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NUACHTLITIR



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Above: Uachtarán Aogán Ó Fearghail

UACHTARÁN Ó FEARGHAIL: OUR CLUBS INSPIRE ME

GAA President Aogán Ó Fearghail says he draws strength and inspiration from the work he sees taking place in GAA Clubs all over the country.

Speaking exclusively to the GAA Club Newsletter as he embarks on the start of his third and final year as Uachtarán Chumann Luthchleas Gael, the Cavan native has paid tribute to the energy and vitality of the GAA's volunteers at club level and salutes their positivity.

He said: "I don't think GAA clubs could survive if they were not positive – it is just not possible because every single club has a challenge.

"If you are in a very large urban area and you have so many other sports and distractions, so many other issues pulling at you and venues are always a big issue – that is a big challenge. Then if you are at the opposite end and you are in a rural club and people have gone and you have more people from your parish in New South Wales in Australia than you have at home in your club – these are all massive issues.

"But if you start out with the problems your club is going nowhere and what I find when

I go around is that the vast majority of our clubs are in a good place and primarily because they have positive leadership; they are people who just get up and get on with it.

"They realise their difficulties, they know them and are aware of them and don't ignore them – but I think our clubs are great.

"On average, I'm in at least four clubs a week and never was there as much activity they tell me, they have more young girls and boys than ever and they really value what comes to them from Croke Park and I am hearing that all the time.

"For example, through the GAA Healthy Club initiative up and down the length of the country we now have clubs with walking groups, clubs doing yoga classes, clubs that are eating better and they are all getting and thanking Croke Park for the advice being given to them.

"We have wonderful club facilities with financial assistance from Central Council

which are distributed through the provinces and are a wonderful addition and people really value that.

“There are more coaches than ever and coaches are delivering in schools and delivering to clubs so the amount of activity was never higher, the organisational levels was never better. I love to hear clubs tell me that the courses we are delivering in Club Leadership are well received. There are issues but, in the main, clubs are in a good place and there are good things happening.

“Every time we sit down in Páirc an Chrócaigh with the roughly 30 different committees we have – the first thing on their agenda is ‘what can we do to make it a better life for clubs?’ and it is always to the forefront of GAA thinking and I am delighted that we have set that very strongly on the agenda and I look forward in the next 12 months to keeping that on a continuous rise – the empowerment and facilitation for clubs.”

As he reflects on what was a busy but successful Congress, Uachtarán Ó Fearghail insists the decisions made at Croke Park that weekend will have lasting benefits for club activity.

He added: “Every decision made here in Croke Park is to try and help clubs and I think the greatest example of that is the recent decisions of Congress.

“The reason for condensing the inter-county football championship is to create more space for our clubs. Bringing back All-Ireland finals to August and potentially

losing both PR and finance from replays was done to give space to our clubs.”

For a small minority these changes have not done enough and there have been some who have claimed a sense of disconnect between Croke Park and grassroots level.

It is a charge that the Uachtarán refutes based on the evidence he sees from his 32 county travels across the GAA's 1600 strong club network.

He insisted: “If some people feel a disconnect I am sorry that they do. You have to remember the membership of the GAA is now around 750,000 and not all of them will share the strength of the warm feeling we've got, but the people I meet on a daily and weekly basis never felt more strengthened by being part of anything than they do at the moment because they see the GAA as one place and they are part of it.

“All I can say is what I see. I am in, on average, four clubs a week and I don't see a disconnect in the people I meet and I certainly don't feel a disconnect.

“I wouldn't like to upset anyone and if someone feels a disconnect I'm disappointed and sorry they feel it, but it is not my experience and it is very much a small minority view because the clubs I am meeting – they can't all be fooling me – they are very warm in their enthusiasm with the link of club to county to province to Croke Park and they see it all as one and the same. There is no hierarchy in the GAA and people who say that are people

who just don't understand what we do.

“My role at the moment is to be president of this Association. My role 10 years ago was to be chairman of my club. My role in two years' time will be a coach in my club and you serve in whatever role you find yourself in that time. There isn't disconnect. There can't be a disconnect when you are of it yourself.

“The Ard Stiúrthóir Páraic Duffy spent his life with his juvenile club in Scotstown and coaching his club and his school teams in St MacCartans. I spent 25 years consecutively coaching U12 teams in my club. I have been chairman, secretary, and every role possible within my club so we are all connected because that is what we are and every decision made here in Croke Park is to try and help clubs.”

As well as thanking clubs for their work on behalf of the Association while on these visits, Aogán says he always reminds clubs that big or small, they are part of a big family. He explained: “I would always thank clubs for what they do and also remind them they are part of a big family and a growing family and they like that – it resonates with them.

“They are part of the GAA family – that whole sense of togetherness and what the GAA always was aspiring to be and it is still in our opening rule that we are building a sense of Irishness in an Irish nation and building a sense of community and that is empowering people to make them feel good about themselves. The greatest need of all human beings is to belong and the GAA club provides that.”

Uachtarán Ó Fearghail intends maintaining his list of club visits and is also focused on

the upcoming 150th committee report which will help position the GAA for where it wants to be in 2034 – the year of our 150th anniversary.

After the changes to the football championship, the president says he is committed to engaging and listening to the hurling community to see what way the hurling championship needs to be approached for the coming years, and he is pleased that new relationship with the GPA protects the amateur ethos of our county players.

He says: “The role has been even better than I expected.

“The colour and the magic when you drive around the country and into parishes and see the passion and excitement is great and it is uplifting.”

CROKE PARK ALLOCATES €100K TO LOCAL COMMUNITY



17 March 2017; Lúthchleas Gael Aogán Ó Fearghail presents Tervor Smyth, Bridget Smyth, Krissi Smyth, Lynette Smyth, Oisín Smyth and Cody Smyth from Whitehall Colmcille's, Dublin, who won an "All Ireland Football Final package 2017" during the presentation of prizes to the winners of the GAA National Club Draw at Croke Park in Dublin. Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Aogán Ó Fearghail Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile

The winners were confirmed of the 2017 GAA National Club Draw after the event took place in Croke Park this afternoon.

In the region of €1.5 million was raised through the draw with all funds retained by clubs who took part in the draw.

The tickets were drawn by Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Aogán Ó Fearghail who said: "The club draw is the GAA's way of helping clubs.

"It's an offer which is there for all clubs to take part in where they can sell the tickets and retain all the profits. Central Council provides the prizes, and they are wonderful prizes.

"We allow clubs to sell up to 2,000 tickets so potentially any club can avail of €20,000 which is an incredible assistance to clubs and so many of them have benefited over the course of the last four years. In that time in excess of €7 Million has been raised by our clubs.

"Clubs get involved by simply looking to Croke Park for the tickets which are available through our finance committee who do a wonderful job. We make sure that clubs are alerted to the fact that the draw is on.

"A lot of clubs have been running their own draws for years, but the big difference here is that we're providing all the prizes and clubs retain 100% of the profits. I'd love to see this being availed of by every club in the country."



National Club Draw Prizes and Winners

1. A NEW OPEL CORSA

Eamon McNally – Ballymaguigan (Derry)

2. TRIP WITH THE 2017 ALL-STARS

Martin Kearney – St. Patrick's
Palmerstown (Dublin)

3. TRAVEL VOUCHER TO THE VALUE OF €1,500

The Tiernan family – Cloone (Leitrim)

4. ALL-IRELAND HURLING & FOOTBALL FINAL CORPORATE PACKAGE 2017

Aisling Sheehan – Drom Inch (Tipperary)

5. ALL-IRELAND HURLING & FOOTBALL FINAL PACKAGE 2017

Tommy Morgan – Mountbellew-Moylough
(Galway)

6. ALL-IRELAND HURLING & FOOTBALL FINAL CORPORATE PACKAGE 2017

Caroline Brady – Simonstown Gaels
(Meath)

7. ALL-IRELAND HURLING & FOOTBALL FINAL PACKAGE 2017

Paul McKenna – Desertmartin (Derry)

8. ALL-IRELAND HURLING & FOOTBALL FINAL PACKAGE 2017

Ciara Burke – Corofin (Galway)

9. SHOPPING VOUCHER TO THE VALUE OF €1,000

Shane Carroll – Clontarf (Dublin)

10. SHOPPING VOUCHER TO THE VALUE OF €1,000

Emmet & Nuala Quinn – Pomeroy (Tyrone)

11. ALL-IRELAND HURLING FINAL CORPORATE PACKAGE 2017

Syl Coote – St. Andrews, Bagenalstown
(Carlow)

12. ALL-IRELAND FOOTBALL FINAL CORPORATE PACKAGE 2017

Krissi Smith – Whitehall Colmcilles
(Dublin)

13. ALL-IRELAND HURLING FINAL PACKAGE 2017

Antóin Mhac Bheasaigh – Belturbet
(Cavan)

14. ALL-IRELAND FOOTBALL FINAL PACKAGE 2017

Peter Coyle – Pomeroy (Tyrone)

CLUB SPECIFIC DRAW

€5,000 overall prize winners

1. Na Fianna (Dublin)

2. Kiltubrid (Leitrim)

3. Tyrellstown (Dublin)

€1,000 prize winners

Connacht:

Boyle (Roscommon), St. Michaels (Galway), Davitts (Mayo), Shamrock Gaels (Sligo), Fenagh
St. Caillins (Leitrim).

Munster:

Newport (Tipperary), Ballyclough (Cork), Ballinameela (Waterford), Dr. Crokes (Kerry),
Clooney-Quin (Clare), St. Patrick's (Limerick).

Ulster:

Ardboe O'Donovan Rossa (Tyrone), Belturbet (Cavan), Doohamlet (Monaghan), Urris
(Donegal), Belcoo O'Rahillys (Fermanagh), Shane O'Neills Camlough (Armagh), Clonduff
(Monaghan), O'Donovan Rossa (Antrim), Coleraine Owen Roes (Derry)

Leinster:

Glenealy (Wicklow), Camross (Laois), Clonard (Wexford), Round Towers (Kildare),
Dunshaughlin (Meath), O'Hanrahans (Carlow), Dundalk Gaels (Louth), Railyard (Kilkenny),
Trinity Gaels (Dublin), Southern Gaels (Westmeath), Cashel (Longford), Tubber (Offaly)

€1,000 prize winners for the highest ticket sales in each Province

€1,000 prize winners for the highest ticket sales in each Province

Connacht: Davitts (Mayo)

Munster: Kilcummin (Kerry)

Ulster: Naomh Mhuire Convoy (Donegal)

Leinster: Na Fianna (Dublin)

YOUR SUPPORT of our Games makes this POSSIBLE

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

2,000+

Club officers have received specialist training as Chairpersons, treasurers, Secretaries and PROs through the Club leadership Development Programme



€2M

in the last eight years has been made available to fund bursary grants for GAA students at third level



€11M

was spent on Games Development, including the funding for more than 200 full-time GAA coaches working with Clubs and Schools nationwide



MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

€1.5m

was raised for Clubs through a National Club Draw



€10M

in the last five years has been allocated to GAA Clubs for the redevelopment of pitches and clubhouses



€1m

over the next four years will be spent on the GAA Healthy Club Project in partnership with Irish Life targeting 60 Clubs across 32 counties reaching 44,638 members



GRMA – YOUR AWARDS ARE WAITING



YOUR REWARDS ARE WAITING

grma (go raibh maith agat) is the new GAA Membership Card and Rewards Programme where GAA Members and supporters can avail of rewards and offers as a 'thank you' or 'go raibh maith agat' for engaging in selected GAA activities and going to games.

The programme is open to both GAA Members and supporters.

GAA Members who sign up with their GAA membership number will also receive their personalised GAA Membership Card.



EXCITING REWARDS & OFFERS

Everyone who registers can earn points for going to GAA games and engaging in selected GAA activities. Points can then be redeemed against great rewards such as:

- **25% Off voucher for Elverys.ie** until 31st March
- Special offers on **Allianz Football and Hurling League Final** tickets
- Exclusive offers on **GAA county jerseys, footballs and sliotars**
- Special discounts on **GAA Museum & Etihad Skyline** tours at Croke Park

Register now at gaa.ie/grma

you've earned it

LÁ NA GCLUBANNA



CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

At first look, to the uninformed, the winter and early spring months might seem like the quieter months of the year for our Clubs.

This is not an unfair assumption as, for many of us, there are no games taking place, the formalities of the Prize Giving Dinner and Annual General Meeting are over for another year. The reality however is a different story. Over the past few years, the months of January to March have saw 100's of hours invested in training 1000's of our Club Officers and the 2017 deliveries of the Club Leadership Development Programme has been one of the busiest periods for training our volunteer administrators yet.

The last three months has saw huge numbers of Club Officers from across the country develop themselves as Leaders within their Club. By the time the Club Leadership Development Programme takes a pause in the middle of next month, and building on last year's successes, the Programme will have been delivered at least once in every County in Ireland. This isn't the only impressive number from this year's Programme however...

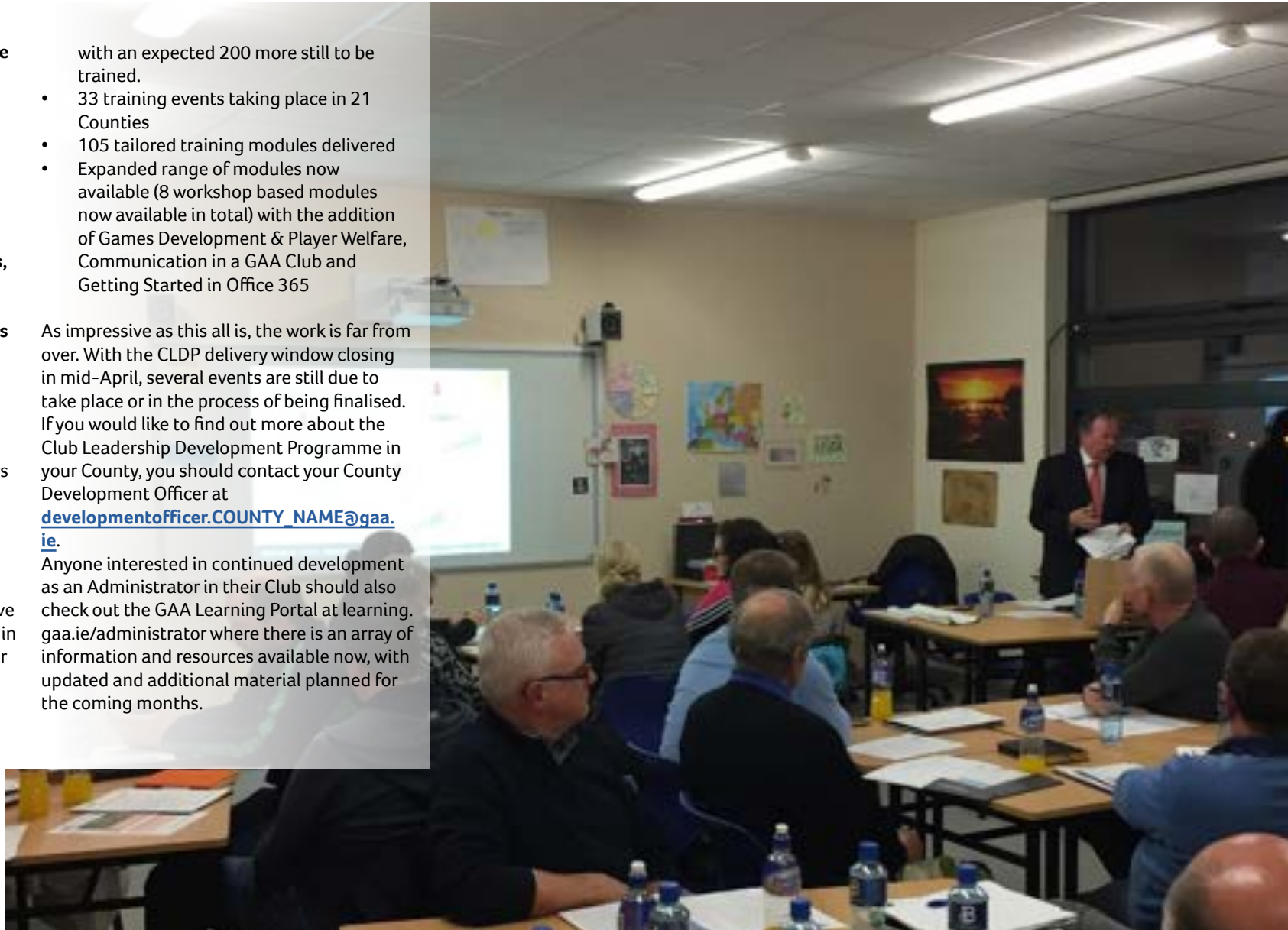
- Over 1100 Club Officers trained to date

with an expected 200 more still to be trained.

- 33 training events taking place in 21 Counties
- 105 tailored training modules delivered
- Expanded range of modules now available (8 workshop based modules now available in total) with the addition of Games Development & Player Welfare, Communication in a GAA Club and Getting Started in Office 365

As impressive as this all is, the work is far from over. With the CLDP delivery window closing in mid-April, several events are still due to take place or in the process of being finalised. If you would like to find out more about the Club Leadership Development Programme in your County, you should contact your County Development Officer at developmentofficer.COUNTY_NAME@gaa.ie.

Anyone interested in continued development as an Administrator in their Club should also check out the GAA Learning Portal at learning.gaa.ie/administrator where there is an array of information and resources available now, with updated and additional material planned for the coming months.



GAA MEMBERSHIP AND REGISTRATION

R Required for Players and Members

Vitamins, minerals, herbs, meal Clubs are reminded that they must register their players and members for the 2017 season on the GAA Management System (GMS) which can be accessed by visiting people.gaa.ie/admin.

When logged on, the designated Club Administrator (Secretary or Registrar) should go to the 'Register Members' page and complete the necessary steps.

This page will contain the details of all those people who have been registered with the Club in previous years. To add new members to the Club, go to 'Add and View Members', click on the 'Add' button, select 'Member' and complete the necessary steps.

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

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

New Club Registrars and Administrators

It is generally the duty of the Club Registrar to perform the online registrations and Club Secretary to oversee that registrations are in order. If you are new to your role in 2017 and need help logging into the GMS, please click [here](#).

Online Help Guides

A number of helpful online forums are available where you will find User Guides and FAQs on using the system. Please [click here](#) to access these forums. The GMS provides your Club with functionality to:

- Add, view and register members and players
- Set-up teams, groups, committees and families for reporting and communication purposes
- Communicate with these groups via bulk text message and e-mail
- Generate team sheets in Irish and English
- Generate registration reports
- Pay and record fees
- Affiliate teams and pay Injury Fund subscriptions
- Create team amalgamations
- Access resources and supports

The GAA Learning and Development Portal contains a GAA Membership Training Manual and videos explaining the system. To access this information, [click here](#)

E-mail and Telephone Support

Each Club will have access to the system either through their Secretary or Registrar. For any queries on access to the system, or on the system functionality, please e-mail or call the Servasport Helpdesk on:

Email: gaasupport@servasport.com
 Phone: ROI: 04890 313 845
 NI: 02890 313 845
 International: +44 2890 313 845
 Support Times

The usual support times are:

- Monday to Friday: 9 – 5 p.m.

Out of hours support will be in operation for a 6 week period between the 18th of February and 31st of March. Out of hours support times will be as follows:

- Monday to Friday: 5 p.m. – 10 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Online module on effective meetings

The GAA has developed an online module to help officers meetings more effectively.

About the module

Meetings are an essential part of running a GAA Club Executive, County Management Committee or Provincial Council. Running meetings so that they run smoothly and achieve what they are supposed to is not as easy as it sounds but it is a skill that can be developed. A well-managed meeting can encourage cooperation between members because people can be made aware of developments across their area of interest in

the Association and contribute to them. Meetings also play an important role in developing team spirit, as volunteers feel a part of changes and plans that they have helped shape. They are especially useful for problem solving. On the other hand, meetings that are not well run can be a source of frustration for members and slow down progress with developments.

Considering this, the GAA has developed an online module to support officers at club, county and provincial levels to run more effective meetings. It is a time-saving guide to planning and running meetings from start to finish which covers preparation, keeping the meeting on track, complying with the GAA Constitution & Rules, and follow-up on actions. It includes best practice advice for dealing with challenging individuals, as well as downloadable templates for creating effective meeting agendas and meeting minutes.

What you'll learn

1. Approaches, rules and tips for running effective meetings
2. How to prepare and organise a Club Annual General Meeting
3. Tools and templates to organise and run effective meetings

Meet the instructor

Jody O'Connor

GAA Leadership Associate

Jody is from the Cratloe GAA Club in Co. Clare and is an Associate of the GAA Club Leadership Development Programme. In this role, Jody facilitates training for club officers on their roles and responsibilities.

Participant feedback

"I thought it was perfect and covered every aspect of what is required. Any new Secretary or officer who studied that module would understand how the role has to be performed."

"The module is excellent. Key information is presented in a wide range of interesting ways. It is interactive with, again, a nice variety of activities to maintain the participant's interest. The links to supporting documents are also useful. The content in this module will be a great reference point and support for Chairpersons and Secretary."

"My initial reaction is that this is a very good module. It is well structured and easy to navigate. The content is excellent and I learned a lot from it. Anyone doing this module online would certainly know what was necessary to conduct effective meetings."



Accessing the module

To access the module, complete these steps:

1. Open an internet browser on your laptop or PC – (Our preferred browser is Google Chrome. Please note that the module is not compatible with a phone or tablet device)
2. Ensure that pop-ups are enabled on your computer – [Click here](#) for guidance on unblocking pop-ups
3. Click on this link – http://learning.gaa.ie/courses/Effective_Meetings/

More information

For more information, visit – <https://sway.com/1LMvqc1RpCId7yN>

Getting started with office 365

The GAA's partnership with Microsoft Ireland provides each of the principal club officers – Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and PRO – with access to Microsoft's Office 365 package for no cost. The package includes an official GAA e-mail account and access to a full range of services, including:

- Email – Microsoft Outlook
- Calendar – Microsoft Outlook
- Spread sheets – Microsoft Excel
- Documents – Microsoft Word
- Presentations – Microsoft PowerPoint
- Notes – OneNote
- Storage in the cloud – OneDrive

With a subscription to Office 365, you get:

- The latest Office web apps, like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook.
- The ability to install on PCs, Macs, tablets, and phones.
- 1 TB of OneDrive cloud storage.
- Feature updates and upgrades not available anywhere else.

Because Office 365 works with all your devices, you can start creating on your PC or Mac, continue editing on your tablet, and then finish up on your phone. All this is possible because you can save your files to the cloud on OneDrive and get to them from anywhere.

Store any type of file, including images, spreadsheets, presentations, and more. Office 365 comes with mobile versions of Office for all your devices. These mobile apps come with premium features that you can't get anywhere else. Right now the version is Office 2016, but you'll continue to get new updates, everything from small tweaks to brand new features.

Getting Started

Each Club Secretary should contact his/her County IT Officer to access official GAA e-mail accounts on behalf of his/her Club. He/she will verify that you are entitled to one and contact the Microsoft Support Desk ([mail.support@gaamail.ie](mailto:support@gaamail.ie)) to arrange the set-up on your behalf. Once set-up, you will receive an e-mail from Microsoft which will contain step-by-step information on getting started.

Once you have your e-mail address and password, sign in to mail.gaa.ie to unlock the full features of Office 365.

- Click the Sign in button at the top right corner of your screen.
- Type in the email and password you use with Office 365 e.g. chairperson.stsaviours.dublin@gaa.ie
- Once you've signed in, you'll see the Office 365 home page.
- From here, you can check your email, access your files on OneDrive, or edit a document.

- By signing in to Office 365, you can work seamlessly on your files whether you're at work, at a match, or at home.

Training Materials

Learning material and training videos on the following topics are available online:

- Getting started
- Mail and calendar
- OneDrive
- Office Web Apps
- Mobile
- Further Help & Training
- Quick Start Guides

To access these, visit – <http://learning.gaa.ie/office365>

Classroom-based training is also being piloted through the Club Leadership Development Programme in 2017. For more information, visit learning.gaa.ie/clubleadership or contact your County Development Officer.

Support Details

Ergo (<http://www.ergogroup.ie>) is a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner headquartered in Dublin with 176 employees. Ergo has provided IT solutions and services to the private and the public sector for over 20 years, building up trusted relationships and helping organisations realise their business goals through the use of technology. They have a dedicated support desk which is open Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. until 5.30 p.m.

Contact details are as follows:

Support e-mail: mail.support@gaamail.ie
Phone: +353 1 8843258

Club officers in Kildare taking part in the 'Using Office 365' training module as part of the Club Leadership Development Programme.



PÁIRC UÍ CHAOIMH: 10 YEAR PREMIUM LEVEL TICKETS

Specatacular 45,000
capacity floodlit stadium



10 Year Premium Level tickets

- > Best seats for all GAA matches in the stadium
 - Min. of 60 National League games across both codes
 - Min. of 30 Munster Championship games across both codes
 - 20 Senior County finals across both codes
 - Many other club, Camogie and Ladies Football matches
- > Free entry to all Co. Championship matches in Cork County
- > Guaranteed advance access to concert tickets in your premium seat
- > Priority access to 15,000 sq. Ft. Conference space
- > Exceptional food and beverage options available at all events



www.paircuichaoimh.ie

€6,500 per 10 year premium ticket.
Limited availability

Contact us: Tel: (021) 4963360
Email: premium@paircuichaoimh.ie

GRADAIM AN UACHTARÁIN / PRESIDENT'S AWARDS



Winners of GAA President's Awards 2017 in Croke Park

The GAA is pleased to confirm the recipients for Gradaim an Uachtaráin 2017 which were presented at a special banquet in Croke Park.

The awards, organised with the support of Club Championship sponsors AIB and broadcast by TG4, are staged annually by the GAA and provide the GAA President with an opportunity to acknowledge outstanding commitment and long service across the club, and county network from people whose highly valued contribution may not be recognised on the national stage.

The awards are made on a provincial and code basis. As well as Gaeilge, Education and International Awards, the presentation of the annual Dermot Earley Family Award will also be made.

Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Aogán Ó Fearghail, who will present the awards at tonight's event, said: "We organise this event every year to highlight some of the individuals across the wider GAA family who make a colossal contribution to the health and wellbeing of the games.

"Many of those being honoured this evening will not be well known outside their clubs and communities – if at all. However, you can be sure that they are highly valued at home for everything they do and people like them exist and work tirelessly in every club, both around Ireland and around the world. This is our way of acknowledging and thanking them for all they do to promote and bolster our games week-in, week-out, year-in, year-out.

“I would like to acknowledge AIB and Denis O’Callaghan, Head of Branch Banking AIB, for their ongoing support of these awards.

“Míle buíochas also to TG4 and to Alan Esslemont, Ard Stiúrthóir for their assistance in helping us to bring these awards to the widest audience possible.”

Buaiteoirí Gradaim an Uachtaráin 2017:

MUNSTER- Bill Harte, Carbery Rangers GAA, Cork

Bill Harte has been involved with Carbery Rangers since his playing days stretching back to the 1950s. In the period since he has occupied virtually every role on offer as well as serving on the General Purposes Committee of the West Cork Board. His retirement as a player saw him pursue a refereeing and coaching career with no little success. He helped drive the publication of the History of Carbery Rangers and has also been instrumental in the enhancement of facilities and as well as showing a keen interest in Scór.

CONNACHT- Paddy Beirne, Tremane Hurling Club, Co Roscommon.

The epitome of safe hands, goalkeeper Paddy Beirne has been a life-long hero to the people of Tremane Hurling Club. Involved since the Club’s inception in 1945, he was a prominent figure on teams that won three Senior Championships, two Junior Championships as well as three football titles. He played on the first Tremane team to win a county crown in

1956 through to being part of the 1976 management team that steered them to being the first Roscommon club to win the Connacht title. Quick thinking and reactions were his hallmark and this same decisiveness was put to great use serving every possible role in the club up to the position of President he now holds.

ULSTER - Jim McKeever, Ballymaguigan St Trea’s, Co Derry

Jim McKeever excelled at every level of the GAA as a renowned footballer playing colleges, club, county and provincial football. He collected county medals and was captain of the Derry team of 1958 that lost the All-Ireland final of 1958. In addition to a long and successful career as an administrator, he developed a strong interest in coaching to complement his role as a prominent educator. He served as Head of Physical Education at St Mary’s Training College for 40 years and is synonymous with the GAA in Derry in particular.

LEINSTER - Ann Gannon, Summerhill, Co Meath

Anne Gannon has given a life time of service to the Summerhill club, a club her whole family is immersed in. A fantastic ambassador for the club, she fulfils a multitude of roles to this day. Club person of the year in 2016, she has been a stalwart in club administration who has been highly active in the area of fundraising. A keen attender of games, she projects a positive and welcoming image for the club and is extremely popular with members right across the club.

CAMOGIE - Eithne Allen, Sarsfields Camogie Club, Co Cork.

Eithne Allen hails from a family steeped in the GAA and she has passed this love of the games onto her own family. She won club and college honours as a player and entered administration in her late teens. She has been a pioneering figure in coaching and games development, and as current club secretary she is a key figure in the organisation and promotion of camogie in the Sarsfields club and further afield. The club has enjoyed particular success in recent years as one of the country’s largest camogie clubs and it continues to go from strength to strength.

HANDBALL - Matt Purcell, Ballymore Eustace GAA Handball Club, Co Kildare

Matt Purcell will forever be associated with Ballymore Eustace Handball Club and he enjoyed a fabulously successful playing career from 1958 to 1984. In 1984 Matt teamed up with the legendary Pat Kirby to win the World Masters 40 x 20 title in Croke Park. This World title was the last major win of a wonderful handball career for Matt. Since then he served in various administrative roles at club and county level for decades, keeping Ballymore Eustace and Kildare at the forefront of the sport through his relentless drive to keep handball alive and well in all of its codes. He is also a renowned handball historian.

LADIES FOOTBALL- John Sheridan, Kilmacud Crokes GAA Club, Co Dublin

Cavan native John Sheridan has been a loyal member of the Kilmacud Crokes Club in Dublin since 1972. But it is in the realm of Ladies Football in particular that he has won special recognition. Thanks to John, Kilmacud Crokes started their first ever Ladies football team back in 1996. From those tentative first steps and with John’s constant support, guidance and encouragement, 30 years later Kilmacud have grown from being one Ladies team to now being the biggest Ladies football club in Ireland with 750 active members across 30 teams. His passion and organisational abilities have also helped create the success that is the U14 7-aside event which has grown in prominence since its debut in 2004 and he continues to inspire with his energy and enthusiasm.

GAEILGE AWARD – Liam Ó Laochdha, Youghal GAA Club, Co Cork

Liam Ó Laochdha, a retired Irish teacher, has devoted his life to the promotion of Gaelic games, Irish language and culture through his involvement in Scór in the town of Youghal, East Cork and beyond. Over the course of more than 50 years he has represented his Club as a player, manager and selector, held all officer positions, was well-known as a renowned referee and was a member of Cork County Board as Oifigeach Gaeilge from 2010 – 2012. A well-known raconteur and balladeer, who hails from a highly active GAA family, he is revered within his club and wider community. Tá áit speisialta bainte amach aige in a chlub féin agus i saol CLG go ginearálta.

RNLI AND GAA TO WORK TOGETHER TO PREVENT DROWNING

The RNLI (the charity that saves lives at sea) and the GAA have today announced a major partnership aimed at reducing the number of people who lose their lives though drowning in Ireland. Each year an average of 28 people drown accidentally around the Irish coast.*

The RNLI aims to halve coastal drowning by 2024 and the GAA will work with the charity to engage with clubs and communities, particularly on the coast, to provide information and support that could save lives.

The RNLI's drowning prevention campaign 'Respect the Water', will be supported through the GAA's Healthy Clubs initiative and the wider club network. Many GAA clubs are based in coastal communities with 333 of them in a 10km radius of the 46 RNLI lifeboat stations in Ireland. Their location makes them ideally placed for sharing information and raising awareness of the causes of drowning and how to prevent it.

In announcing the partnership, the President of the GAA, Aogán Ó Fearghaíl says, 'In the RNLI the GAA sees an organisation that mirrors its core values of community activity and volunteerism. We welcome the 'Respect the Water' campaign and its efforts to keep people safe all year round.'

Joining the President at the launch is RNLI Chief Executive, Paul Boissier, who added, 'Drowning devastates communities, but it's often accepted as just part of life by the water. We believe that many of these deaths are preventable and we need to work with other organisations who, like us, want to keep their communities safe.'

Much like a lifeboat station, a GAA club is at the heart of community life. Sporting communities can play a major role in preventing deaths by drowning. Through their approach to the sport and their position in the community they are well placed to be lifesavers.'

Through the partnership the RNLI invited the GAA to their training college in Poole and to Portsmouth University, to meet cold water shock expert Professor Mike Tipton. Four GAA athletes; Jackie Tyrrell from Kilkenny, Lyndsey Davey from Dublin, Neil McManus from Antrim and Lee Chin from Wexford experienced what it was like to be plunged into cold water and see the effects of it on the body.

The athletes, along with representatives of four coastal 'GAA Healthy Clubs' (Bray Emmets, Wicklow; St. Peter's, Down; Achill, Mayo, and Castlehaven, Cork), also took part in rescue scenarios in specially created challenging weather and sea conditions.

Dublin footballer and three times GAA All-Star, Lyndsey Davey, has a very personal reason for getting involved in the campaign. Her great uncle Michael Hayes was the skipper on the Tit Bonhomme, which sank off Glandore Harbour with the loss of five of the six crew, including Michael. Lyndsey says, 'The loss of Michael and his crew was a very difficult time for all the families involved.'

During the days and weeks following the sinking, the whole community of Union Hall really came together. The search and rescue efforts were relentless and the support given was incredible. I got involved in this campaign as I wanted to give something back and help create awareness around water safety and drowning. In doing so I hope we can prevent

any family the pain of losing a loved one through drowning.'

All-Ireland winning Kilkenny hurler Jackie Tyrrell said, 'Like many people in Ireland I too have lost someone close to me to drowning. So many of our clubs live and train near the water, whether on the coast or near inland rivers and lakes. We have a responsibility to help and our sport and our ethos encourage this. I know our supporters get behind us in our games, now we are asking them to get behind this campaign; it could help save a life.'

Antrim Champion Hurler and Cushendall native, Neil McManus, has been at the fore in driving the partnership and added, 'The stories of loss through drowning that we've heard from the RNLI really hit home. You can't help but think of the grief of the families.'

I play hurling across the road from the local lifeboat station and I know not everyone can be rescued. In backing this campaign I hope that the message reaches as many people as possible because no family should have to suffer the pain of losing a loved one through drowning.'

Wexford Hurler Lee Chin has also put his

full support behind the campaign. Lee says, 'Visiting the RNLI College and taking part in the exercises and rescue scenarios has made me aware how quickly people can get into trouble in the water. Simple advice and information can save lives and reduce the numbers of people drowning in Ireland.'

The athletes and Healthy Clubs representatives were joined at the launch by Kerry footballer Killian Young and Cork footballer Brian Hurley. Both athletes live near the RNLI lifeboat stations, Union Hall and Valentia and are backing the Respect the Water campaign.

Legendary broadcaster Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh, who was Master of Ceremonies for the launch, has also narrated a specially commissioned short film for the partnership, which was given its first screening at the event.

The RNLI will work with the GAA and their volunteers in local communities to promote the campaign and share key safety messages and advice.



The RNLI and the GAA have announced a major partnership aimed at reducing the number of people who lose their lives though drowning in Ireland.

PLAYER WELFARE

GAA 15 Injury Prevention Programme / Warm Up

The Medical, Scientific and Welfare Committee in conjunction with a working group comprising of experts including Dr. Catherine Blake, Prof. Niall Moyna and Dr. Kieran Moran have developed the GAA 15, a standardised warm-up programme aimed at reducing the number of injuries sustained by GAA players. Recent research carried out in IT Carlow has shown that using the GAA 15 can significantly reduce lower limb related training injuries by up to 45% in adolescent males.



Oisín McConville speaks about how Crossmaglen Rangers have benefited from using and adapting the GAA 15/Activate Warm-up as part of their training sessions.

The programme, including video tutorials on the exercises involved is available at the following link:

<http://learning.gaa.ie/GAA15> and <http://activategaa.sini.co.uk/>

Concussion

Questions for your club:

- **Who is responsible for Concussion education in your club?**
- **Have all members been notified of the resources available in relation to concussion? (Guidelines and Information sheets etc;)**
- **Have all team mentors completed the GAA's online e-learning course? Is this club policy?**
- **Is it club policy that a player who has suffered a suspected concussion receives medical clearance before he returns to play?**
- **Is a poster displayed prominently in the club house / dressing rooms?**

What is Concussion?

Concussion is a brain injury and can be caused by a direct or indirect hit to the player's head or body. Concussion typically results in an immediate onset of short lived signs and symptoms. However in some cases, the signs and symptoms of concussion may evolve over a number of minutes or hours.

Concussion diagnosis is a clinical judgement by a suitably qualified medical professional.

GAA Concussion Guidelines

The GAA Concussion Guidelines are based on international best practice and are approved and regularly reviewed by the GAA's Medical, Scientific and Welfare Committee. The guidelines are based on the following key principles:

- Concussion is a brain injury that needs to be taken seriously to protect the long term welfare of all players.
- Any player suspected of having sustained a concussion, should be removed immediately from the field and should not return to play on the same day.
- Where a Team Doctor is present, he should advise the person in charge of the team (i.e. Team Manager) in this regard and the player must not be allowed to continue his participation in the game.
- Concussion is an evolving injury. It is important to monitor the player after the injury for progressive deterioration.
- Concussion diagnosis is a clinical judgement – Use of the SCAT 3 (Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 3RD Edition) can aid the doctor in his /her diagnosis.
- Players suspected of having a concussion, should have adequate rest of at least 24 hours and then should follow a gradual return to play (GRTP) protocol.
- Players up to the age of 18 should have a two week rest period and then should follow a GRTP protocol
- Players should receive medical clearance (by a doctor) before returning to play.

The guidelines have received widespread acknowledgement and praise for their emphasis on the principle "if in doubt, sit them out".

GAA Concussion Resources

A Concussion education poster will be distributed to all clubs via County Boards during February 2016 and is also available to download from <http://learning.gaa.ie/Concussion>. All clubs are requested to display this poster prominently in their clubhouse or dressing rooms.

Further resources including the full guidelines, the GAA's E-Learning Course and advice sheets for Players, Coaches, Parents and Referees are available on

<http://learning.gaa.ie/Concussion>





CLUB PLAYER WELFARE SEMINAR

If you would like to request a player welfare seminar for your club's administrators, coaches, parents or players of any age you can do so by e-mailing playerwelfare@gaa.ie

The Seminar covers topics including Player Pathway, Concussion, Anti-Doping/Nutrition Advice, GAA 15, Cardiac Screening and Defibs and general player safety and is roughly 1 hour in duration.

ONLINE PLAYER TRANSFER SYSTEM

An application for an Inter-County transfer may be made online as part of a pilot scheme by Central Council. If a player wishes to apply online, he should contact the Secretary of the Club he wishes to join and refer him/her to the transfers section of the official GAA website for information on the process. Benefits of using the new system include:

- Quicker processing of applications.
- Less chance of incorrect information being submitted.
- Ability to check status of applications.
- Easy access to transfer history.
- Less administration work.

Answers to frequently asked questions in addition to step-by-step user guides for players, Club Secretaries and County Secretaries can be accessed by visiting –

<http://www.gaa.ie/news/transfers-and-sanctions/>

Please note the new online transfer system can only be used at present for transfer which are cross-provincial (i.e. approved by Central Council) Accessing the Player Transfer System

(Club and County Secretaries only)

A Club or County Secretary can access the Player Transfer System by visiting pts.gaa.ie and entering his/her 7 digit Membership Number and Password. For more information, please refer to the user guides on the GAA website. Queries can be e-mailed to gearoid.devitt@gaa.ie

GAA MUSEUM SUMMER SCHOOL TO EXAMINE 'THE POLITICS OF SPORT'

Industry experts will discuss 'Sport and Politics' at the 2017 GAA Museum Summer School, including internationally renowned activist and sociologist Dr. Harry Edwards

Who said that politics and sport should not mix?

The GAA Museum is hosting a fascinating series of talks at Croke Park this summer from Thursday 29th June to Saturday 1st July examining the theme of 'Sport and Politics' and the effects they have had on one another since the 1870s.

National and international leading experts in their field will discuss diverse topics including how the GAA suffered in the 1890s due to its support for Charles Stewart Parnell; the issues and divisions in Irish soccer that led to the establishment of two separate governing bodies in 1921; the struggle for an Irish identity through the Olympic movement pre-1922; how the Irish republican movement has viewed sport since 1923, and the cultural trauma felt by the people of Liverpool in the aftermath of the 1989 Hillsborough tragedy.

Commenting, Mark Reynolds, the GAA Museum Archivist, said "The event will be of huge interest to anyone with a keen interest in sport, politics or history. The broad overall theme of 'Sport and Politics' and the calibre of the speakers ensures that this will be an engaging and stimulating experience for all those who attend. We are honoured to have high profile speakers attending from all over the world, including Doctor Harry Edwards, Professor John Hughson and Professor Alan Bairner. It is a unique opportunity to ask questions and interact with these speakers."



The keynote talk from internationally renowned Doctor Harry Edwards, the former Professor Emeritus of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley is much anticipated. Doctor Edwards will speak on the history of sport and racial segregation in America from the 1960s.

Fifty years ago, in 1967, Edwards established the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR) through which he called for a Black athlete boycott of the United States 1968 Olympic team, in order to highlight the racial inequities and barriers that existed in sport and society. The movement resulted in demonstrations by Black athletes across America and ultimately at the 1968 Mexico City games where the iconic 'Black Power Salute' was delivered by Tommie Smith and John Carlos.

Edwards, a scholar-activist who became spokesperson for what amounted to a revolution in sports, is now considered the leading authority on developments at the interface of race, sport, and society and was a pioneering scholar in the founding of the sociology of sport as an academic discipline.

This really interesting combination of talks at the GAA Museum Summer School will have huge appeal to anyone with an interest in politics, sport or history and culture.

Tickets cost €45 per day or €120 for a three day pass. Lunch and tea/coffee are included in the price. Advance booking is required, and it is expected to sell out quickly, so secure your place today on <https://crokepark.ie/summerschool> GAA Museum Summer School itinerary:

Day One. (Thursday 29 June 2017)

Richard McElligott The collapse of the GAA in the 1890s (Parnell Crisis)

Jarlath Burns The GAA and Politics

Doireann Markham The Republican Boycott of the Tailteann Games

Cormac Moore The Split in Irish Soccer

John Hughson The Hillsborough Tragedy as Cultural Trauma

Round Table Discussion

Day Two. (Friday 30 June 2017)

Kevin McCarthy The Struggle for Irish identity through the Olympic Games, 1896-1922

Katie Liston Ireland and the British Empire Games

Donal MacAnallen The GAA in Ulster 1946-1962

Brian Hanley Irish republican attitudes to sport since 1923

Alan Bairner Sport, Irishness and Ulster Unionism

Round Table Discussion

Day Three: (Saturday 1 July 2017)

Mark Reynolds The GAA and the 1981 Hunger Strike

Sean Kelly MEP The GAA and Rule 42

David Hassan Sport in the North of Ireland

Dr Harry Edwards Sport and Racial Segregation in America

For more information please contact Niamh Murphy ETC – The Events, Tourism & Communications Agency

niamh@e-t-c.ie / 087-0617705

Or

Theresa Byrne GAA | Croke Park Marketing Manager

theresa.byrne@gaa.ie / 087-9134811



Harry Edwards – one of the big names sure to attract crowds to the GAA Museum Summer school

FRIENDS OF THE GAA MUSEUM

Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh made honorary 'Friend of the GAA Museum' GAA Museum announces new exclusive membership programme

Veteran broadcaster and commentator Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh has been made an 'Honorary Friend of the GAA Museum' in recognition of his legendary contribution as 'the voice of Gaelic Games' for more than six decades.

The announcement was made by Aogán Ó Fearghail, President of the Gaelic Athletic Association, at the launch of the GAA Museum's new 'Friends of the GAA Museum' membership programme.

Friendship has always been at the heart of the GAA and the programme has been created to support the GAA Museum in its mission to promote our national games by preserving their values, culture and most importantly, the people who have contributed to the Association.

One of the highlights of becoming a 'Friend' is an exclusive invitation to a VIP gala evening at the GAA Museum with other avid supporters. An official presentation will be made to Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh at this event.

The annual membership allows unlimited access to the GAA Museum with a guest throughout the year and a special guided tour with the Museum Curator. Friends will also receive a personal membership card, a welcome pack with a personalised mini-hurley in their county colours, a complimentary Stadium Tour, and discounts at the GAA Museum shop and café.

Commenting Mr. Ó Muircheartaigh, said, "I am absolutely honoured to be made the first Friend of the GAA Museum. The GAA have been my passion, my career and my life, and I look

forward to meeting other friends who sign up for membership. It's a chance for you to help protect our unique GAA heritage for future generations to come."

Aogán Ó Fearghail, President of the Gaelic Athletic Association, said "I want to congratulate Mícheál who has indeed been a great friend to the GAA for so many years through his coverage, promotion and support of Gaelic Games."

"Making life-long friendships is one of the intrinsic benefits of being a part of our Association and this new initiative in the GAA Museum will be popular with people who appreciate our rich history and culture."

GAA Museum Director, Niamh McCoy, said, "The GAA Museum is dedicated to honouring those who have made an outstanding contribution to our national games and Mícheál Ó Muircheartaigh is one of the greatest legends of them all, so we are absolutely thrilled to make him an Honorary Friend."

"We are calling on our friends in the GAA community to join Mícheál. We only have 200 annual memberships available so it's an exclusive group and a novel gift idea for anyone passionate about Gaelic Games, history and culture".

The GAA Museum is the national custodian of all archives and artefacts of the Gaelic Athletic Association, and funds raised through the membership programme will assist in the acquisition of more artefacts and documents, the care of collections, and the restoration and enhancements to existing displays. For an annual membership of €100, Friends will receive:

- A membership card



- A welcome pack including a personalised GAA Museum gift
- Complimentary access to the Museum throughout the year for you and a guest
- An invitation for you and a guest to an annual gala event at the Museum
- An invitation for you and a guest to a yearly special guided tour of the Museum by the GAA Museum Curator
- A monthly e-zine on everything that's

happening at the Museum

- Two complimentary Croke Park Stadium Tour tickets
- 20% discount on all GAA Museum Shop merchandise
- 20% discount at the GAA Museum's Blackthorn Café

Apply now to be a Friend of the GAA Museum on www.crokepark.ie/gaamuseum-friend

CUALA CLAIM AIB ALL IRELAND SHC TITLE

CUALA (DUBLIN) 2-19 BALLYEA (CLARE) 1-10

By John Harrington at Croke Park

Cuala created history in Croke Park today by becoming the first ever Dublin club to win the AIB GAA All-Ireland Club Senior Hurling Championship.

It was a richly deserved victory too as they over-powered a game Ballyea team that simply couldn't cope with their firepower.

The Dublin side dominated right down the spine of the field thanks to herculean performances from the likes of Cian O'Callaghan, Sean Moran, Darragh O'Connell, John Sheanon, Colm Cronin, and Con O'Callaghan.

That sextet in particular hurled with a potent combination of aggression, pace, and craft, that bodes very well for the general health of Dublin hurling.

Cuala's performance was all the more impressive considering the greasy sod and spitting rain made playing conditions difficult.

It was a scrappy, hard-hitting contest in the early stages with forwards finding it difficult to turn quickly which played into the hands of the tight-marking defenders of both

teams.

As the half progressed though Cuala gradually began to take control of the contest, thanks largely to the dominance of their half-backs and midfield.

The Dublin team had given regular wing-back John Sheanon the arduous task of man-marking Ballyea danger-man Tony Kelly, and the manner in which the dominated that tussle really set the tone for the contest.

His showing combined with some brilliant hurling from Darragh O'Connell alongside him in the Cuala midfield and the ball-winning ability of Colm Cronin meant the Ballyea defence was coming under increasing pressure.

The first significant blow of the game was struck on 15 minutes when that man Cronin scored a fine goal.

Cuala full-forward Con O'Callaghan broke a high ball right into the onrushing Cronin's path, and the centre-forward drilled a brilliant finish to the right-hand corner of the net.

The initial response from Ballyea was impressive as Niall Deasy and James Murphy knocked over points to reduce the deficit to



two, but Cuala then enjoyed their best spell of the game thus far in the ten minutes before half-time as they hit four unanswered points.

Con O'Callaghan was becoming a more and more influential presence at the apex of their attack, and was very unlucky when a looping shot came off the cross-bar and back into play.

He got the score he had been long-threatening just before the half-time whistle when he slung over a beauty from the right-hand side to give Cuala a 1-7 to 0-4 lead.

Ballyea needed a fast start to the second-half and they nearly got it too when Pearse Lillis tore



through on goal.

But just when it looked like he must hit the back of the net, Paul Schutte did brilliantly to get in a partial hook in that took the power out of the shot and made the save a lot easier for Cuala 'keeper Sean Brennan.

That miss looked all the more costly when Cuala then scored the first three points

of the match at the end, two frees from Treacy and another classy point from Con O'Callaghan.

It was starting to look grim for Ballyea who trailed now by nine, but points from Gary Brennan and Pearse Lillis briefly gave their supporters cause for hope.

The problem for the Clare team was that for all of their effort, Cuala remained dangerous at the other end of the field whenever they hit the ball in the direction of men like Cronin, O'Callaghan, and the always influential David Treacy, and by the 45th minute still held an eight-point lead, 1-12 to 0-8.

The match then entered a tit-for-tat phase with Treacy and Niall Deasy regularly exchanging pointed frees, which did little to aid Ballyea's overall cause.

They badly needed a goal, and it finally came on the 50-minute mark when their two most dangerous forwards combined as Pearse Lillis picked out Deasy with an angled cross-field pass and the wing-forward smashed the ball to the back of the net.

Ballyea had the momentum they so badly craved, but it didn't last long. Darragh O'Connell immediately responded with a fine point for Cuala after a jet-heeled run, and then a couple of minutes later they struck for their second-goal.

Con O'Callaghan did well again to win a hard ball before popping a perfect hand-pass to the onrushing Jake Malone who delivered an emphatic low finish to the net.

Cuala now led by 2-15 to 1-10, and Ballyea were faced with a mountain they simply couldn't climb.

The remainder of the match was a Cuala procession that delighted their vocal supporters as they hit the final six points of the match.

It was the perfect exclamation mark for a hugely emphatic performance.

Scorers for Cuala: David Treacy 0-9 (8fs), Colm Cronin 1-1, Jake Malone 1-0, Con O'Callaghan 0-3, Darragh O'Connell 0-3, Colum Sheanon 0-2, John Sheanon 0-1, M Schutte 0-1.

Scorers for Ballyea: Niall Deasy 1-6 (6fs), Pearse Lillis 0-2, Gary Brennan 0-1, James Murphy 0-1.

CUALA: Sean Brennan; Simon Timlin, Cian O'Callaghan, Paul Schutte; Jake Malone, Sean Moran, Oisín Gough; John Sheanon, Darragh O'Connell; Sean Treachy, Colm Cronin, David Treacy; Cian Waldron, Con O'Callaghan, Mark Schutte.

Subs: Colum Sheanon for Cian Waldron (46), Ross Tierney for Simon Timlin (61), Nicky Kenny for Colm Cronin (60+3).

BALLYEA: Kevin Sheehan; Joe Neylon, Jack Browne, Brian Carrig; Gearóid O'Connell, Paul Flanagan, James Murphy; Tony Kelly, Stan Lineen; Niall Deasy, Gary Brennan, Cathal Doohan; Pat-Joe Connolly, Damien Burke, Pearse Lillis.

Subs: Martin O'Leary for PJ Connolly (37), David Egan for Damien Burke (39), Brian Murphy for Joe Neylon (55), Mark Coughlan for Stan Lineen (57).

REFEREE: Fergal Horgan (Tipperary).

DR. CROKES WIN AIB GAA ALL-IRELAND CLUB SFC FINAL

Dr. Crokes (Kerry) 1-9 Slaughtneil (Derry) 1-7

By John Harrington at Croke Park

Dr. Crokes dug deep to defeat a brave Slaughtneil in Croke Park this evening and win the AIB All-Ireland Club SFC for the first time since 1992.

Colm Cooper was the team mascot back then, and 25 years later he and this generation of Dr. Crokes players finally reached the promised land after many years of trying and falling just short.

They deserved their victory, but you could argue the decisive moment of the match came just before half-time when Slaughtneil midfielder Pádraig Cassidy was red-carded for striking.

Winning the match with 14-men was always going to be a huge ask for the Derry side, and Cassidy had been a key player for them until his departure, scoring their first-half goal.

Until that red-card there was nothing between the two teams. Slaughtneil were actually the quicker team to settle and seriously troubled Dr. Crokes early on with their clever, skilful, and every effective brand of football.

They played Sé McGuigan and Cormac

Doherty in a two-man full-forward line right on the edge of the Dr. Crokes square, and made them the focal point of their attacking strategy.

Once they brought the ball into the Dr. Crokes half with strong running and slick hand-passing, they would then drive it in long and support runners would feed off the breaks from McGuigan and Doherty.

Sweetly struck points on the run from two of those support runners, Shane McGuigan and Christopher Bradley, gave them an early two-point lead as Dr. Crokes struggled to match their energy.

The Kerry and Munster champions slowly settled through, and Brian Looney got them off the mark after six minutes with a nice finish from the left-wing after cutting back inside onto his right foot.

That positive start from Looney was a foretaste of what was to come, and by half-time he would have accumulated three points from play, all of them really classy scores.

Dr. Crokes defender Gavin White had a glorious chance to score the first goal of



the game after a turbo-charged run down the middle ripped the Slaughtneil defence asunder, but he steered his shot wide.

Dr. Crokes had still managed to chisel out a one-point lead by the eleventh minute thanks to converted frees from Colm Cooper and Daithi Casey, but a couple of minutes later they were reeling when Pádraig Cassidy goaled for Slaughtneil.

Once again their tactic of going long to their two-man full-forward line and feeding off them worked a treat as O'Doherty won a great ball and then fed the on-rushing Cassidy.

The midfielder still had a lot to do, but he showed real composure to cut back inside onto his left-foot to take goal-keeper Shane Murphy out of the equation and clip a low shot to the back of the net.

Another Christopher Bradley point was followed by a Paul Bradley free after an inspirational run from Chrissy McKaigue, and Slaughtneil were leading by 1-4 to 0-3 and looking good.

Dr. Crokes needed players to step up and show some leadership, and it was no surprise that Daithi Casey and Colm Cooper were those men.

Casey tore the Slaughtneil defence open with



a powerful solo down the middle and then had the presence of mind to punch a ball that looked like it was about to bounce away from him into the path of Cooper.

The angle was tight, but Cooper produced a typically clinical finish as he angled a low shot past Antoin McMullan and to the back of the net.

The momentum was with Dr. Crokes now, and a point from Casey and two from Looney had them 1-6 to 1-5 ahead in first-half injury-time.

Then came that decisive moment when Cassidy was red-carded just before half-time for striking out at Kieran O'Leary of Dr. Crokes. By the letter of the law, referee David Coldrick had little option but to send him off.

Despite being a man down, Slaughtneil

bravely stuck to their guns for the second-half, lining out again with two inside forwards pushed right up onto the Dr. Crokes square.

They scrapped tenaciously for every ball and deserved to draw level after 37 minutes when Paul Bradley flighted over a free.

The longer the game wore on the more likely the numerical advantage of Dr. Crokes would begin to tell, and so it proved.

Their ability to bring on two live-wire attacking subs in the shape of Micheál Burns and Jordan Kiely was also an important factor because they both brought a lot of energy and class to the Crokes attack.

A smartly taken point from Burns pushed the Kerry side two up, and then Kiely set off on

a jinking run that won a free Colm Cooper converted to push Dr. Crokes 1-9 to 1-6 ahead and put some daylight between the teams.

Slaughtneil refused to die, though. They emptied their bench to bring some much-needed fresh-legs into their hard-working team, and forced Dr. Crokes to concede a free that Bradley pointed to reduce the gap to two.

That proved to be their last score though as Dr. Crokes saw out the game in a very professional manner.

They dropped Colm Cooper back into a deep-lying quarter-back role, and successfully played keep-ball for long stretches to run down the clock and keep

Slaughtneil at bay.

Scorers for Dr. Crokes: Colm Cooper 1-2 (2f), Brian Looney 0-3, Daithi Casey 0-3 (2f), Micheál Burns 0-1

Scorers for Slaughtneil: Pádraig Cassidy 1-0, Christopher Bradley 0-2, Paul Bradley 0-3 (2f), Shane McGuigan 0-1, Francis McEldowney 0-1

DR CROKES: Shane Murphy; Luke Quinn, Michael Moloney, John Payne; David O'Leary, Gavin White, Fionn Fitzgerald; Ambrose O'Donovan, Johnny Buckley; Alan O'Sullivan, Gavin O'Shea, Brian Looney; Kieran O'Leary, Daithi Casey, Colm Cooper. Subs: Jordan Kiely for Gavin O'Shea (39), Micheál Burns for Alan O'Sullivan (39), Shane Doolan for David O'Leary (48), Tony Brosnan for Brian Looney (57), Eoin Brosnan for Daithi Casey (62), Christopher Brady for Kieran O'Leary (62)

SLAUGHTNEIL: Antoin McMullan; Brendan Rodgers, Paul McNeill, Karl McKaigue; Keelan Feeney, Christopher McKaigue, Francis McEldowney; Patsy Bradley, Pádraig Cassidy; Micheál McGrath, Christopher Bradley, Shane McGuigan; Sé McGuigan, Cormac O'Doherty, Paul Bradley. Subs: Brian Cassidy for Cormac O'Doherty (48), Ronan Bradley for Micheál McGrath (52), Barry McGuigan for Keelan Feeney (52), Gerald Bradley for Sé McGuigan (54)

Ref: Maurice Deegan

GARY BRENNAN – LAOCHRA GAEIL

Tar éis taispeantas den scoth i Stáid an Phiarsaigh mí Iúil seo caite sheas Gary Brennan i lár na páirce. Bhí muintir peile an Chláir scapaithe timpeall air, Ros Comáin buailte agus turas go Ceann Aras le teacht.

Cé go raibh Ciarraí ro ghlic i bPáirc an Chrócaigh ní raibh aon dabht go raibh dul chun cinn mór déanta ag foireann Colm Collins. Ait bainte amach i Roinn 2 sa tSraith Allianz agus babhta ceathrú ceannais sa Chraobh sroichte acu.

O shin ar aghaidh rug Brennan greim ar an gcamán agus bhí bliain dochlóite aige i ngeansaí dubh agus buí Baile Aodha. Le Craobh an Chláir agus Mumhan ina seilbh acu anois, tá a fhios ag Brennan go bhfuil rudaí go maith faoi láthair. “Caithfidh mé bheith sásta go leor, ach ar nós gach imreoir spóirt ní bhíonn muid sásta go dtí an deireadh riamh,” deireann Brennan. D’fhág Baile Aodha croíbriste ar Lá Fhéile Phádraig, ach bhí an turas acu. “Feach bhí blianta againn nuair nach rabhamar i gCluichí Ceannais agus nuair nach rabhamar i Roinn 2 sa pheil, caithfidh me taitneamh a bhaint as sin fad is atá muid ann. Ní bheidh muid ann go deo, sin mar a tharlaíonn, casann an roth sa spóirt.

Nuair a bhí Brennan og spreag an Príomhoide scoile Eddie Liddy suim sa

nGaeilge. Oibríonn Brennan mar mhúinteoir corpoideachas agus Gaeilge i gColáiste Flannán anois.

“Is dócha sa bhunscoil sin a fuarthas an ngrá don Ghaeilge. Bhí múinteoirí bunscóile iontacha againn ansin, Eddie Liddy go háirithe a bhí mar Phríomhoide. Nuair a bhí mé sa bhunscoil i mBaile Aodha chuir sé an bhéim ar an nGaeilge agus is as sin a spreagadh mo shuim sa Ghaeilge.

“Chuaigh me go dtí an meánscoil ansin agus d’aithin mé an meon diúltach a bhí ann i leith na Gaeilge i measc mo chomhdhaltaí agus theastaigh uaim rud éigin a dhéanamh chun sin a athrú. Ní dóigh liom go bhfuil sin á dhéanamh agam go hiomlán ach fos féin táim ag iarraidh.

“I Ollscoil Luimnigh rinne mé Gaeilge le Corpoideachais. Ní raibh ach triúr againn ón rang sin a chailigh le Gaeilge. Go hiondúil déanann daoine Tíreolaíocht no Mata b’fhéidir.

“Thaitin sé liom. Níl aon Ghaeilgeoiri sa bhaile nó aon rud mar sin, níor tháinig aon duine as an nGaeltacht nó aon rud mar sin.” Le cursaí sport faoi lan seol gach samhraidh ní dhearna Brennan cúrsa aon bhliain nuair a bhí sé ina dhéagóir. “B’fhéidir ar feadh deireadh seachtaine nó lá anseo agus ansiúd.



“Ní dhearna mé cúrsa riamh sa nGaeltacht mar bhí siad ar siúl le linn an tSamhraidh nuair a bhí peil agus iomanaíocht le n-imirt. Ní raibh mé in ann imeacht ar feadh trí seachtain, níor chaith me seal mar sin riamh ann.”

Mar gheall ar sin bhí siad sásta i mBaile Aodha agus i gCluain De Ghad, áit a imríonn Brennan a chuid peile. “Níl aon pheil i mBaile Aodha. Is as Baile Aodha domsa féin ach is é Chluain de Ghad (Clondragh) an

Chumann peile, díreach in aice linn.

“Tá roinnt mhaith leads a imríonn an dhá chluiche, ceathrar nó cúigear. Tá saghas tuiscint idir Baile Aodha agus Cluan de Ghad.”

Tá gach rud tuillte ag Brennan – múinteoir, peileoir, iomanaí – cúis inspíráid d’éinne a chuireann suim i gcursaí Chumann Luthchleas Gael.

SCÓR NA NÓG 2017

Scór na nÓg 2017 was held in the prestigious Waterfront Hall, Belfast City on 11 February

A crowd of approximately 1,500 competitors and supporters enjoyed an afternoon of eagerly contested competitions. The day commenced at 11.00 a.m. with a Table Quiz, which had competitors from 28 counties pitting their knowledge against one another under Quiz Master, Valerie Mulcahy, former Cork All Ireland winning Ladies Footballer. The afternoon saw the other 7 competitions commence at 3.00 p.m. with Rince Foirne and conclude with the much enjoyed and lively Rince Seit. Laura Crossan, Leitrim, who competed in four competitions in 2016, officiated as Bean a'Tí and kept proceedings moving without any delays. The raffle, for much sought after prizes, took place with winners pleased with their prizes. Following the raffle it was time to announce the winners and present the trophies and medals. The winners of all competitions are as follows:-

Rince Foirne Naomh Cillian, An Chrois Bhán, Ard Mhacha

Amhránaíocht Aonair Niamh Nic Dhubhghaill

Aithriseoireacht / Scéalaíocht Emile Ní Sheác

Bailéad Ghrúpa Móta Uile Bhán, An Iarmhí

Léiriú Stáitse Naomh Doiminc, Roscomán

Ceol Uirlise Naomh Pádraig, Domhnach Mór, Tír Eoghain

Rince Seit An Spá, Ciarraí

Tráth na gCeisteanna Boird Céad Áit - Naomh Columba, Dún na nGall

Dara Áit - Baile Uí Chumaoil, An Iarmhí

Following each announcement, supporters waved banners and vocally cheered their winners. Trophies and medals were presented by Páraic Ó Dufáigh, Ard-Stiúrthóir in the company of Micheál Ó hOsáin, Cathaoirleach Comhairle Uladh and Antóin Mac Gabhann, Cathaoirleach Coiste Náisiúnta Scór with each group having a photo opportunity with all gentlemen.

Scór supporters will be making their way to the Waterfront for the Scór Sinsir Finals on 6 May, 2017.

Tá súil againn go mbeidh lá agus trathnóna fíor thaithneamhach ag na h-iomaitheoirí, a lucht tacaíochta agus ag an lucht féachana.





Football

Hurling

Club

General

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

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

Produced by the GAA Communications Department in Croke Park, Edited by Cian Ó Murchadha and designed by DBA Publications in Blackrock, Co Dublin.