouse myself.

## CLUB LEADERSHIP & DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

**2021 HAS BEEN ANOTHER YEAR OF ZOOM CALLS AND ONLINE LEARNING FOR US ALL. IT WAS A YEAR THAT SAW OVER 8,000 GAA MEMBERS TAKE PART IN ONLINE WORKSHOPS AND LIVE WEBINARS TO BROADEN THEIR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF RUNNING GAA CLUBS.**

For the past year the Club Leadership Development Programme proved to be a great success for thousands of our volunteers worldwide by participating in a number of our 26 modules offered to Club Officers across the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Associations. 2022 hopes to be another successful year for the Club Leadership Development Programme with plans already in place for incoming Club Officers.

With AGM's already taking place in some Clubs throughout the county it is that time of year again where introductory courses are being planned for incoming Club Officers. Due to the current situation, these courses will be held online in early January and each Province will have their own night to run the courses. These modules, that focus on the key areas for new Chairpersons, Secretaries, PRO's and Treasurers, are extremely beneficial for any Club Officer new to their role this year. Details on how to register for these courses will be available in early January. Further information is available at <https://learning.gaa.ie/administrator>

The GAA Communications Department in conjunction with the Officer Development Committee will be hosting a digital communication webinar for Clubs in early 2022. This will focus on the importance of strong communication systems within the GAA Club whilst outlining a few suggestions on how a club can improve its communication to their members, their community and their county by using more efficient techniques. This will be a Webinar not to be missed as communication experts will be on hand to guide you through an effective digital communications plan for your club. Details on how to register will be available in the new year.

As 2021 comes to an end it may be a chance for your club to prepare a long-term development plan to inspire the future generation of players and give them the best chance of success in years to come. There are over 100 clubs already implementing their plans and we wish them the very best of luck with their ongoing projects. The GAA Club Planning Programme provides independent facilitators to assist the club in designing and implementing a medium-long term plan for the club. These independent facilitators have a wealth of experience behind them in club planning and have been proven to provide results for clubs. For more information on how to get involved, please contact the County Planning & Training Officer.

Many thanks to all of our clubs, participants and our Leadership Associates who have facilitated our events throughout the year, we hope all of our members enjoy a safe Christmas and New Year. We will see you all again in 2022.

**GAA Officer Development Committee**





## DECISIONS OF CENTRAL COUNCIL

**VIRTUAL MEETINGS OF BOTH AN COISTE BAINISTÍOCHTA AND ARD CHOMHAIRLE TOOK PLACE LAST MONTH AND THE FOLLOWING MATTERS, AMONG OTHERS, WERE DECIDED:**

Emergency Powers were extended for counties/provinces to 27ú Nollaig and for An Coiste Bainistíochta to 31ú Nollaig 2021.

Congress 2022 will take place in the Connacht GAA Dome, Bekan, Co Mayo.

Ard Chomhairle agreed to submit Motions to Congress 2022 on foot of proposals from the Standing Committee on Playing Rules, the slíotar workgroup and Games Development Committee and also approved a Motion to allow another player to join the captain for acceptance of the trophy on behalf of the team.

The Code of Behaviour (underage) was amended to assist the Child Safeguarding Committee in its work in ensuring compliance by all units with the Children's First Act and the Rules of the Association.

The Rules Drafting Report arising from Motions approved at Special Congress was approved.

The 2022 Master Fixture Plan was approved. It was agreed to allow Provincial pre-season competitions to proceed and recommence collective training on 8th December.



Le Jamie Ó Tuama

## AG CLUBANNA LAIGHEAN AGUS NA MUMHAN AN LÁ AG SCÓR SINSIR NA HÉIREANN 2020

**BA AG CLUBANNA CHÚIGE LAIGHEAN AGUS CHÚIGE MUMHAN A BHÍ AN LÁ AG BABHTAÍ CEANNAIS SCÓR SINSIR NA HÉIREANN 2020 AR 20 SAMHAIN, 2021, I GCRUINNEACHÁN AEIR CLG CHONNACHT. D'ÉIRIGH GO HIONTACH LEIS AN LÁ AGUS THAITHIN AN T-IONAD GO MÓR LENA RAIBH I LÁTHAIR ANN GAN TRÁCHT AR NA TAISPEÁNTAIS STÁITSE! B'IN É AN CHÉAD UAIR RIAMH A BHÍ ÓCÁID DEN CHINEÁL SIN SA GCRUINNEACHÁN AGUS PÍOSA STAIRE BAINTE AMACH AG NA HIOMAITHEOIRÍ UILIG.**

D'éirigh le clubanna chúige Laighean cúig cinn ar fad de chomórtais a bhuaigh agus d'éirigh le Tiobraid Árann trí cinn a thabhairt leo thar ceann chúige Mumhan.

Sna comórtais damhsa bhuaigh CLG an Chaisleáin Nua, Tiobraid Árann, an Rince Foirne agus bhuaigh CLG Bhun Brosnaí, An Iarmhí, an Rince Seit a bhuaigh do thaispeántas spleodrach lán brí agus fuinnimh.

Ba é Jack Gladney ó CG Naomh Moling, Ceatharlach, plúr na n-amhránaíthe aonair agus thug an scéalaí clúiteach Noel Joyce ó CLG S.C. Breacháin, Tiobraid Árann, leis an corn sa chomórtas aithriseoireachta.

Bhuaigh CLG an Fhéir Bháin, Uíbh Fhailí, an comórtas Bailéad-Ghrúpa agus bhuaigh CLG Chill Chábháin,

Laois, an Comórtas 'ceol uirlise'.

Rinne CLG Thulach Sheasta, Tiobraid Árann, éacht nuair a bhuaigh siad an nuachleas don dara bliain i ndiaidh a chéile agus ba iad muintir CLG Éadan Doire a bhuaigh an comórtas 'Tráth na gCeisteanna'.

Fógrófar pleananna Choiste Náisiúnta Scór do chomórtais 2022 go luath sa bhliain nua ach tógadh cinneadh le gairid go gcuirfead tús le gníomhaíochtaí 2022 le Scór na nÓg.

### **Torthaí Bhabhtaí Ceannais Scór Sinsir na hÉireann 2020**

Rince Foirne:  
An Caisleán Nua, Tiobraid Árann

Amhránaíocht Aonair:  
Jack Gladney, Naomh Moling,  
Ceatharlach

Ceol Uirlise:  
Cill Chábháin, Laois

Aithriseoireacht/Scéalaíocht: S.C.  
Breacháin, Tiobraid Árann

Nuachleas:  
Tulach Seasta, Tiobraid Árann

Bailéad-Ghrúpa:  
An Féar Bán, Uíbh Fhailí

Rince Seit:  
Bun Brosnaí, An Iarmhí

Tráth na gCeisteanna:  
Éadan Doire, Uíbh Fhailí



THE NAOMH DOMINIC TEAM REPRESENTING ROSCOMMON AND CONNACHT DURING THE NUACHLEAS COMPETITION AT SCÓR SINSIR 2020 ALL-IRELAND FINALS



SIOBHAN EGAN OF TULACH SHEASTA REPRESENTING TIPPERARY AND MUNSTER DURING THE AMHRÁNAÍOCHT AONAIR COMPETITION AT SCÓR SINSIR 2020 ALL-IRELAND FINALS AT THE CONNACHT AIRDOME

## FIRST EVER INCLUSIVE CÚL CAMP IN CONNACHT GAA IS A WINNER

### MAYO GAA AND MAYO SPORTS PARTNERSHIP TEAMED UP OVER THE OCTOBER MID-TERM BREAK AND HOSTED THE FIRST INCLUSIVE KELLOGG'S GAA CÚL CAMP TO BE HELD IN THE PROVINCE.

The Camp ran for two days on 26th and 27th October in the new AirDome at the Connacht Centre of Excellence in Began. The camp was fully booked out and with the help of Mayo GAA coaching staff, Mayo Sport Partnership Staff and volunteers it proved to be a huge success.

Billy McNicholas Games Development Manager with Mayo GAA said: "This Camp was a brainchild of Ray McNamara, Sports Inclusion Development Officer and myself over the past two years but due to Covid 19 our plans got delayed slightly but we never let the idea die and got the opportunity to run the camp."

Billy added: "The camp was run by my game's promotion staff from all over the county who have done a tremendous job in running the activities. We were delighted with the turn out and the camp went

fantastically well, and we hope to build on the success of the camp with more GAA For All with local clubs."

Ray McNamara Sports Inclusion Development Officer said: "This is a partnership approach between Mayo GAA and Mayo Sports Partnership in getting children with additional needs involved in the Cúl Camps"

Ray thanked Mayo GAA for running the camp and the Connacht Centre of Excellence for hosting the camp, he paid

tribute to the new dome and the facilities that are available in Began.

He added: "This was a launch platform for more clubs to set up GAA For All Sections of their Clubs and follow Bohola Moy Davitts who have already set up a GAA For All section and doing great work."

If you are interested in developing a GAA For All section of your club contact Ray at [rmcnamara@mayococo.ie](mailto:rmcnamara@mayococo.ie) for more information.



## 2021 BAHRAIN GAMES A ROYAL SUCCESS

### **HOST CLUB ARABIAN CELTS QUITE LITERALLY GAVE ALL COMPETING TEAMS AT THE 2021 BAHRAIN GAMES A ROYAL WELCOME.**

Guest of honour at the Men's and Women's Senior Finals was Khalid Bin Hamad, a member of the Bahrain Royal Family and son of the country's ruler, King Hamad.

His presence at the Finals was a testament to just how highly regarded the Irish community in Bahrain and across the Middle East is.

It was a recognition too of the huge popularity of Gaelic Games in the region and the prominent role it plays in the day to day lives of the Irish in the Middle East.

"It was amazing to have a member of the Royal Family attend the event because they're such powerful well-respected figures," said Arabian Celts Chairperson, Brendan Galvin.

"To have someone of that profile attend a Gaelic Games event here is massive. It's massive for our club and it's massive for GAA in the Middle East region and we're just so happy that he was able to come."

The men's Senior Final was won by Dubai Celts and the Women's Senior Final was won by Abu Dhabi Na Fianna.

"I've been here 10 years and coming here to Bahrain for seven years and this is the first time we've won it here," said victorious Dubai Celts captain, Barry Canavan. "It means a lot.

"We've a new bunch of lads in this year and thankfully they gave us a little injection of speed and enthusiasm so it helps us old lads to just get over the line."

As much as the 2021 Bahrain Games was a real celebration of sport, it was also a poignant occasion too because of who could not be there.

Amanda Kinsella, a much loved member of the Arabian Celts club, died tragically in Ireland over the summer and her memory was very much to the fore throughout the weekend.

Her name was stitched into the jerseys of all the Arabian Celts teams and her brother David represented the Kinsella family on the pitch in her absence.

"It's a bit raw not having Amanda around, she was a big part of the club over here," he said.

"All of her close friends would be out here as well and they've all been greatly affected by it. Yeah, it's tough.

"It's really emotional to see her name on the back of the jersey and it really shows the impact that she made out here. Amanda loved it out here. Gaelic Football was a big part of her life and it's just an incredible gesture by the team to have her name on the jersey. We really appreciated it, it means a lot to the family.

"I'd like to think she's here in spirit. We've a big GAA family here and back home and I'd like to think she's looking down on us now and I'm sure she's smiling now."

### **2021 Bahrain Games Winners**

Mens Senior Final: Dubai Celts A

Mens Senior Plate Final: Jumeriah Gaels B

Ladies Senior Final: Abu Dhabi Na Fianna A

Ladies Senior Plate Final: Al Ain

Mens Inter Cup Final: Al Reem Shamrocks

Mens Inter Plate Final: Dubai Celts

Ladies Inter Cup Final: Abu Dhabi Na Fianna A

Ladies Inter Plate Final: RAK Ropairí

Mens Social Cup Final: Sharjah Gaels

Mens Social Plate Final: Janabiya Juggernauts

Ladies Social Cup Final: Sharjah Gaels B

Ladies Social Plate Final: Al Ain



**KHALID BIN HAMAD, A MEMBER OF THE BAHRAIN ROYAL FAMILY, PRESENTS DUBAI CELTS CAPTAIN, BARRY CANAVAN, WITH THE 2021 BAHRAIN GAMES MEN'S SENIOR CUP.**

# THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION LAUNCH 2022 M.N.A. PROGRAMME

- **M.N.A PROGRAMME AIMS TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN COACHING**
- **PROGRAMME IS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SPORT IRELAND'S WOMEN IN SPORT POLICY**
- **APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN FOR 100 CLUBS TO TAKE PART IN 2022**

The Camogie Association are delighted to launch the third year of our female coaching and mentorship initiative, the M.N.A Programme, in partnership with Sport Ireland's Women in Sport Policy.

The M.N.A Programme primarily looks at the development of female Mentors and Coaches within Clubs around the country and the 2022 programme will offer places to 100 Clubs to take part.

The M.N.A Programme will act as an important step in assisting Clubs to ensure the retention of players away from the playing field and the recruitment of females and that they will pass on their knowledge and experience to future players through coaching. The role which women can play in passing on their intrinsic knowledge of the game to young players in particular is a key reason behind this programme and the part which they can play as positive role models for young players.

Participating Clubs will be required to nominate one female Mentor who will be upskilled across a wide range of areas including communications, mentoring and volunteer development.

M.N.A Mentor Training will be held:

- online
- 26th February – in person at one of four locations around the country.

M.N.A Mentors must complete all training in order to proceed with the programme.

The programme is seen as a model for Clubs of how to develop a pathway to recruit, develop, retain, and support females within the Club on their journey as coaches or in other volunteer roles.

The application process for Clubs to apply to take part in the 2022 M.N.A Programme is now open until close of business on Monday January 24th 2022.

Please click on the below link to the application form:

<https://forms.office.com/r/de3iiSEApd>

Please find below an electronic copy of the M.N.A Programme Booklet and our Tesco Hurl With Me Booklet for your reference:

**[M.N.A Programme Booklet 2022](#)**

**[Tesco Hurl With Me Booklet](#)**

If clubs have any queries please feel free to contact the M.N.A Programme Administrator on the following e-mail address –

[mna@camogie.ie](mailto:mna@camogie.ie)



**M.N.A**  
**PROGRAMME**  
Motivate - Nurture - Aspire

## TRANSLINK LAUNCH SEARCH FOR OUTSTANDING YOUNG GAA VOLUNTEERS



LAUNCHING THE TRANSLINK ULSTER GAA YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD, FROM LEFT, DIARMAID MARSDEN (ULSTER GAA HEAD OF CLUB AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT), STEPHEN MONTGOMERY (TRANSLINK), AND OLIVER GALLIGAN (ULSTER GAA PRESIDENT)

### **TRANSLINK AND ULSTER GAA ARE CALLING ON CLUBS ACROSS THE PROVINCE TO NOMINATE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE TRANSLINK ULSTER GAA YOUNG VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD.**

The award celebrates the outstanding contribution made by young members of the Association to their clubs and communities during the 2021 season. Given the challenging times that all communities have experienced recently, it is important to acknowledge those young people who have risen to the challenge.

This is the fifth year of the initiative and all of the young nominees will hope to emulate 19-year-old Niamh Rafferty from St Brenda's Camogie Club, Ballymacnab, Co. Armagh, who was the winner of the

prestigious award last year.

The winner will receive a prize package including specially commissioned Volunteer of the Year merchandise, a Translink Enterprise Plus travel voucher for two people to Dublin and a set of jerseys for their club youth team.

Gaelic Football, Hurling, Camogie, Rounders and Handball clubs across Ulster are encouraged to nominate young people aged 16-24 whose actions best demonstrate the volunteering ethos and community spirit of the Association during the year.

Encouraging the GAA community to seize the opportunity to celebrate its young people, Stephen Montgomery from Translink, said:



“Translink recognises the importance of promoting an active and healthy lifestyle and values the impact a strong community spirit can make in local areas – something the Young Volunteer of the Year Award is all about.

“It is great to see this award return for another year and I'd like to thank Ulster GAA for working in partnership with Translink to deliver this fantastic celebration of volunteering. I'd also like to pay tribute to all the clubs and coaches who train, motivate and inspire their players to be the best they can be, as well as the young people who volunteer hours of their time for their local clubs. Good Luck!”

Ulster GAA President Oliver Galligan said: “Volunteerism is at the heart of everything

that happens in the GAA across the province and we are delighted that our initiative with Translink recognises the positive impact that our youth members have with their clubs and communities through a wide range of volunteer activities, including coaching, well-being schemes, fundraising and committee membership.

“At the end of the GAA season, I would encourage all of our clubs to celebrate their own young leaders by entering a nomination for this award”.

To nominate a young person for this award, visit [ulster.gaa.ie/youngvolunteeraward](https://ulster.gaa.ie/youngvolunteeraward).

The nomination process opens on 24th November and closes on 8th December.

## NINE GAA VOLUNTEERS TO BE HONOURED AT FEDERATION OF IRISH SPORT AWARDS



EAMONN MCGOWAN HAS DEDICATED MORE THAN 65 YEARS TO GAA AND HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN EVERY ASPECT OF ALLEN GAELS SINCE ITS INCEPTION AS A CLUB 52 YEARS AGO.

**NINE GAA VOLUNTEERS - DAMIAN MÓR Ó NÉILL (NAOMH COLUM CILLE, TYRONE) DENIS MARTIN (STAKER WALLACE GAA, LIMERICK), PETER CALLAN (NAOMH FIONNBARRA AND ST ANNE'S GFC, LOUTH), EAMONN MCGOWAN (ALLEN GAELS, LEITRIM), FRANK MCGHEE (CLG ARD AN RATHA, DONEGAL), JAMES DALY (SILVERBRIDGE GFC, ARMAGH), JOE MOORE (ST AIDAN'S GAA, ROSCOMMON), PAT HENNESSEY (TOOMEVARA GAA, TIPPERARY) AND SEÁN SMITH (CROSSERLOUGH GFC, CAVAN) WILL RECEIVE NATIONWIDE RECOGNITION NEXT WEEK FOR THEIR DEDICATION TO SPORT, AS THEY HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE TYRONE, LIMERICK, LOUTH, LEITRIM, DONEGAL, ARMAGH, ROSCOMMON, TIPPERARY AND CAVAN AWARDS RESPECTIVELY FOR THE 2021 FEDERATION OF IRISH SPORT VOLUNTEERS IN SPORT AWARDS, PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY EBS.**

The awards will take place virtually on December 7th, 8th and 9th and will see all nine GAA volunteers, along with volunteers from across the country, honoured for their amazing dedication to volunteering across a variety of different sports.

As a schoolboy and with the help of his friends, Damian Mór Ó Néill established Naomh Colum Cille Hurling Club in the Clonoe and Coalisland Parishes of Co. Tyrone. His commitment to the club over the last 35 years has led them to incredible success including competing in the All-Ireland Junior Club Final in Croke Park in 1996. As a young man, Damian played minor football for Tyrone but decided to follow his passion for hurling, a passion that has led him to promote hurling within East Tyrone and have a hugely positive impact on hundreds of young players. Damian currently serves as the club's chairperson and has previously served in numerous committee positions as well as coaching positions within the club. His love of hurling and the Irish language, as well as his dedication to the sport and club, has made Damian a valued member of the community over the last 35 years.

Denis Martin's impact on Staker Wallace GAA is immeasurable. Having joined the club in the 1970's, Denis immersed himself into the club and at various points since 1982, has held the role of Junior Club Secretary, often stepping back to take on a different volunteer role in the club. Denis is involved with every aspect of the running of the club, organising fundraisers, manning the parking at matches and selling tickets for the club

lotto - Denis has done it all. Denis' role goes beyond the clubhouse and he is always on hand to coordinate first aid courses to all the new volunteers and coaches and is an extremely valuable club person.

Peter Callan has been dedicated to Naomh Fionnbarrá and St. Anne's GFG for more than 50 years. He is a passionate groundman and committee member who has always ensured that facilities are open when necessary and in good time, that pitches are lined, that the grass is kept in excellent playing condition, goal nets installed and flags lined out for all games that take place involving the club. Peter ensures that the club has the best facilities possible and his dedication to the club ensures that children from nursery right through to minor grades and adults have a welcoming facility to call their own.

Eamonn McGowan has dedicated more than 65 years to GAA and has been involved in every aspect of Allen Gaels since its inception as a club 52 years ago. A decorated player, Eamonn won six Senior Hurling club medals before transitioning to management at Allen Gaels. All training sessions, from nursery to senior, take place under his watchful eye and you are guaranteed to meet him at every single game, no matter the age group. In addition to his coaching and management positions, Eamonn takes charge of all aspects of the upkeep of Allen Gael's ground, Shane McGettigan Memorial Park, a ground for which he worked and fundraised tirelessly in the early 2000s. In 2013, Eamonn began his management of the Gaelic4Mothers&Others team, a

role which he takes immense pride in and continues in to this day.

Frank McGhee's involvement with CLG Ard an Ratha began in 1958 when he played with his Primary School Meenavalley in the Ardara Schoolboys League. Little did he realise then that he would go on and play for the club for a further 43 years. Frank's contribution to the club was not limited to playing, as he managed underage teams in the '70s and '80s before holding the Senior Team Manager's position from 1987 to 1990. He has since trained the senior and reserve teams with his enthusiasm for the game never waning. In addition to his coaching, Frank also spent time refereeing at underage level, often acting as linesman and umpire for the club at both home and away games. Furthermore, Frank prepares the grounds for all matches, getting flags ready, car park stewarding, opening of dressing rooms, and anything in relation to repairs and maintenance he always has the tool box in the boot of his car.

James Daly is the epitome of an Irish volunteer and has dedicated his entire life to his community and his GAA club. He is around the club every single day and knows everything about the club. James inspires others to become volunteers by the example he sets through his work at Silverbridge GFC. When the club needs an electrician, or a joiner, or a plumber, James will ensure the job is done correctly. Silverbridge has a massive campus with three fields, a large community centre and seven breakout rooms for which James is the full-time volunteer caretaker, a job he is extremely dedicated to.

Joe Moore is a stalwart of St. Aidan's GAA club. Since the club's inception in 1956, Joe has been involved in every aspect of St. Aidan's, from playing, to managing, to refereeing and everything in between. Since a Junior Championship win in 1966, in which Joe lined out as right wing



SINCE THE CLUB'S INCEPTION IN 1956, JOE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN EVERY ASPECT OF ST. AIDAN'S, FROM PLAYING, TO MANAGING, TO REFEREEING AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

forward, the club has continued to grow from strength to strength, in no small part due to Joe's herculean efforts on and off the pitch. At his first ever club meeting, Joe was appointed as Club Secretary, remaining in that role for some time. He has also committed his time to refereeing, taking charge of the 1975 Senior County Final and replay between Roscommon Gaels and Castlerea St. Kevin's. Today, Joe is still heavily involved in the club, as Club President and as part of the Parks Committee, and is ever-present by the pitch on match day.

Pat Hennessey has been a volunteer at Toomevara GAA Club for over 40 years and his contribution to the club in that time has been invaluable. Despite being a busy farmer, the list of tasks he accomplishes on a day-to-day basis for the club is outstanding. From opening up

the field and locking up a night, to lining the pitch before matches and operating the manual scoreboard, to treating the pitch so it is kept in prime condition, it is clear that Pat is truly committed to the club and its success in the community. He is always involved in club fundraising events, selling tickets and keeping spirits high. A passionate hurling fan, he has a wonderful knowledge of the game and club members frequently seek his advice and wisdom. Pat's impact on his club and community, while quiet, has been effective and indispensable.

Seán Smith's passion for Crosserlough GFC is unquestionable. His first official role in the club began in 1981 as PRO, which began a run of 28 years as an officer of the club in many different roles. He has held the role of PRO twice, Treasurer twice and Assistant Secretary. For the last 20

years he has also been the caretaker of the club grounds along with being the Lotto Coordinator and Kitman for many of the teams. Seán can always be found at the GAA grounds either mowing the field or ensuring the pitch is lined out properly for upcoming games. He also ensures that all other weekly community activities take place in the club and are run to the highest possible standards. Seán has been the one constant within the club for over 40 years, he is a dedicated leader, who goes over and beyond for his club and community each and every week.

The Volunteers in Sport Awards celebrate the contributions of the band of volunteers across the country who give their time to Irish sport and physical activity every year. This equates to approximately 37.3 million hours of volunteering across Ireland's 13,000 registered sports clubs and associations and, according to Sport Ireland's 2021 'Researching the Value of Sport in Ireland' report, is worth an estimated €1.5bn to the exchequer.

Throughout September and October members of the public, sports clubs and governing bodies were invited to nominate an individual whose contribution to sport and physical activity in Ireland has made a real difference to their community, club or county. The nominations and award recipients were selected by a judging panel consisting of 12 individuals drawn from sports administration, the volunteer community and media, and included former Director General of the GAA, Páraic Duffy, RTÉ broadcaster, Marie Crowe and CEO of Gaisce, Yvonne McKenna.

In addition to the 32 county-level award winners, Amina Moustafa, a volunteer across many different sports including football, basketball and swimming, received the overall Outstanding Achievement Award for her incredible service to the promotion of sport amongst





PAT HENNESSEY HAS BEEN A VOLUNTEER AT TOOMEVARA GAA CLUB FOR OVER 40 YEARS.

women of diverse ethnic backgrounds, as well as her continued support of Sport Against Racism Ireland (SARI).

Máire Allen and Jacqueline McCormack have also received a Special Recognition Award for their amazing work with Roscommon Special Olympics Club. They have dedicated their time tirelessly over the last number of years and more recently, in the face of the challenging circumstances caused by Covid-19, did everything to ensure the club's members remained fit and active throughout the various lockdowns.

Pádraic Kearney (RIP) has been honoured with a Special Recognition Award for his commitment to Gaelic Games in Adare GAA Club (Limerick). Pádraic was incredibly committed to his community, with his volunteerism going far beyond

sport. His untimely passing earlier this year has been felt by everyone in the club, especially the younger members, who Pádraic coached for many years.

Commenting on the awards, Minister of State for Sport and the Gaeltacht, Jack Chambers, TD, said: "It is an honour for me to support this year's Volunteers in Sport Awards and help recognise so many fantastic volunteers in our community. These awards have a special place in the sporting calendar as they recognise those who have given an incredible amount of time throughout the year who have ensured that sport can take place in our communities, and they do so without the expectation of gratitude or reward. The amount of hard work and dedication that these volunteers give to sport in Ireland is quite truly astonishing and I am privileged to support both the volunteers and

these awards. I would also like to thank the Federation of Irish Sport and EBS, and all who will help make these virtual ceremonies a memorable occasion for all."

Speaking about the awards, CEO of the Federation of Irish Sport, Mary O'Connor said: "Despite another very challenging year for sport, we have once again seen how important volunteering has been to communities across Ireland. We have an enormous amount of gratitude for the army of volunteers who have ensured that sport could take place in a safe and controlled manner. Whether it be on pitches, courts, tracks, pools or even community halls across the country, the volunteers are always there to make sure sport and physical activity continues to take place around Ireland. It gives me immense pride to be able to recognise so many of these volunteers at next

week's virtual Volunteers in Sport Awards and I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to all of this year's recipients. I would like to also thank EBS for their continued support in bringing wider recognition of volunteers in sport in Ireland to life. I would also like to express my gratitude to Minister Jack Chambers who will be taking the time out of his schedule to attend our virtual ceremonies next week and helping us to champion and celebrate the recipients."

Managing Director of EBS, Paul Butler, commented: "EBS is delighted to partner with the Federation of Irish Sport once more to honour and recognise the everyday heroes around Ireland who make sure sport happens every day. EBS has been involved in local communities around Ireland for over 80 years and we are delighted to showcase the tremendous work these volunteers do for sport throughout their communities. These volunteers truly are the backbone of Irish sport, and we are proud to support them. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the recipients of the 2021 Volunteers in Sports Awards and thank them for all of the tireless work they do to ensure sport in Ireland continues to flourish."

The awards will be streamed live each evening from 7pm on the Federation of Irish Sport's Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/federationofirishsport/> with the awards schedule listed below:

- Tuesday, December 7th: Leinster and Special Recognition Award
- Wednesday, December 8th: Munster, Connacht and Special Recognition Award
- Thursday, December 9th: Ulster and Outstanding Achievement Award

For more information on the awards, visit <http://www.volunteersinsport.ie/>

## 2020 GAA MACNAMEE AWARD WINNERS

### **THE WINNERS OF THE 2020 MACNAMEE AWARDS HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED BY THE GAA.**

The GAA National Communication and Media Awards are named after the late Pádraig MacNamee, former President of the GAA, Chairman of the GAA Commission (1969-1971) and member of the RTÉ authority.

They are presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions made by individuals and Association units in the area of media and communications. Due to the Covid-19 situation the presentation of the MacNamee Awards has been postponed until a future date.

Uachtarán CLG Larry McCarthy offered his congratulations to the winners. He said:

“From its earliest days the GAA understood the importance of communication with its membership and the power of being able to tell and share its story far and wide.

“The GAA’s MacNamee Awards allow us to recognise those individuals who have performed exemplary work in this field and whose contribution to GAA communications is of the highest standard.

“Congratulations to all of the winners. The

diverse range of awards reflects the fact that communication is ever evolving and we remain committed to ensuring that Gaelic games remains seen and heard in this busy landscape.

“I want to particularly pay tribute to Hall of Fame inductee Seán Bán Breathnach and salute his life-long dedication to GAA journalism across so many different platforms. Thar ceann Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, míle buíochas a Sheáin.”

The winners of the 2020 MacNamee Awards are as follows:

**2020 Best GAA Publication – ‘Len Gaynor - Chiselled from Ash’ by Shane Brophy**

In a world flooded with sports biographies and autobiographies, *Chiselled From Ash* stands out as a very readable personal tale filled with emotion, humour and, above all, a love for the game of hurling. In this story of the life and times of Len Gaynor we learn about his journey to the top of his game, bear witness to some thrilling matchday memories and come to understand the importance of the GAA Club. Contributions from hurling legends and other prominent GAA figures add an extra depth to this book which is filled with real insights into the experiences of the flamboyant wing back. *Chiselled from Ash* also introduces us to some very memorable and uniquely hurling



TIPPERARY HURLING LEGEND LEN GAYNOR (RIGHT) WITH THE AUTHOR OF HIS BIOGRAPHY, 'CHISELLED FROM ASH', SHANE BROPHY.

characters as Len looks back on seven decades of a love affair with the small ball.

### **2020 Best GAA Club Publication – Knockmore GAA Club 60th Anniversary**

The Knockmore GAA Club 60th anniversary book is a wonderful retrospective of the story of the club. The club's history is chartered chronologically through the book year by year with great taglines for each year by way of introduction. The use of pictures throughout helps bring their story to life. The presentation is excellent, it is a substantial book, and the landscape design makes it accessible. The 2020 county senior football champions who have reached the 2021 decider at the time of writing, Knockmore GAA club was formed in 1958, but from the moment

they won their first major title via a North Mayo junior crown in 1968 they have been a club wasting no time to make a big impact. Since winning senior status in 1972 they've won the senior crown nine times and counting with the club's ladies' teams a beacon of inspiration also.

### **2020 Best Website – Blarney GAA Club – blarneygaa.ie**

Blarney's website has a very modern feel to it; a fresh design and good use of media. Lots of news, features and sub-sections which are up to date. Navigation across the site is clear, information is easily attained, and the search function performs well. Links to their social media sites are available and additional sections such as the galleries and 'Blarney Quizzes' section adds further character to the

site and is welcoming for members, both new and old. In addition, there are comprehensive sections on Child Safety & Wellbeing, which are so important in this day and age. Their Club History & Roll of Honour sections also caught the eye, with detailed information on the club, its vision and their teams. This site has something for everyone, catering to all within the Blarney GAA Community.

### **Digital Impact Award – Armagh GAA**

The Armagh TV & PR Team are deserving winners of the 2020 MacNamee Award for Best Digital Impact. Their innovative and consistently excellent approach to engaging the Armagh GAA Community, both at home and overseas, ensured that Armagh GAA maintained, and indeed enhanced, its engagement with the GAA fraternity throughout the pandemic. The viewing and engagement statistics for their campaigns provide evidence that the content delivered was both relevant and unique and, no doubt, helped many Gaels through the tedium of lockdown.

Providing access to the public to view the Club championships (in all codes) was done in a comprehensive and professional manner with excellent pre-match, post-match analysis and commentary. Similarly, being able to successfully deliver events like Club All-Stars, inter-county Jersey launches and club draws in a virtual format is further testament to the excellence the digital team in Armagh.

### **Community Contribution Award – Beal an Mhuirthead GAA Club, Belmullet**

The nomination came from an individual in the community that saw and highlighted the community impact from their own personal interaction with the GAA club community outreach programme. The challenges faced by communities in rural Ireland was evident in the distance the volunteers covered in deliveries of groceries and medicine. The GAA club planned, organised and went that extra mile to help and support their community daily.

There was a genuine sense of community

THIS PHOTOGRAPH OF TRILICK ST. MACARTANS'S SUPPORTERS REACTING DURING THE 2020 COUNTY SFC SEMI-FINAL AGAINST NA FIANNA COALISLAND BY DAVID FITZGERALD OF SPORTSFILE HAS WON THE MACNAMEE AWARD FOR BEST PHOTOGRAPH.



spirit. The familiar faces helping each other, and the extra time spent to have a chat with members of the community who were very lonely during the lockdown months of the Covid pandemic were invaluable.

#### **2020 Best Photograph – David Fitzgerald, Sportsfile**

In the year that was COVID and multiple lockdowns, this image not only portrays the joy of the sport but the love of supporters. Rarely do you see an image where multiple faces tell the same story – a story of relief, excitement and the enthrallment of attending a sporting venue once again.

#### **2020 Best Programme GAA – Armagh Senior Football Championship Final Programme**

This production is contemporarily designed with excellently chosen content. The decision to focus attention on the fixture means that each editorial and statistics page has a refreshingly ‘easy on the eye’ look while holding the curiosity of the reader. There is a simplicity of design to the team pages and some very welcome infographs displaying interest-peaking information.

#### **2020 Best GAA Related Radio Programme – Adrian Eames, RTÉ Radio Sport– Bloody Sunday Commemoration**

Broadcast live from Croke Park during the Bloody Sunday Commemoration. This entry was selected for the manner in which it brought the commemoration of one of the most poignant days in GAA history to a worldwide radio audience, with a recap of the history of the day, mixed with live inserts of the pageantry, the laying of the wreath by an tUachtarán and the playing of the special musical composition commissioned for the occasion.

#### **2020 Provincial Media Award – ‘Rubbing Shoulders with Giants’ – by Damian Dolan, The Irish World**

The article is brilliantly researched, detailed and sets out the unlikely story of a multi-talented Dublin football team – on a quest to win the 2011 All-Ireland under Pat Gilroy – playing London club team Parnell’s in May 2011 at Ruislip.

It’s a brilliant local London look at an untold story of the part played by an under-strength London club side (whose best players were representing the county team that weekend) in Dublin’s first All-Ireland success for 16 years. The piece details Dublin’s training camp in London and how they used London Irish RFC’s ground in Sunbury as their base. An interview with Pat Gilroy – among many others – sheds great light into this trip. It’s a wholly unique piece, entertaining, fresh, and a great piece of local journalism.

#### **2020 National Media Award – Fintan O’Toole, The 42.ie “My grandfather, sporting memories and a Kerry team playing on All-Ireland Hurling final day”**

If you were to really examine your love of Gaelic Games and try to pinpoint where it comes from, there’s a very good chance it’s all about family. The passion for club and county that was passed down, the trips to matches as a child with older relatives, the support of parents and siblings on the days you laced up a pair of boots yourself.

Fintan O’Toole’s beautifully written article about his Grandfather, Patie O’Sullivan, is an eulogy to how a love of Gaelic Games is what binds so many families together. It’s full of wry humour, and the colourful picture it paints of a man who loved sport and family will feel universal for so many readers who inherited their own passion for Gaelic Games from those that went before them.

#### **2020 Gradam na Gaeilge (Irish Language Award) – Conall Ó Máirtín, BBC Uladh - ‘Domhnach na Fola’**

Is don chlár faisnéise ‘Domhnach na Fola’ a craoladh ar BBC Uladh, a bronnadh Gradam na Gaeilge i mbliana. Caitear súil siar sa chlár seo ar Domhnach na Fola sa bhliain 1920 agus tríd an gceol, trí mhaisíocht fuaimne, trí shuíomhanna éagsúla chomh maith le hagallaimh, tugtar ar aistear muid siar ar an méid a thit amach an lá tragóideach sin.

Clár siamsúil a bhí anseo ina ndearnadh sárthaighde ann. Bhí an méid a bhí ann suimiúil, ómósach agus thug sé ábhar machnaimh don lucht éisteachta. Léiríodh tuisicnt shoiléir ar ábhar an chlár agus ar an tionchar a bhí aige ar mhórphobal Chumann Lúthchleas Gael. Léiríodh agus cuireadh i láthair go han-éifeachtach é. Bhí an rogha ceoil an-fheiliúnach chomh maith leis an mhaisíocht fuaimne agus luas an cháir. Lig sé sin don lucht éisteacha

análú agus gach rud a pléadh a shníomh isteach.

The winner of Gradam na Gaeilge this year is the radio documentary Domhnach na Fola broadcast on BBC Uladh. The programme looks at Bloody Sunday in 1920 and through the use of music, sound effects, locations and interviews, we are brought on a journey showing us what happened on that fateful day.

This was a well-researched and entertaining programme. The content was interesting, respectful and thought provoking. There was a clear understanding of the topic at hand and the impact that it had on the GAA community and this was a well-produced and presented programme. The music choice was excellent as was the sound effects and the pace of the programme allowed the listener to breathe and take in everything that was being said. An enjoyable listen.



**FINTAN O'TOOLE, GAA EDITOR WITH THE42.IE, PICTURED HERE INTERVIEWING CLARE HURLER PAUL FLANAGAN, HAS WON THE 2020 MACNAMEE NATIONAL MEDIA AWARD.**

### Special Merit Award – Michael Foley, *Sunday Times*

In recognition of Michael's extraordinary commitment to the telling of the Bloody Sunday at Croke Park story of 1920 and at ensuring that the memory of the 14 innocent lives lost at the stadium that day were appropriately remembered in the centenary year. His assistance in what has been the Bloody Sunday Graves Project is also recognised. Michael's body of work across print, radio, tv, digital media, lectures and podcasts ensured that every possible medium was used in honouring the memory of those who died.

### Hall of Fame – Seán Bán Breathnach

Bhí Seán Bán Breathnach i gcroí-lár go leor den chraoladh spóirt a rinne Raidió na Gaeltachta le beagnach 50 bliain anuas.

I dtús na 1970idí, d'hill an 'Fear Bán' abhaile as Sasana nuair a fuair sé beagán oibre ó Raidió RTÉ ag cur clár pop-cheoil i láthair trí mheán na Gaeilge, ach le teacht Raidió na Gaeltachta i 1972. D'hill sé ar Chonamara.

Agus an eagraíocht sin ag leagan agus ag cur leis an gcráoladh spóirt a bhí uaithi dá lucht éisteachta, bhí Seán lárnach i dtráchtairachtaí spóirt ar Chluiche Idir-Chontae Chumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Ní raibh na raidióanna áitiúla ar an saol ag an am sin agus ba é Raidió na Gaeltachta a thug faoin gcráoladh ar chluichí na gclubanna – rud nár déanadh riamh roimhe. Bhí Domhnach stairiúil faoi leith i bhFómhar ceann de na 1980idí nuair a chraoladar cluichí ceannais as cúig chontae faoi leith.

A chuid tráchtairachta ba mhó a thuill clú do Sheán, ach bhí sé sáite freisin i gcláracha irise agus i sraitheanna leis na laochra móra as an am atá caite.

Tá dlúthbhaint aige le craoladh Chomórtais Peile na Gaeltachta le breis agus 40 bliain.

Thug teacht TnaG/TG4 breis deiseanna ina bhelach, ach is dóigh liom go n-admhódh sé féin gur sa raidió atá a chroí.

Seán Bán Breathnach has been at the forefront of Raidió na Gaeltachta's coverage of sport for the best part of half a century.

Having returned from England as a long-haired blonde hippy in the very early 1970's, he obtained some part-time work from RTÉ Raidió presenting a pop-music programme 'as Gaeilge'.

The advent of Raidió na Gaeltachta in 1972 saw him return to his native Connemara.

As that organisation mapped the vision of its sports reporting Seán played a central part in commentaries of the GAA's inter-county football and hurling competitions.

Local radio was then still some way off, and Raidió na Gaeltachta pioneered the broadcasting of county championship matches, in all grades – covering five county finals on one famous Sunday in the mid 1980's.

Seán is most famous for his commentaries, but his sports magazine programmes and his series of interviews with players of the past have earned great acclaim.

For over 40 years, he has been closely associated with Comórtas Peile na Gaeltachta.

The advent of TnaG/TG4 opened up another avenue for his talents and made the spectrum broader – but I think that he would admit himself that he is a 'radio-head' at heart.

ACTORS BARRY JOHN KINSELLA, FRONT LEFT, WHO PLAYED THE ROLE OF MICHAEL HOGAN AND JACK GALVIN, WHO PLAYED THE ROLE OF WILLIAM ROBINSON, TWO OF THE 14 VICTIMS OF BLOODY SUNDAY IN A SERIES OF SHORT FILMS BY THE GAA, IN THE COMPANY OF JOURNALIST MICHAEL FOLEY, LEFT, UACHTARÁN CHUMANN LÚTHCHLEAS GAEL JOHN HORAN AND MUSICIAN COLM MAC CON IOMAIRE AT THE LAUNCH IN CROKE PARK OF A SPECIAL RANGE OF INITIATIVES BY THE GAA TO FOCUS ON THE MEMORY OF THE 14 PEOPLE WHO WENT TO A MATCH ON BLOODY SUNDAY, NOV 21, 1920 AND NEVER CAME HOME.



RTÉ RAIDÍÓ NA GAELTACHTA COMMENTATOR, SEÁN BÁN BREATHNACH.



Football

Hurling

Club

General

## MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

### Nollaig Shona agus Ath Bhliain faoi mhaise

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](mailto:clubnewsletter@gaa.ie).

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