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### Issue: March 2024

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### Black and Amber Forum

The inaugural Kilkenny GAA Black and Amber Forum, sponsored by UPMC, was launched at a breakfast event on the 29th February last at the InterContinental Hotel in Dublin. This new initiative broadens the opportunity for people and businesses to connect with Kilkenny GAA, one of the most recognisable and prestigious sporting brands in Ireland. PJ Kenny, Chairman along with Officers of Kilkenny GAA, the committee and members from both Supporters Clubs joined the host of celebrities and members of the political, business, entertainment and sporting worlds in attending the event. Special acknowledgement to those who had to rise in the small hours of the morning and travel from far and wide to be there for the 7.30 start time, thank you.

Speaking at the launch, Iar-Uachtaráin na hÉireann, Mary McAleese, spoke about her role as chair of the Steering Group for Integration of the GAA, the Camogie Association and the LGFA and how the Steering Group on Integration has a recommended pathway to a 'One Association' for all of Gaelic games by 2027 with the aim of integrating all GAA codes under the one umbrella.

To mark the occasion, David McRedmond, CEO, An Post presented Ms McAleese with a proof set of 'Cats' stamps issued by An Post in 2007. The gathering was informed that the 'Kilkenny Cat' stamp from the collection was the biggest seller ever of their special issue stamps.

Kieran Cuddihy was MC for the event and the "Fireside Chat" involving Derek Lyng, Richie Hogan and Grace Walsh led to an insightful and engaging panel discussion and Q&A. Niall Butler, Chairman of the Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club (Dublin Branch) gave a closing address thanking all who supported the event and helped to make it a success.







Above and previous page, a selection of photos from the inaugural Black and Amber Forum.

## Calendar of Events

### Golf Classic 2024

Our annual Supporters Club (Dublin Branch) golf classic will take place at Killeen Golf Club on Friday 30th August 2024. The organising committee will circulate details in advance and as always, your support for this event, which generates valuable funding to enable the club to actively support Kilkenny GAA, is greatly appreciated.

### Bus to Galway

The Supporters Club are planning to organise a 'Championship' bus to Galway for the Round 2 match in Pearse Stadium on April 28<sup>th</sup> if there is sufficient interest and numbers. This offers a great chance for members and their friends to enjoy an away matchday and the rekindling of contact & comradery. Full details will issue to members shortly.

### Membership Drive 2024

The Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club (Dublin Branch) has been in operation for over 25 years. The club exists primarily to generate funding to support the Kilkenny county teams and provide a social dimension to its members.

As a committee, we are extremely grateful to all our loyal members for their continued support and thanks to those who have already renewed their membership.

The membership rate for 2024 remains €25.

Revolut - The club are happy to facilitate members that wish to pay their membership via Revolut. Send directly to Seamus O Neill (087 2234789) and please include your name when paying.

## Club hurling championships

The 2023/24 AIB All-Ireland Club Hurling Championship saw epic performances by Kilkenny clubs at Junior, Intermediate and Senior grades. The Committee and Membership of the Dublin Branch of the Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club who would like to congratulate Tullogher Rosbercon, Thomastown and O'Loughlin Gaels on their performance in their respective finals.

Sat 13<sup>th</sup> January 2024 saw two South Kilkenny clubs pitted against Cork clubs. In the AIB All-Ireland Club JHC Final, Tullogher Rosbercon togged out to face St Catherine's (Cork). After an emphatic start, memorable performances by Man of the Match Pat Hartley, Walter Walsh (1-3) and free-taker Cian O'Donoghue (10 points) laid the platform for the Kilkenny side to dominate in all the key areas of play and lead 2-14 to 0-9 at half time. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half saw a more competitive contest with both teams even on scores (0-7 – 1-4) but the sizable lead built by Tullogher Rosbercon in the first half laid a solid foundation for this well-deserved victory, the club's first All-Ireland success. The final score-line read, Tullogher Rosbercon 2-27 - St Catherine's 1-13.

Thomastown faced Castlelyons in the Intermediate Final for another Kilkenny V Cork showdown on the day! On entering the hallowed turf the Thomastown team were greeted and no-doubt energised by the victorious squad from Tullogher Rosbercon who took time out from their celebrations to provide encouragement to their fellow county men.

In this final, the first ever meeting between Thomastown and Castlelyons, captain Stephen Donnelly, who scored 2-3, was named Man of the Match. John Donnelly scored four points and

Robbie Donnelly as free taker scored nine points for Thomastown. It was fourteen minutes into the game before Castlelyons got onto the scoresheet and save a flat period mid-way through the first half where Thomastown hit six wides in short succession, the Kilkenny Champions finished the first half in the lead, 0-11 to 0-6.

A strong second was half spurred on by an early Stephen Donnelly goal and a succession of scores mid-way through the half. There were strong cameos by Luke Connellan and Zach Bay Hammond with the entire defence standing firm with just 13 points conceded over the course of the game.

With the final score-line reading Thomastown 2-23, Castlelyons 0-13, Thomastown are the eighth Kilkenny team to claim the All-Ireland Intermediate crown. They now have an opportunity to make an impact at the senior grade.



The Tullagher Rosbercon and Thomastown Teams Celebrate their All Ireland Victories

AIB All-Ireland club Hurling – Senior Final - Sunday January 21<sup>st</sup> 2024.

O'Loughlin Gaels had dethroned six-in-a-row chasing Ballyhale Shamrocks in the Kilkenny County final by the narrowest of margins, 0-20 to 0-19. Another one-point victory saw them defeat Na Fianna in the Leinster final and victory in the All-Ireland semi-final against Cushendall was by a single point.

Opposition in the final was St Thomas' who had retained their Galway County crown for a sixth time before overcoming 2022 All-Ireland champions Ballygunner in a tight semi-final which was ultimately decided on penalties.

The final was ferociously contested throughout and despite the miserable playing conditions, the game ebbed and flowed with skill and determination being exhibited by both sides to deliver a dramatic game with lots of talking points. The unusual positioning of the umpires behind the goal may have served to cloud their vision and judgement of what appeared to be a clearance from behind the goal line by Fintan Burke following a shot in the eighth minute by Owen Wall of O'Loughlin Gaels. The eventual clearance from this (fiasco) saw a point scored at the other end.

In a game of close margins, this resulted in, what could be considered to, a four point swing in favour of St Thomas'. The game went on to deliver monster scores from long-range frees, some striking scores on the break, epic saves, hard hits and gripping duels.

In the end, it was the 14 man St Thomas' that came out on top, 0-18 to 0-17. With the teams separated at the end by the narrowest of margins, special mention to a most impressive Éanna Burke point scored in the fourth and final minute of injury time.

**Allianz Hurling League 2024**

## Division 1 Group A Table after the 5 rounds

  NHL semi-finals
   Qualify for Division 1A for 2025
   Relegated to Division 1B

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
 Clare	5	4	1	0	106	98	8	9
 Kilkenny	5	3	1	1	106	98	8	7
 Cork	5	3	0	2	142	105	37	6
 Wexford	5	1	3	1	105	114	-9	5
 Waterford	5	1	0	4	111	108	3	2
 Offaly	5	0	1	4	97	144	-47	1

## Division 1 Group B Table after the 5 rounds

Team	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
 Limerick	5	4	1	0	144	92	52	9
 Tipperary	5	4	0	1	148	111	37	8
 Galway	5	3	1	1	151	92	59	7
 Dublin	5	2	0	3	112	135	-23	4
 Westmeath	5	1	0	4	95	146	-51	2
 Antrim	5	0	0	5	80	154	-74	0

After their defeat of Waterford in Round 5 of the Allianz League, Kilkenny will now face Limerick next Saturday in the first semi-final. The game is scheduled for 4.30 pm on Saturday March 23<sup>rd</sup> in SuperValu Páirc Uí Chaoimh and will be shown live on TG4 TV as well as on KCLR FM radio.

In 2025 a seven-team Division 1A will consist of the top three teams in Division 1a and 1b this year Clare, Limerick, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Galway and Cork, as well as the fourth placed team with the best record (which is Wexford from Division 1a).

Division 1B in 2025 will see Dublin, Waterford, Westmeath, Offaly and Antrim joined by the winner of Division 2A (Carlow) and the semi-final winner between Laois and Down also from Division 2a.

**Hurling Trivia** – Did you know that in November 2018, Hurling and Camogie were inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity - a list of protected cultural activities. UNESCO said that hurling is "an intrinsic part of Irish culture"

For more information click on this link - <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/hurling-01263>

### AIB Hurler/Team of the Year Awards



Congratulations to Kilkenny Captain Paddy Deegan on being crowned AIB Club Hurler of the Year. Deegan was nominated for the Senior Hurler Award alongside club mate David Fogarty who had a memorable season for O'Loughlin Gaels as well as David Burke who came back from a cruciate ligament injury to help his club St Thomas to All-Ireland club success. The Croke Park ceremony also crowned the team of the year which saw four O'Loughlin's players, Huw Lawlor, David Fogarty and Mark Bergin joining Paddy in picking up awards.

### Leinster GAA Senior Hurling Championship – 2024

Round 1	Date	Venue	Time
Kilkenny V Antrim	21.4.2024	UMPC Nowlan Park	2.30pm
Round 2			
Galway V Kilkenny	28.4.2024	Pearse Stadium, Galway	2.00pm
Round 3			
Carlow V Kilkenny	11.5.2024	Netwatch Cullen Park	4.30pm
Round 4			
Dublin V Kilkenny	18.5.2024	Parnell Park	3.00pm
Round 5			
Kilkenny V Wexford	26.5.2024	UPMC Nowlan Park	2.00pm
LEINSTER SH FINAL			
	8.6.2024 (Sat)	Croke Park	6.00pm

### Results

For all County and Club Fixtures lists & Results visit the Kilkenny GAA Website  
<https://kilkennygaa.ie/fixtures-results/>

## Bereavements



Sincere condolences to the families and friends of Dermot Dunleavy, Kitty Walsh (Laura Dalton's Mother), Peadar Walsh and all those, in any way associated with our club, who passed away recently.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

## Kilkenny GAA "Kilkenny Cats" App

**KILKENNY CATS**  
SOCIAL PLATFORM

myclub  
/360°

**INTRODUCING KILKENNY GAA'S VERY OWN  
SOCIAL PLATFORM - KILKENNY CATS**

- Fixtures and Results
- Activities and Event Updates
- Skills Hub with Netflix Style Catalogue of Courses
- Jobsfeed
- Newsfeed
- Live Streams

**Join Kilkenny Cats TODAY!**

Scan for Android App

Scan for IOS App

Kilkenny GAA recently announced the official partnership between Kilkenny GAA and MyClub360, to bring about "Kilkenny Cats" – the ultimate all-in-one social platform designed exclusively for Kilkenny GAA fans!

Designed to enhance your connection to the Kilkenny GAA action, visitors will find exclusive features, news and fresh content added every day! Discover real time fixtures and results, draws, interactive forums, and so much more.

Scan the QR Code above or click the links below to download the app & to register.

IOS <https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/myclub-360/id6475672380>

Android [https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.alpas.myclub360&pcampaignid=web\\_share](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.alpas.myclub360&pcampaignid=web_share)



## Camogie News

Congratulations to Denise Gaule who was the sole Kilkenny representative on the 2023 PwC Camogie All-Star selection.

## AIB Club Championship Camogie Team of the Year 2023


On the back of their All-Ireland success, Dicksboro deserve our congratulations having been awarded eight places on the AIB Club Championship team of the year. Dicksboro overcame St. Vincents of Dublin to claim their first Leinster title and went on to defeat Loughgiel Shamrocks of Antrim as Ulster champions in the All-Ireland semi-final before their All-Ireland final win over Sarsfields of Galway.



1. **Kirsty Maher (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
2. **Jane Cass (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
3. Laura Ward (Sarsfields, Galway)
4. **Katie Byrne (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
5. Tara Kenny (Sarsfields, Galway)
6. Maria Cooney (Sarsfields, Galway)
7. **Ciara Phelan (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
8. Sarah Spellman (Sarsfields, Galway)
9. **Aobha O' Gorman (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
10. **Asha McHardy (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
11. **Amy Clifford (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
12. Lucy Allen (Sarsfields, Cork)
13. **Aoife Prendergast (Dicksboro, Kilkenny)**
14. Siobhan McGrath (Sarsfields, Galway)
15. Caitrin Dobbin (Loughgiel Shamrocks, Antrim).

## Camogie Division 1A

In Division 1A, the top two teams meet in the Camogie League final. The last-place team will be relegated to 1B.

Team	Pld	W	D	L	Diff	Pts	Notes
 Waterford	3	2	0	1	+14	6	Advance to NCL Final
 Galway	3	2	0	1	+12	6	
 Tipperary	3	2	0	1	+3	6	
 Cork	3	2	0	1	+1	6	
 Kilkenny	3	1	0	2	+3	3	
 Clare	3	0	0	3	-33	0	Relegation

### Remaining Camogie Division 1A Fixtures



**Saturday 23rd March 2024- Round 4**

Kilkenny v Tipperary

**Saturday 30th March 2024- Round 5**

Waterford v Kilkenny

**Sunday 14th April – League Final**

### Artificial Intelligence and Gaelic Games.



Artificial Intelligence is quickly becoming part of our everyday lives and this is increasingly extending to sports of all codes. One of the most significant differences technology has made to sport is the level of analysis and insight it provides. Advanced data collection tools, video analysis software, and wearable technology are having an increasing impact on how squad members train, compete, and recover. Coaches with access to the right technology can access detailed statistics and performance metrics to optimise training programs and strategies.

Moreover, technology has transformed the fan experience in many sports, offering immersive viewing options, real-time updates, and interactive engagement opportunities. Overall, technology has elevated the performance, understanding, and enjoyment of sports across the board.

The growing use of technology in the GAA has been significant, with innovations such as Hawk-Eye employed for score verification in addition to video analysis tools aiding coaching and performance evaluation. Additionally, apps and online platforms are being rolled out to provide for enhanced fan engagement and player development programs.

AI technology has brought advancements to modern-day sports, under the following heading:

1. Personalised Training:

AI in sports has become a powerhouse of training. It uses machine learning for customised meal and exercise plans for each player that aligns exactly with their requirements. One of the straightforward examples of this is fitness apps which provide the user with a detailed plan after they answer a few questions.

2. Performance Optimisation:

AI algorithms analyse vast amounts of player performance data, including speed, distance covered, heart rate, and more. This data is used to extract valuable insights that help coaches and players identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The squad player doing busts along the side-line at the latter end of a GAA match is much more about building data for assessment by the Strength and Conditioning team than to impress spectators!

3. Game/Performance Analysis:

AI algorithms can analyse player performance, team tactics plus the moves and strategies adopted by an opposing team through processing large volumes of match data. This helps coaches make data-driven decisions to improve team performance. AI in sports is also being leveraged for real-time decision-making by coaches and to adjust their strategies as a situation

demands in real-time when tracking the opponent's movements. It is now easier than ever to monitor a player's performance during games and make decisions instantaneously. The data chip in the hurling sliotar may be further developed into the future to provide valuable data on metrics like puck speed and distance travelled, the impact of weather on the day thereby enhancing the understanding of issues arising and enabling more informed coaching decisions.

4. **Injury Prevention:** Wearable devices equipped with AI can monitor players' physical condition, track movements, and identify patterns that may indicate injury risks. This allows teams to implement preventative measures and optimise player recovery. Sports artificial intelligence has become the enabler of better health and performance among players, which has a lot to do with predictive analytics. Wearable sensors can track biometric data in real-time, helping coaches tailor training regimes and monitor player health. Elite rugby players now wear gum shields incorporating sensors that measure impacts and assist with HIAs (head injury assessments).
5. **Fan Engagement:** AI-driven technologies enhance fan experiences through personalised content, predictive analytics for match outcomes, and interactive platforms for social engagement. Communication on social media is becoming crucial to building relationships with fans. Sports teams are magnifying their online presence by curating relevant content for social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, X and for Kilkenny GAA, the new my club 360°. These platforms are now the go to station for fans to check up on team news and updates, match day squads, interviews, match highlights and other important events.
6. **Referee Support:** AI technology, such as video analysis systems in other sports, helps referees in making more accurate decisions by providing instant replays and foul play recognition.
7. **Training and Simulation:** Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) simulations allow players to experience game scenarios, practice strategies, and improve decision-making skills in a controlled environment.
8. **Integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI)** into the sports industry has ushered in a new era of innovation and advancement. Overall, AI technology continues to revolutionise Gaelic Games by enhancing various aspects of the sports, from performance analysis and player safety to fan engagement and officiating. The applications of AI in sports are vast and impactful, touching various aspects of athlete performance, coaching strategies, fan engagement, and overall sports management. By harnessing the power of AI, the sporting bodies across all codes have now got the potential to gather, analyse, and utilise data in ways that were once unimaginable.
9. Certainly, new technology in the GAA, like any sport, presents potential risks. These may include over-reliance on data leading to a loss of intuition or creativity, concerns about data privacy and security with the collection of biometric information, and inequalities arising from access to expensive technology. Additionally, there's always the risk of technology disrupting the traditional spirit of the game or creating controversy around contentious decisions made by technology-driven systems. It's essential to balance the benefits of technology with these potential risks and ensure that its integration aligns with the values and integrity of the sport.

## Image from the Archives



### ALL IRELAND MH CHAMPIONSHIP WINNING TEAM: 1950

Photo courtesy of Gerry O'Neill

**Back:** Jim "Link" Walsh, Dermot Dunleavy\*, Paschal Lyng, John Maher\*\*, Pat Lennon (Capt), Johnny McGovern, Mick Brophy, John Doherty, Micky Gardiner, Paddy Hogan, Bob Doherty.

**Front:** Ritchie Brennan, John Brennan, Tom Hanrahan, Paddy Johnston, Sean O'Brien, Jim Walsh, Donal Gorey, Jack Murphy, Dinny Rafferty, Claude Gough.

\* Dermot was the late brother of Denis Dunleavy, former Chairman of the Supporters Club (Dublin Branch),

\*\* John was the father of our Committee member Sean Maher and Supporters Club member Colm Maher.

On 3 September 1950 Kilkenny won the Minor championship following a 3-4 to 1-5 defeat of defending champions Tipperary in the All-Ireland final. This was Kilkenny's fourth All-Ireland Minor title since the competition's first staging in 1928 and their first time to lift the Irish Press Cup in 14 championship seasons.

### The 'Kilkenny Cat' stamp



Issued by An Post in 2007, the 'Celtic Cats' collection, designed by Award-winning political cartoonist Martyn Turner, was the first set of An Post stamps to feature cats. Along with a 'Kilkenny Cat' the slightly irreverent comic caricatures in the collection featured a Celtic Tigris, a Fat Cat and a pair of Cool Cats.

END OF NEWSLETTER