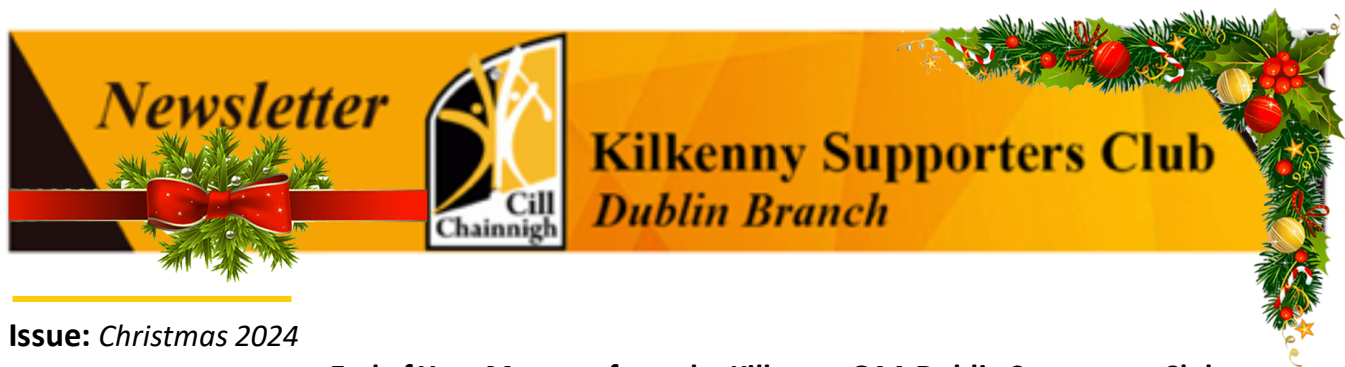




Issue: Christmas 2024

Hon President:

Eddie Nolan
086 2421924
ednol@indigo.ie

Chairman:

Niall Butler
086 8071821
Niall.e.butler@gmail.com

Vice-chairman:

Kevin Houlihan
087 7663738
khoulahan01@eircom.net

Treasurer:

Seamus O'Neill
087 2234789
seamus.oneill@live.ie

Secretary:

Laura Dalton Walsh
086 849 7687
laurawalshkk@hotmail.com

Membership Secretaries:

Jim Dunne
085 1120428
jpkdunne@gmail.com

John Mooney,
087 6406148

PRO:

Dermot Hearne
087 9597178
Kilkennyfan@gmail.com

Committee:

Kay Cannon:
087 2183592

Lar Carroll:
087 6790984

Jane Lynam- Treanor:
087 4199862

John Nolan:
086 8439590

Jim Staunton:
087 2345588

Seanie Maher:
087 6329533

End of Year Message from the Kilkenny GAA Dublin Supporters Club

As we close out 2024, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to all our members, families, committee, and supporters. Your generous contributions and unwavering commitment have enabled us to support Kilkenny GAA teams while fostering a vibrant social community in the Dublin region.

Celebrating Achievements

This year has been exceptional both on and off the field.

County Success:

Congratulations to our county teams for retaining the senior Leinster Championship and achieving notable underage successes, including victories in the Minor Championship and the Celtic League.

Club Triumphs:

Pride of place goes to Thomastown and Tullogher Rosbercon for their outstanding achievements in winning their respective All-Ireland Club Finals.

Farewell to Legends:

This year also marked the retirements of several Kilkenny icons, including Cillian Buckley, Walter Walsh, Conor Fogarty, Grace Walsh, and Miriam Walsh. Their exceptional playing careers and personal qualities have left a lasting legacy, inspiring future generations of Kilkenny players. Special thanks to Walter and Grace, who have been particularly generous with their time in supporting our club events.

Successful Events in 2024

Off the pitch, 2024 was a milestone year for fundraising and community engagement. These events not only raised crucial funds but also strengthened the social and networking aspects of our club.

'Black & Amber' Forum:

A new initiative this year, the 'Black & Amber' Forum was a business breakfast and networking event. It featured high-profile speakers such as former President Mary McAleese and Economist Jim Power. A fireside chat brought together Derek Lyng, Jim Gavin, Brian Cody, Grace Walsh, and Richie Hogan to share insights on leadership, business, and sport. With Kieran Cuddihy as a dynamic MC and Phil Hogan's leadership in organizing the event, the Forum was a resounding success.

Leinster Final Preview:

Ahead of the Leinster Hurling Final, we hosted a preview event with guest speaker Jackie Tyrrell, whose engaging insights and predictions added great value. Refreshments and lively discussions rounded out the evening.

Golf Classic:

Our flagship Golf Classic in August at Killeen Golf Club was a tremendous success, with a 50% increase in team participation. The day featured an extended suite of prizes, excellent catering, and a fantastic opportunity for members, past players, and friends to reconnect. These events are now crucial contributors to our fundraising efforts, especially in a time when operational expenses are outpacing membership growth. I deeply appreciate everyone who supported us in 2024, and I encourage members, businesses, and extended groups to get involved in 2025.

Thank You and Best Wishes

None of the above achievements would be possible without your continued support. To all our members, committee, and contributors— sincere thanks to each and every one of you for your unwavering dedication and effort throughout the year.

Wishing you and your families a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous 2025. Let's look forward to another exciting year for Kilkenny GAA!

Best regards,
Niall Butler
Chairman

Message from the Treasurer

My thanks to all members for their continuing support in 2024.

Your great support for our teams, especially the senior hurlers, ensured a strong demand for tickets for all matches up to and including the All-Ireland semi-final. In addition to looking after the teams when playing in Dublin, we were able to support the team when playing the Leinster Championship fixture in Galway in April. We were also happy to support O'Loughlin Gaels, Thomastown and Tullogher-Rosbercon in their club All-Ireland Finals.

Membership continues to be stable thanks to the efforts of members led by Jim Dunne and John Mooney and we again supported strongly the Hurlers Co-Op Draw. Thanks to all members for the continuing financial support. The Golf Classic under the stewardship of Eddie Nolan, John Nolan, Willie Grant, Luke Bird and Seanie Maher continues to be a significant fundraiser.

I mentioned at our AGM in November last that rising costs make the challenge of preparing teams increasingly difficult and that new initiatives were necessary to expand our fundraising efforts. In conjunction with Kilkenny County Board and Phil Hogan, the Club organised two breakfast events, in February and October, aimed at the business community in Dublin. The Black & Amber Forums proved highly successful and we look forward to growing the event in 2025.

At the end of the financial year on 30 September, the Club had reserves of over €15,000 and we will discuss with the County Board how best to utilise those funds for the benefit of Kilkenny GAA.

My thanks and best wishes to all members for the Christmas season and 2025.

Seamus O'Neill

Message from Secretary

As I reflect on my first year as Secretary, I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the members and the committee for their warm welcome and support. Their encouragement has made my transition into this role both smooth and enjoyable.

During this year, we've shared moments of great pride, celebrating thrilling victories and performances, but we've also faced heartbreaks that remind us of the challenges and uncertainties of the game we all love.

Your continued support has been the heartbeat of our Supporter's Club, keeping the spirit of Kilkenny alive in Dublin.

Christmas is also a time to remember those who are no longer with us. We hold in our heart the members, family and friends we lost this year. Their presence in our lives will never be forgotten and we carry their memories with us. Our thoughts are with their families and loved ones as they face their first Christmas without them.

As we look to 2025, we do so with the hope and determination that defines Kilkenny GAA. Together let's continue to support our teams and celebrate our county.

Wishing all our members and their families a joyful and peaceful Christmas. May the New Year bring each of you, health, happiness and further success for Kilkenny GAA

Nollaig shona daoibh go léir

Laura Dalton

Message from the Membership Secretaries

Membership subscriptions continue to be healthy in 2024 with 21 new members added in 2024. Social activities have not recovered due to Covid-19. Special thanks to the committee for driving the Membership efforts and to Niall Butler for coordinating the successful Hurlers Co-Op Draw. We were pleased to be able to hold our annual Golf Classic once again. Thanks to Eddie Nolan, John Nolan, and Willie Grant the event proved highly successful and continues to be our principal fundraiser.

Best wishes to all members for the Christmas season and for 2025. Jim Dunne/John Mooney

Retirements

Eamonn Purcell from the Committee of the Supporters Club Dublin Branch

Eamonn, one of the founding members of the Dublin Branch of the Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club back in the 1990s, has decided to take a step back after 28 years of active involvement with the Club. Over the years, Eamonn, who was present at the very first branch meeting, held in Paddy Morrissey's pub on Leeson Street, has remained an active member up to this day. That first meeting was arranged by Frank Houlihan, brother of committee member Kevin, following on from a match programme notice he placed and an announcement he arranged at a county final in Nowlan Park. Others attending that meeting included Seamus Mernagh RIP and Jim Butler RIP, who became the first Treasurer. Membership was the only means of generating income for the club in the early years and Eamonn, as the first Membership Secretary, applied himself diligently to building up the number of members. Over the years, Eamonn has remained actively involved and has proven to be an enthusiastic supporter of fundraising activities such as the Race Nights, Pub Quizzes, Corporate Dinners and the Annual Golf Classic for which he regularly organised teams over the years. Visiting his beloved county remains high on his agenda, whether it be in support the GAA or simply to catch up with friends and family in the hinterland of Piltown. Even though, by his own admission, he has many miles on the clock, Eamonn will remain available to support the work of the Supporters Club in the background. For that and for all he has done in support of Kilkenny GAA, we all wish himself, his wife Mary and his family all the best into the future. Thanks Eamonn.



Eamonn, second from right, representing the Dublin Branch at 2024 Hurlers Draw No 3 in Piltown

Senior County Hurler retirements

The Supporters Club wish the best to three prominent Kilkenny senior hurling players announced their retirement from inter-county hurling in 2024:

Cillian Buckley: The Dicksboro clubman retired after a distinguished 14-year career with Kilkenny, starting in 2012. He achieved three All-Ireland SHC titles, eight Leinster championships, and five National League titles. Cillian was known for his leadership, including captaining the minor team to an All-Ireland title in 2010 .

Walter Walsh: A towering figure in Kilkenny hurling, Wally debuted in 2012 and earned accolades such as three All-Ireland SHC titles, including a Man of the Match performance in the 2012 final. Over his career, he also secured eight Leinster titles and four National League wins .

Conor Fogarty: The Erins Own star joined the senior county squad in 2011 as a 20 year old. Amongst his distinguished achievements were four All-Ireland SHC titles, nine Leinster championships, and five National League titles.

All three players were role models and leave behind a legacy of dedication, competitiveness and success. The Supporters Club wish Conor, Killian and Walter all the very best into the future.



John Mooney and Dermot Hearne in New York with Conor, Killian, Walter and some other familiar faces.



Walter, Colin Fennelly and Pdraig Walsh dedicate some Trophies time with Dublin Branch members



Walter sharing his spoils & posing with members (James Butler representing the next generation)

Black and Amber Forum No 2

After the very successful Black and Amber Forum back in February, and the Leinster Hurling Final Preview on June 6th, a second Black and Amber breakfast event took place on October 3rd, this time in the Conrad Hotel Dublin. The Networking event was hosted by Phil Hogan and featured Economist Jim Power as guest speaker in addition to a most enjoyable and informative Q&A, with Brian Cody, former Kilkenny Senior Hurling Manager and Jim Gavin, former Dublin Senior Football Manager and our Chairman Niall Butler chatting with Kieran Cuddihy. The organisers want these business breakfast events to provide opportunities for networking with our business partners in addition to hearing from various speakers.

Below is a series of photographs from the event.

Kilkenny Supporters Club Dublin Branch Newsletter Christmas 2024




Guest Speaker
Jim Power
Economist

KIERAN CUDDIHY, MC

Fáilte ón gCathaoirleach

A Chairde

On behalf of Kilkenny GAA, I wish to welcome everyone to the Black and Amber Forum this morning and thank you for supporting this event. This initiative gives our business partners an opportunity to support us, as well as engaging in networking activities. I would also like to thank Plusvital for sponsoring today's event.

Today's topic is examining the budget and its effect on your businesses. I would like to welcome our guest speaker, economist Jim Power. Jim is one of Ireland's leading and best-known economic analysts and I look forward to hearing his views on the recent budget.

We are also joined this morning by the two most successful GAA managers, Brian Cody and Jim Gavin. The GAA has co-opted both of these men onto committees in Croke Park to draw on their vast experience and knowledge to help shape the future of the GAA and I wish them both the best of luck in their new roles. Thanks also to Kieran Cuddihy for performing his duty as MC for today's event.

Finally, thank you again to all who have come here to support Kilkenny GAA and I hope it is a fruitful morning for you all.

Cathaoirleach
P.J. Kenny CLG Cill Chainnigh

CLÁR

7.30 AM BREAKFAST

8.00 AM INTRODUCTION
KIERAN CUDDIHY, MC

8.10 AM "FIRESIDE CHAT" WITH
BRIAN CODY & JIM GAVIN

8.50 AM KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY GUEST SPEAKER
JIM POWER, ECONOMIST

09.15 AM CONCLUDING REMARKS



MEET THE PANELISTS



BRIAN CODY
Former Kilkenny GAA Hurling Manager



JIM GAVIN
Former Dublin GAA Football Manager

Contact Us

UPMC Nowlan Park
O'Loughlin Rd, Pennefatherslot,
Kilkenny R95 WN66
Tel: 056-7765122
Email: nowlanpark.kilkenny@gaa.ie
www.kilkennygaa.ie

Kilkenny Supporters Club (Dublin Branch)
Niall Butler (niall.e.butler@gmail.com)
Jim Dunne (jpkdunne@gmail.com)
Dermot Hearne (kilkennyfan@gmail.com)

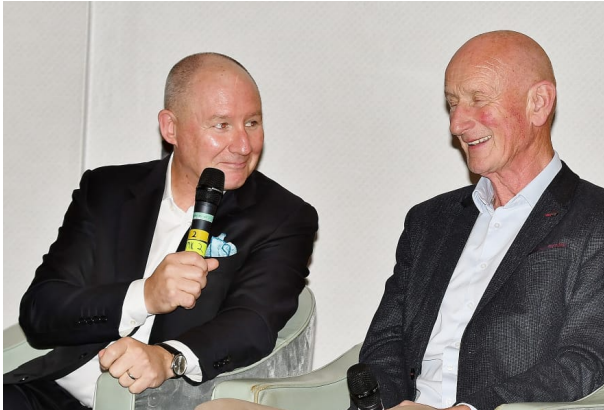









Kilkenny Supporters Club Dublin Branch Newsletter Christmas 2024



Kilkenny Supporters Club Dublin Branch Newsletter Christmas 2024



Golf Classic 2024

The organising committee would like to express our sincere gratitude to all those who participated/sponsored a team for our Annual Golf Classic. The event proved to be a wonderful day weather-wise and played on what was a beautiful course on the day with great company and competitive play.

The day was wrapped up with a fantastic meal enjoyed in an atmosphere of camaraderie that truly reflects the spirit of the Supporters Club, providing the opportunity for attendees to connect with others and to meet new faces. Thank you again for your support towards making the golf classic such a success.



FIRST PRIZE – Team: Luke Bird - Score 97 pts

Players; Luke Bird, Con Donavan, Tony O'Keefe, Luke A. Bird

SECOND PRIZE - Team: Eddie Nolan - Score 90 pts

Players; Eamonn Brennan, Rob Kearney, Jack McNamara, Tony Butler

THIRD PRIZE - Team: Poitin Still - Score 89 pts

Players: Anthony Kelly, Robert Miley, Darren O'Brien, Chris Brady

FOURTH PRIZE - Team: Academy Hotel - Score 87 pts

Players: Kevin Brennan, Matt Dooley, Paddy McGuinness, Christy Comerford

FIFTH PRIZE – Team: Phil Hogan - Score 83pts {43 on back nine}

Players: Phil Hogan, Pat O'Neill, Peter Casey, Arthur French

SIXTH PRIZE - Team: Willie Grant - Score 83 pts {41 on back nine}

Players Willie Grant, Billy Cashin, Michael Grant, Mark Grant

SEVENTH PRIZE – Team: Tom O'Neill - Score 83 pts {34 on back nine}

Players: Tom O'Neill, Pdraig McMahon, Jim Daly, John Ryan

EIGHT PRIZE – Team: Killester Travel - Score 80 pts

Players: Noel Skehan, Tim Williams, Jerry Phipps, Michael Berkery

LONGEST DRIVE: Donal McGovern {Niall Butlers Team}

NEAREST THE PIN: Eamonn Brennan (E. Nolan's team)

The committee wish to express our appreciation to all sponsors and participants



County Championship News

Hurling

The 2024 Kilkenny GAA County Hurling Championships

St. Canice's Credit Union Senior Hurling Championship



Congratulations to Thomastown on their victory over O'Loughlin Gaels in the St Canice's Credit Union Kilkenny SHC Final. The final saw the 'Town', who had beaten Mullinavat (1-27 to 0-12) in their semi-final, face favourites O'Loughlin Gaels, who had overcome Bennettsbridge (2-17 to 1-14) to reach the final.

The match represented a first appearance for Thomastown in the final since 1988 and resulted in their second victory in the competition to be the best senior club side in Kilkenny. It has been a memorable campaign for Thomastown who after winning the All-Ireland Intermediate title in January, have now won their first senior championship since 1949.

The Senior Hurling relegation final saw James Stephens losing out to go down to Intermediate for the first time in 69 years following their defeat to Glenmore on a score-line of 3-17 to 3-12.

Michael Lyng Motors Hyundai Intermediate Hurling Championship

Lisdowney overcame Young Irelands 2-12 to 0-15 in the Michael Lyng Motors Hyundai Intermediate Hurling Championship Final to win the Hanrahan Cup. Lisdowney followed up their Co Final win with a victory over Clodiagh Gaels of Offaly (3-23 – 1-10) in the AIB Leinster Club IHC 24 Quarter Final on November 16th.

In the Intermediate Relegation final, Conahy Shamrocks lost out by 3pts in their match with Carrickshock which will see them playing at Junior level next season.

JJ Kavanagh & Sons Junior Hurling Championship

Wins for St Lachtain's and Windgap saw these teams advance to the Junior County Final on Saturday November 2nd. Windgap had overcome Emeralds (2-25 to 0-22) and St Lachtain's beat James Stephens (0-27 to 1-14) to reach the final. On the day the victory spoils went to St Lachtain's who became Junior champions beating Windgap (2-15 - 1-12).

Football

Dicksboro (1-9) defeated Lisdowney (1-6) in the JJ Kavanagh and Sons Senior Football Championship 2024 Final.

In the Senior Relegation Final, Erins Own (1-4) defeated Danesfort (0-4).

In the JJ Kavanagh and Sons Intermediate Football Championship 2024 Final, Conahy Shamrocks (3 – 8) defeated Glenmore (1 – 10).

The JJ Kavanagh and Sons Junior Football Championship 2024 Final saw Graignamanagh (0 – 11) overcome Bennettsbridge (1– 6).

Camogie



Soaring Stars Awards for 4 Kilkenny Camogie Players

Kilkenny, the runners-up in this year's 2024 Glen Dimplex All-Ireland Intermediate championship, saw four players earning a place on the 2024 PwC Camogie Soaring Stars team.

Goalkeeper Cliona Murphy (Kilmacow), Wing/Half Backs Mairead Kennedy (Slieverue) and Hannah Scott (James Stephens) as well as midfielder Danielle Morrissey (Conahy Shamrocks) have all been rewarded for their displays.

Congratulations in particular to Conahy's Danielle Morrissey who went on to win the GPA PWC Intermediate Player of the Year.

The committee and membership wish Miriam Walsh the very best of luck on her retirement from Senior county camogie. The Tullaroan club player bows out with three All-Ireland medals, three All-Stars and as PWC Camogie Player of the Year in 2022.

Tommy Shefflin has been named as the Kilkenny senior camogie manager as a follow on to the departure of Peter 'Chap' Cleere who announced his resignation following the All-Ireland quarter-final loss to Dublin in early July. The Ballyhale Shamrocks native was previously involved with the seniors as a coach/selector under Brian Dowling for their All-Ireland senior successes in 2020 and 2022. Tommy enjoyed a recent success as a coach with Piltown when the club claimed their first Kilkenny senior camogie title. Jimmy Meagher, who stepped down as Ballyhale Shamrocks manager following their Kilkenny SHC quarter-final loss to Thomastown last month will assist as coach.

Michael Lyng Motors Hyundai Senior Camogie County Final

Piltown (3-11) overcame Dicksboro (0-14) to make history and to win the Michael Lyng Motors Hyundai Senior Camogie County SC Final for the first time. Piltown Captain Katie Power commented that "having a bit of belief" was the key factor in their victory. Piltown (2-12) also beat Dicksboro (0-12) to claim the League Final.

The Relegation Final saw the Rower Instioge (0-15) overcome Barrow Rangers (0-11).

Intermediate Camogie

County Final - O'Loughlin Gaels (0-12) - Mooncoin (1-8)

League Final - Mooncoin (1-10) - Danesfort (0-10)

Kilkenny River Court Junior Camogie

Junior Final - Emeralds (3-3) - John Lockes (2-4)

Junior B Final - Bennettsbridge (1-13) - Blacks & Whites (1-8)

Junior C Final - Windgap (8-13) - Conahy (0-5)



Piltown's Aoife Doyle and Katie Power proudly lift the Senior Championship trophy

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 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.

GAA Trophies

What trophy is awarded for what? Below is a list of All Ireland and major trophies in the GAA:

All-Ireland Senior Championships

Liam MacCarthy Cup – *Awarded to the winners of the All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship.*

Sam Maguire Cup – *Awarded to the winners of the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship.*

O'Duffy Cup – *Awarded to the winners of the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship.*

Brendan Martin Cup – *Awarded to the winners of the All-Ireland Ladies' Senior Football Championship.*

Provincial Senior Championships

Senior Football Championship

Anglo-Celt Cup – *Ulster* Delaney Cup – *Leinster* JJ Nestor Cup – *Connacht* Munster Cup – *Munster*

Senior Hurling Championship.

Bob O'Keeffe – *Leinster* Mc Grath Cup – *Munster*

All-Ireland Senior Club Championships

Andy Merrigan Cup – *Football* Tommy Moore Cup – *Hurling*

National League Trophies

New Ireland Cup – *For winners of the Allianz Football League*

Dr. Croke Cup – *For winners of the Allianz Hurling League*

Other Notable Trophies

Joe McDonagh Cup – *All-Ireland Senior Hurling Tier 2 (2018).*

Christy Ring Cup – *All-Ireland Senior Hurling Tier 3 (2018) – (Tier 2 2005- 2017)*

Nicky Rackard Cup – *All-Ireland Senior Hurling Tier 4 (2018) – (Tier 3 2005-2017)*

Lory Meagher Cup – *All-Ireland Senior Hurling Tier 5 (2018) – (Tier 4 2009-2017)*

Clarke Cup: *All-Ireland U21/20 Football (Age changed from 21 to 20 in 2018)*

Tailteann Cup – *Introduced in 2022 for second-tier football teams.*

Corn na mBan – *Awarded to intermediate camogie champions.*

Nancy Murray Cup – *For junior camogie championship winners.*

University/3rd Level College Trophies

Hurling

Fitzgibbon Cup – Tier 1 All Ireland Colleges

Ryan Cup – Tier 2 All Ireland Colleges

Football

Sigerson Cup – Tier 1 All Ireland Colleges

Trench Cup – Tier 2 All Ireland Colleges

Youth Trophies

Tom Markham Cup – *All-Ireland Minor Football Championship (Age changed from 18 to 17 in 2018).*

Irish Press Cup – *All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship. (Age changed from 18 to 17 in 2018)*

James Nowlan Cup – *All-Ireland U-21 Hurling Championship.*

EirGrid U-20 Football Trophy – *All-Ireland U-20 Football Championship.*

The Cross of Cashel: *All-Ireland U21/20 Hurling (Age changed from 21 to 20 in 2019)*

International and Special Competitions

1. Dr. Croke Cup – *All Ireland Post Primary Schools hurling competitions. (eligible players must be U19)*

2. Hogan Cup – *All Ireland Post Primary Schools hurling competitions.*

Bereavements

Sincere condolences to the families and friends of dear departed members and condolences also to all those, in any way associated with our club, who had a recent bereavement. Our Deceased List for 2024 is as follows:

Members: Joe Butler, Chris Comerford and Michael Kelly.

Relatives: Peadar Walsh (Uncle of Laura Dalton), Tom Brett (Brother of Hugh Brett), Kitty Walsh (Mother of Laura Dalton), Dermot Dunleavy (Brother of Denis Dunleavy), Mary Harrison (Mother of Brian Harrison), Kathleen Carroll (Sister of John O'Rourke), Donal O'Leary (Brother in Law of Jim Staunton), Joan Lalor (Sister of John Mackey), Edward Meany (Cousin of Eddie Nolan).

Others: Mícheál O'Muirheartaigh, Michael (Mick) Crotty, Billy Norris (Piltown GAA/Draw) and his wife Nell Norris, Tom Reid, John Kinsella and John O Mahony (Mayo).

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Hurlers Co-op Draw 2024

The club would like to thank all those who bought Hurlers Draw 2024 tickets. Over 200 tickets were purchased by members and those associated with the club and we are most grateful for the support, thank you all. Sympathies from the club to the family and friends of Billy Norris RIP who, up to the time of his passing, was one of the mainstays behind the Hurlers (Piltown) Draw.

Congratulations to the following Supporters Club ticket holders who were 2024 Draw winners, Niall Butler our Club Chairman, Elizabeth Nolan, Charles & Celine Molloy, Vinnie Carton & Mick Quinn and also the Dublin Branch of the Supporters Club won 500 euro in Draw No 4.

Richie Hogan/Joe Canning Book/s Launch

Richie, a seven time All Ireland senior championship medal winner, two time All Ireland U21 winner, 2014 hurler of the year and All Star (4) shared the spotlight with Joe Canning, an All Star (5) and another legend of the game. The Portumna man won All Ireland medals at Minor, U21 and at the Senior grade with his county and four All Ireland titles with his Club and Joe was the 2017 Hurler of the year.

Matt Cooper hosted the Croke Park event and we wish Richie and Joe all the best.



Matt Cooper with Richie Hogan and Joe Canning at their recent Books Launch at Croke Park



A series of photos featuring attendees from the club at the Richie Hogan/Joe Canning Books Launch.

Team Management and Players

The committee wish county managers, selectors, their back room teams and players across all codes every success in competitions over the next year.

Player Nutrition

The festive season brings inevitable scope for indulgences which might be fine for many amongst us, but what about elite players? They may be required to anticipate feasts, prioritise key nutrients and make smart festive choices.



The development of modern-day nutrition for GAA players of all grades has evolved significantly over the past few decades. Once driven largely by traditional, local dietary habits, the approach to nutrition in the GAA has become increasingly scientific, focusing on maximizing performance, recovery, and overall well-being. Here's an overview of how this development unfolded:

Early Days: Traditional Diets (Pre-1990s)

In the early history of the GAA since its foundation back in 1884, players' nutrition was largely based on traditional Irish diets, which were typically high in carbohydrates (potatoes, bread) and dairy products, supplemented by some meat and vegetables. For a long time, diet was not seen as a significant factor in performance. Players ate regular meals, with little emphasis on pre-match nutrition or recovery strategies. Players mostly consumed locally sourced and seasonal foods, with little access to sports-specific supplements. Games like hurling, camogie and gaelic football require high endurance, and the carbohydrate-heavy Irish diet suited the energy needs of players to a certain extent.

Introduction of Sports Science and Nutrition (1990s-2000s)

As sports science began to evolve globally in the late 20th century, GAA players and coaching teams began to adopt some of these advances. Players and coaches started realising the importance of sports-specific nutrition in improving athletic performance, especially when competing at higher levels.

Adoption of carbohydrate loading:

Inspired by practices in other sports like soccer and rugby, GAA players began to adopt carbohydrate loading before games to optimize glycogen stores for energy during matches.

Increased protein intake for recovery:

The importance of protein for muscle repair and recovery after games and training became more widely acknowledged, and players started to increase their intake of protein-rich foods.

Hydration strategies:

Proper hydration, including the use of sports drinks to maintain electrolyte balance during matches, became part of a standard preparation routine. During this period, GAA players still balanced their sporting lives with full-time jobs, which often meant that nutrition wasn't as closely monitored or tailored as in professional sports. Nonetheless, county teams began hiring nutritionists and sports scientists to advise players.



Professionalization and Personalisation (2000 - 2010)

The years after 2000 marked a significant shift in the approach to nutrition in the GAA, as sports science became a mainstream part of player preparation.

The influence of professional sports:

The success of professional sports such as rugby and soccer in Ireland, where players had access to world-class nutrition programs, spurred GAA teams to follow suit. While GAA remained amateur, inter-county players now began to eat and train more like professionals.

Tailored nutrition plans:

Nutritionists began creating individualised plans for players, focusing on position-specific requirements (e.g., the needs of a midfielder differ from those of a forward or goalkeeper) and personalising nutrition to meet the demands of both training and match day.

Supplements and recovery aids:

The use of protein powders, energy gels, creatine, and electrolyte replacements became common, especially for recovery post-training. Some GAA clubs/players also began to use modern recovery techniques such as cryotherapy and nutritional supplements to aid muscle repair. This era also saw a greater focus on periodisation of nutrition, where diets were adapted based on the training cycle (e.g., bulking phases for strength, cutting for endurance).

Integration of Modern Sports Science (2010-Present)

From 2010, the GAA family became more open to embracing a fully integrated sports science approach, where nutrition, strength & conditioning, psychology, and recovery protocols became part of a holistic approach to player well-being. Nutrition was seen as one of the critical pillars in ensuring peak performance and preventing injury.

Evidence-based nutrition practices:

GAA nutritionists now use scientific research to inform dietary recommendations, ensuring that players are receiving the optimal balance of macronutrients (carbs, proteins, fats) and micronutrients (vitamins, minerals) to fuel performance, aid recovery, and support long-term health.



Nutritional timings:

Nutritional strategies have become highly time focussed. For example, during pre-season, diets may focus on muscle gain and strength, while in-season nutrition emphasises fuelling for endurance and quick recovery between matches.

Match-day nutrition:

Match-day routines have been refined, with specific guidelines for pre-match meals (usually high in carbohydrates with moderate protein) and post-match recovery (focused on protein for muscle repair and carbohydrates to replenish glycogen). Hydration strategies, including personalized electrolyte intake, have also become highly specialised.

Increased focus on body composition:

With advancements in technology, body composition (ratio of muscle to fat) is now monitored more closely, and players follow specific nutrition plans to optimize lean muscle mass and reduce excess fat.

Mental health and well-being:

Nutrition has also been linked to mental well-being, and players are now encouraged to eat foods that support cognitive function and emotional health, especially during the stress of competitive seasons.



Current Trends:

Whole Foods and Long-Term Health

Recently, there has been a shift towards more holistic approaches to nutrition. While supplements and protein shakes are still used, there is now a greater emphasis on consuming whole, nutrient-dense foods.

Anti-inflammatory diets:

Players are increasingly encouraged to adopt anti-inflammatory diets, incorporating foods like oily fish, nuts, seeds, fruits, and vegetables, which help reduce inflammation and aid recovery from injuries.

Gut health and performance:

Gut health has become a hot topic in sports nutrition, with an emphasis on probiotics and fibre-rich foods to ensure optimal digestion and immune function.



Sustainability:

There's a growing awareness of the environmental and ethical impact of food choices, and growing numbers of players across all codes are adopting plant-based or flexitarian diets.

Partnerships:

In March 2023, the GAA entered into a three-year arrangement seeing Optimum Nutrition, a part of the Glanbia Performance Nutrition brand family, which will see the providing its Elite Series product range of certified high quality performance nutrition products to adult players and counties nationwide to inter-county teams across all codes. As part of the

partnership the company undertook to support the education of players on the importance of eating a nutritious diet along with appropriate high quality sports nutrition products to provide performance benefits throughout the season.

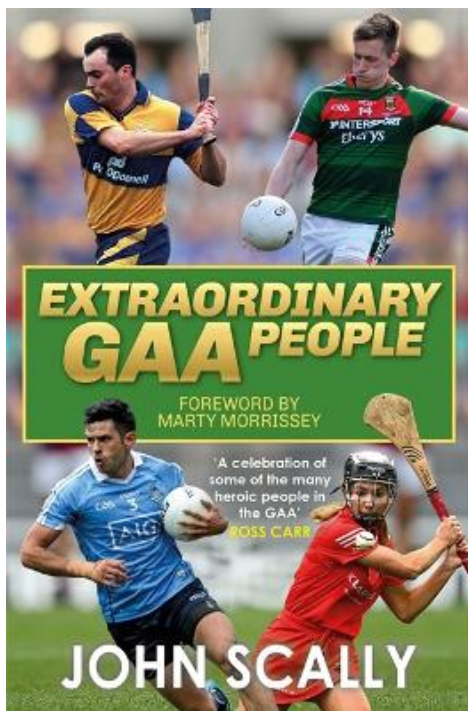
Conclusion

The evolution of nutrition in the GAA has mirrored broader trends in sports science, shifting from traditional, unstructured diets to highly personalised, evidence-based nutrition plans that cater to the specific needs of individual players. Nutrition is now viewed as an essential component of training, performance, and recovery for GAA players, and it plays a pivotal role in helping athletes maintain peak fitness throughout the season while promoting long-term health.

Some recommendations for book-loving GAA fans this Christmas, old and young!

In *Whatever it Takes*, Richie Hogan tells the story of his dazzling career, from his obsession with maintaining high standards in the Kilkenny team, to the stand-out moments on the pitch and the challenges he encountered along the way that threatened to derail everything.

In his memoir, Joe Canning delves into the highs and lows of his career – the standards of excellence he at times felt chained to, trying to meet other people's expectations, his parents' battles with cancer and the perspective that brought as he strove for greatness and about how he made peace with his decision to retire.



Gaelic Games have been shaped by great players. Since its inception, special players have made hearts soar with daring moves, achieved sporting glory and created everlasting memories. Now Extraordinary GAA People celebrates the achievements of the very best footballers, hurlers, managers, ladies footballers and camogie players from the start of the twentieth century to the present day.

.....'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through Croke Park.....

It was quiet and peaceful; the great pitch was dark..

But not for long!As the clock strikes midnight, there's a magical surprise!!...

By Julianne McKeigue.



GAA QUIZ

Q 1. What's a high snig in hurling?

Q 2. How many Kilkenny GAA Clubs have the jerseys containing the colour red?

Q 3. Name the sub that scored the only goal of the game in two successive All Ireland SH Finals?

Q 4. Prior to 1984 in Thurles, 1937 was the last year an All-Ireland SH Final played outside Croke Park, where?

Q 5. Identify the following GAA Counties by their nickname?

- a) The Yew County
- b) The Farney County
- c) The Wild Rose County
- e) O'Farrell County

Q 6. How many GAA Clubs are in the entire county of Kilkenny?

Q 7. In what county is Brewster Park?

Q 8. Name the recently retired Kilkenny player pictured right?



Q 9. Name the Kilkenny GAA Hurling Clubs that won an Intermediate county championship and went on to win the county championship at Senior level the following year?

Q 10. Since the foundation of the GAA in 1888, Kilkenny never failed to win the Leinster Senior Hurling title on the fourth year of every decade (years ending with a 3 e.g. 1893) up to what year?



Q 11. Name the Kilkenny hurler in action on the cover of the September 1963 Edition of Gaelic Sport?

Q 12. How many points did Kilkenny sharp shooter Eddie Keher score in the 1963 final

Q 13. In the decade 1914 – 1924, each of the All Ireland Hurling final winners scored more goals than points to give them victory, except for one of the years, 1920.

- A) what counties contested the 1920 final?
- B) Who won?

Q 14. In 1896, Tipperary scored 8-14 to win the final. Their opponents scored 0-4. Name the losing county in this one sided final?

GAA QUIZ ANSWERS**Answer 1.**

A high Snig in hurling is where you hit the sliotar away (from behind your opponent), where your opponent has thrown up the ball to strike it.

Answer 2.

6 James Stephens, Railyard, Rower Inistioge, St Martin's, Windgap and Young Irelands.

Answer 3.

Noel Lane was the sub that scored the only goal of the game in two successive All Ireland SH Finals, in 1987 he got a key goal 9 mins from the end V Kilkenny and the following year, his impact as a sub was cemented with a crucial goal for Cyril Farrells men again in the 1988 final with 3 mins remaining V Tipperary.

Answer 4.

This was the first All-Ireland to be played outside of Croke Park. Only one year after it opened, Killarney's Fitzgerald Stadium hosted the 1937 and 50th All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final between Tipperary and Kilkenny, after a builder's strike delayed the construction of the Cusack Stand in Croke Park.

Tipperary were victors on the day in front of a crowd of 43,638. This game was the last ever appearance of Lory Meagher in a Kilkenny jersey. The Tullaroan native came off the bench in the second half to score Kilkenny's only point of the half, bringing the curtain down on a glorious career that saw him win three All-Irelands as well as nine Leinster Championship medals over a 13-year career.

**Answer 5.**

- The Yew County = **Mayo**. The name comes from the Irish words "Maigh Eo" meaning "Plain of the yew trees" and originates from the village of Mayo nowadays known as Mayo Abbey.
- The Farney County = **Monaghan** – Farney is a barony in the South East of the County.
- The Wild Rose County = **Leitrim** - County Leitrim is nicknamed 'Wild Rose County' due to the prevalence of Dog Rose in the area. Dog Rose (Rosa Canina) is a rose native to Ireland.
- O'Farrell County = **Longford**, Ó Fearghail is a family name of the Irish nobility from County Longford who were historically the Princes of Annaly.

Answer 6.

There are 42 GAA Clubs are in Kilkenny.

Answer 7.

Brewster Park is in Enniskillen Co. Fermanagh.

Answer 8.

Walter Walsh, the Tullogher–Rosbercon forward who recently retired after a decorated 13-year career with Kilkenny. *'The next chapter.....Plenty to keep me occupied in retirement'* remarked Wally following the arrival of twins, recently born at St Luke's General Hospital. Congratulations and best wishes to Wally and Vicky.

Answer 9.

Ballyhale Shamrocks, O'Loughlin Gaels, Clara, Dicksboro and Thomastown.

Back in the 1970s, Ballyhale Shamrocks won the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship in 1975. The following year, in 1976, they were promoted to the senior ranks and went on to win the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship.

Ballyhale continued this momentum, eventually capturing their first All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship title in 1981. Ballyhale Shamrocks went on to win a record 9 All-Ireland Senior Club Championship titles over 5 consecutive decades, (1981, 1984, 1990, 2007, 2010, 2015, 2019, 2020 and 2022) making the club one of the most decorated hurling clubs in Ireland.

O'Loughlin Gaels won the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship in 2006, and then, in 2007, they went on to win the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship.

The club went on to win an All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship in 2011.

In 2012, Clara won the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship, and then, in 2013, they triumphed in the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship.

In 2013, Dicksboro won the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship, and then, in 2014, they triumphed in the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship.

In 2023, Thomastown won the Kilkenny Intermediate Hurling Championship, and then, this year they triumphed in the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Championship 2024. *'The Town' then went on to finish the year by winning Leinster and All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship finals.*

Answer 10. - 2013

Kilkenny have won a total of 76 Leinster SH titles (listed below) and have won the title on the fourth year of every decade (as highlighted), since the foundation of the GAA, up to 2023, except in 2013, a year the Cats lost to Dublin in the final.

1888, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1898, 1900, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1907, 1909, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1916, 1922, 1923, 1925, 1926, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1939, 1940, 1943, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1950, 1953, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1987, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024.

Answer 11. - Thomastown's Tom Walsh who was a member of the Kilkenny Senior team from 1963 (when he joined as a nineteen year old) up to 1967, the year his career ended after he lost an eye after being struck in the face by an opponent's hurley in the All Ireland final v Tipperary.

Answer 12. - Eddie Keher scored 14 points, in Kilkenny 4-17 to 6-8 win over Waterford.

The other Kilkenny Scorers in that final were T. Murphy (2-1), T. Walsh (2-0), S. Cleere (0-2).

Answer 13.

A) Dublin and Cork contested the 1920 final

B) Dublin, they beat Cork 4-9 to 4-3 to win their 3rd All Ireland Hurling Crown.

Answer 14. - Dublin.

Images from the Archives



The teams parade before the 1937 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Final in Fitzgerald Stadium, Killarney.



Kilkenny team that defeated Waterford (4-10 – 3-12) in the All Ireland Hurling Final 1957

Back row: Syd Bluett (trainer) Jim Walsh, Dick Rockett, John Sutton, Mick Brophy, Sean Clohessy Mick Kenny, Ollie Walsh, Bob Aylward (Chairman).

Front row: John McGovern, Billy Dwyer, Paddy Buggy, Denis Heaslip, Mick Kelly (Captain) Mick Walsh, John Maher.

The Alternative GAA Phrasebook

Mighty :- Very good!.

Hames :- bad shot, e.g. "He made a hames of that chance".

Lamp :- A good thump, e.g. "I swung for the sliotar, missed by a metre and lamped the full back".

A Crowd :- A gathering of people who watch a match and hope for random acts of violence.

Schkelp :- To remove living tissue in the absence of surgical procedures, e.g. "That ****er from Tipp took a schkelp outta me leg".

Hatchet Man :- Mountany type, uses hunter/gatherer instincts.

Bullin' :- Angry, e.g. "The centre half was bullin' after I lamped him".

Joult :- A push, e.g. "I gave him a good joult and it put him off balance".

The Bomber :- Historical name for a fat hairy GAA player.

A Hang Sangwidge :- that may contain a half a pound of salty butter. Consumed with "tay" on the sides of roads after matches in Pairc Ui Chaoimh or Thurles.

Rake :- A great amount of anything, mainly pints! and in the past, consumed on the night before an important match.

Indanamajaysus (in-da-nam-a-Jaysus) :- What was that for referee?

Leh-It-In-Ta-**-Wud-Ya** :- Full forwards appeal to a midfielder for a more timely delivery of the pass.

Dirty Ball :- nothing to do with the actual cleanliness of the ball!

Mullocker :- Untidy or awkward player released for matches.

Leh 'im Hav it!:- normally an encouragement from the side-line for a player to fight with another.

Handbags:- This is where the combatants don't want to get hurt, or to hurt the opponent, a pretend fight where they throw shapes.

Schmozzle :- A disagreement on the pitch that is more serious than handbags and which involves more than two people engaged in variations of wrestling.

Fracas:- More dynamic and physical...with a few more involved than in a Schmozzle.

A Melee :- a disagreement involving both teams, including goalies, substitutes and mentors.

Shameful scenes:- A massive row, sometimes with contributions from supporters always physical and on occasion, may continue off the pitch and into the dressing rooms or beyond! known at times to have required the services of St John's Ambulance and An Garda Siochana! ...

Whip, pull, lash, flake:- all meaning to move the ball on the ground...its only sport after all!

And finally...

