

# GREEN FLAG

The official magazine of Leinster GAA

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*Leinster GAA  
reaches for  
the skies  
in 2017!*





**Leinster GAA has secured two significant sponsorship deals to help drive the promotion of Gaelic Games in our Province**

# New Sponsorship Backing for Leinster GAA

The month of November saw Leinster GAA unveil two partnerships that secure backing for Post-Primary School Gaelic Games via Top Oil as well as the continuation of the Bord na Móna support of the Leinster GAA series in January.

Top Oil is an Irish company that employs 300 people nationwide and has fuel depots as well as a network of service stations. They have signed up to sponsor our Post-Primary School competitions for the 2016/17 and 2017/18 seasons.

It is the first time in more than 10 years that there is sponsorship for this most vital sector of our Games promotion programme.

There are more than 220 schools affiliated to Leinster GAA and some 1500 schools matches played across secondary schools and colleges in the province in a season that runs from September to May – the flagship being the Senior 'A' football and hurling championships.

At the start of the school year, there was a delivery of new footballs and sliotars made to every school in Leinster.

Bord na Móna meanwhile have decided to extend their sponsorship of the O'Byrne, Walsh and Kehoe Cups for a further three years for senior inter-county football and hurling. It is a continuation of a great relationship which has existed between Leinster GAA and Bord na Móna who are one of the most significant employers in the Leinster region.

These senior competitions have been in existence for more than fifty years and have grown since they have moved to their slot in January and are used by counties as the ideal preparation before the start of the national leagues.



Dublin footballer Eoghan O'Gara and Kilkenny hurler Cillian Buckley with Top Oil mascot "Mr. Ted" during the Launch of the Top Oil sponsorship of the Leinster GAA Post-Primary Schools Senior Championships at St. Vincent's CBS, Dublin.

The 2017 Bord na Móna Leinster GAA Series was launched in December and it is set to be a very interesting start to the New Year with Davy Fitzgerald taking his first steps in charge of the Wexford hurlers while there are new managers in charge of Offaly and Laois hurling too.

In football, the arrival of Andy McEntee in Meath and Seamus 'Banty' McEnaney in Wexford also spice up the battle to provide serious opposition to Jim Gavin's Dublin.

Last January, a victory for Longford in the O'Byrne Cup was the only defeat inflicted on the Dubs in all of 2016.

Leinster GAA Chairman John Horan has welcomed the new sponsorship announcements. He said: "It is great news for us to be able to announce these sponsorship arrangements with Top Oil and Bord na Móna.

"It is a tremendous endorsement of the work that we are doing promoting Gaelic Games in our province that these two fine companies have looked to be associated with us and we are excited about the plans that are in place to promote these competitions.

"Top Oil acknowledge the enormous size of the post-primary school sector and the important work that is done to keep kids involved in sport in that difficult 13-18 age group when there can be such a great drop off in playing numbers.

"Bord na Móna have a great GAA pedigree and our partnership has gone from strength to strength with the Bord na Móna Leinster GAA Series in January well established now as the perfect start to the season."

Aside from these provincial sponsorships, Leinster GAA has also been active on assisting several counties in identifying and securing their own sponsorship opportunities and another busy 2017 on this front is expected.

Traditionally known as the 'Accident Tournaments', the gate money from the O'Byrne, Walsh and Kehoe Cups is used by the Leinster Council to provide funding to hardship cases that have befallen families and individuals connected in some way to the GAA in Leinster.

Bord na Móna Leinster GAA Series 2017 Launch at Croke Park (L-R): David O'Callaghan of Dublin, Pat Fitzgerald of Bord Na Móna, John Horan, Chairman of Leinster Council, and Davy Fitzgerald, Wexford Hurling Manager.





The opportunities for Johnny Doyle to inspire his county on the field of play ended with his retirement from top-level football, but he is now striving to encourage a new generation of Gaelic Games players in his role as Kildare GAA's Community Development and Participation Officer. The former All-Star forward is responsible for the implementation of games development policies and Kildare Local Sports Partnership programmes.

# JOHNNY DOYLE

## STILL STRIVING TO INSPIRE YOUNG PLAYERS IN KILDARE

Since his appointment last April, Johnny Doyle has been focusing mainly on initiatives to sustain and increase the involvement of boys and girls with the GAA in urban areas.

As someone who starred for the Lilywhites at the top level for more than a decade, he understands the efforts required to harness and foster talented young players in order to bring more success to the county.

But it's not all about winning.

"In my playing days, I would have been very driven about getting the most out of myself, but there is another aspect to it," Johnny said. "It's about participating and getting involved in the community and, of course, the GAA is the centre of the community in a lot of places."

"From my point of view, obviously you want as many high-quality players as possible coming through to represent Kildare at county level but, also, the other side of it is to get boys and girls at an early age involved in team sport which, in our case, is the GAA. The

*"It's about participating and getting involved in the community and, of course, the GAA is the centre of the community in a lot of places."*

social aspect is big, they are mixing and feeling part of a group, and there are physical and mental health benefits."

As an integral member of the Kildare GAA scene all his life, Johnny had first-hand knowledge of some of the coaching initiatives in the county before joining the full-time staff himself.

"But I had no idea of the amount of stuff that's going by the guys in coaching roles, it's a massive amount of work," he said. "It incorporates coach education, development squads, primary and secondary schools and the clubs."

He has also noticed enthusiasm and openness in schools that he is liaising with. "Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity to go into all schools yet, but it's a work in progress," he said. "I've never gone into a school, or indeed a club, that said we've everything under control, there is always something you can support them with."

"An area I would have looked at in the secondary schools, particularly the bigger schools, is why so many GAA children come in and don't play football for the school.

"I went into one school and said I would help, so we sat down and went through a few things. There are nearly 900 boys in the school, but were offering football to an average of 75. So they are taking on projects such as a first year blitz and of the 180 first years, around 150 took part, which is a huge amount of football for them. They also decided to enter an under 14 B team and that gives another 25 lads an opportunity to play football. The teachers deserve huge credit for it, they do massive work and there is no way of gauging if it

wasn't done where would we be, but I think we would be in a very poor place."

Clubs, he added, should try to assist the teachers and local schools where possible and coach education is one area which helps to facilitate that.

"We have run Foundation Courses, and there is a big drive to get as many coaches as possible onto the Award 1 Course. If we could get a mentor from every age group with an Award 1 qualification it would be great, but for that to happen is going to require a lot of resources. There is huge interaction from clubs, we advertised a course recently and the demand was so great that we had to put on a second one. That shows a willingness to learn new things."

During the summer, Johnny saw first-hand the success of the Kellogg's Cúl Camps which are held nationally and continue to see increasing number of children taking part. And he is heartened by clubs "thinking outside the box" and organising extra camps.

"There is an awful lot of good work going on in Kildare, but there is always room to improve," he said.

"We've been competitive at Minor and Under 21 and also down the grades with Development Squads, so the next step is to challenge on a national stage.

"Kildare need to be back winning Leinster Senior titles - our record has been poor - but that is the burning desire in every county. That is the one dream we all have - to see players lifting the cup on the third Sunday in September and saying that they came through the system."





# Leinster GAA and the GPA launch Coaching Pathway for former Inter-County Players

LEINSTER  
and the GPA

Inter-county players whose talents have  
inspired generations of future stars are now being  
assisted in becoming top-class coaches through

a partnership between Leinster GAA  
and the GPA

The Coaching Pathway initiative which provides Award 1 Youth/ Adult coaching courses for former players will be rolled out across the province over the next few months. It has already been successfully piloted in Kildare and Meath, where the feedback from the participants was extremely positive, and a course in Louth will have over 20 well-known names taking part.

A formal launch of the project was held at the GAA National Games Development Centre at Abbottstown in October, where former inter-county players including Jason Sherlock, Trevor Giles, Richie Power, John Doyle and Colm Nally voiced their support.

Participants in the courses will be provided with the necessary skills to meet the mandatory standard that is now required by the GAA to be the lead coach with youth or adult teams.

The training provided will also ensure that the former inter-county players have the ability to transfer the knowledge and experience gained from competing at the top level in order to maximise their potential as coaches.

One former inter-county player and selector who has already completed the course is Kildare's Brian Flanagan, who said: "I found the Award 1 Course to be very informative and interesting. As an ex-player, it was an eye-opener for me with regard to gaining insights into best practice around coaching methods and guidelines in today's game. I also found the group dynamic to be very enjoyable. Participants were encouraged to share their own views on coaching which is very important given the level of inter-county experience within the group."

Leinster GAA Chairman, John Horan highlighted the tradition in the GAA of people "giving something back to generations coming after them".

"Inter-county players have an important role to play in inspiring players of the future through their on-field exploits and increasingly we see them do this through their off-field work in coaching and team management," Mr Horan said.

Leinster GAA Operations and Games Manager, Shane Flanagan said he was delighted with the involvement of the GPA and emphasised how many former county players have been influential coaches within the GAA over the years.

Dessie Farrell, CEO of the GPA commented; "For former county players, filling the void that retirement brings can be challenging. This scheme provides an opportunity for those players with a passion for our games to become involved in a formal coaching programme, benefitting the next generation of players."

**Interested players are asked to contact their county games managers or, alternatively, Leinster GAA Learning and Development Manager, Colm Clear ([colm.clear.leinster@gaa.ie](mailto:colm.clear.leinster@gaa.ie)), or GPA Project Manager, Eamon Murphy ([eamon@gaelicplayers.com](mailto:eamon@gaelicplayers.com))**

*Former GAA players (L-R): footballer Colm Nally of Louth, footballer John Doyle of Kildare, footballer Trevor Giles of Meath, hurler Richie Power of Kilkenny and footballer Jason Sherlock of Dublin, in attendance as Leinster GAA and GPA announce the coaching initiative for retired players at the GAA Centre in Abbottstown, Co Dublin*



## Case Study Positive Reaction to New Coaching Initiative in Louth

Former inter-county goalkeeper Colm Nally is spearheading the implementation of the partnership between Leinster GAA and the GPA in Louth to get more ex-players involved in coaching, and at the launch in in Abbottstown, he detailed the progress being made:

"We started on Wednesday, 19th October in Louth and we have 23 ex-county players signed up. I am one of the coaching tutors with Leinster GAA and have already done one of these courses with the ex-players in Meath and seen how successful it was.

After Louth great Stephen Melia sadly passed away, a seven a-side tournament was organised in his memory, and a lot of former players participated. I started to gauge the interest through a *What's App* group that was created at the time of the tournament, so that's how we got the ball rolling in terms of contacting players.

A lot players came back expressing an interest. We agreed on dates and 23 of them then signed up. We are beginning with our first module in our Centre of Excellence in Darver. One of local tutors, Paul Gallagher, is taking the first module. Out of the course, we are hoping to get some mentors for our development squads.

There are eight modules in the Award 1 Youth and Adult course. It's a combination of practical and theory – the introduction is theory-based, on the role of the coach. Then there are modules on team play, tactics, physical fitness, etc, which are all practical.

In Louth, we have an interesting group in that we have players from the '90s and early '00s and even some fellas who have recently finished playing, so there is a nice spread there and different levels of experience in terms of fellas who played under different managers and in different eras. I would be hoping that they will all gel together, exchange stories, and maybe get back involved with teams.

There seems to be an appetite among former county players to do this together. There's a great GAA community in Louth, and some great young players, and we are trying to create the best environment for them to blossom. If that includes using the experience of ex-players, we're delighted to do that, and I'd like to thank the GPA and Leinster GAA for their support."





Dreams continue to come true for thousands of Under 8 players each summer thanks to Leinster GAA

## Leinster GAA Under-8 Activity Day at Croke Park a Resounding Success

This year alone, boys and girls from almost 300 clubs across the province were afforded an opportunity to play at Croke Park during three 'Activity Days' held in July and August. Highlights of the day for the stars of the future included:

- **Togging out in a Cusack Stand dressing room**
- **Running onto the hallowed pitch through the tunnel**
- **Displaying their Gaelic football or hurling skills to a captivated audience at one of the most famous stadiums in the world**
- **Climbing the steps of the Hogan Stand to lift the Cup**

And with lots of photo opportunities for parents and club officers to avail of, the special memories will be preserved forever.

Held each summer for the past eight years, the 'Activity Days' have provided an opportunity for approximately 25,000 children to emulate their heroes at GAA HQ. With the event continuing to grow in popularity, clubs are already enquiring about the possibility of securing a slot in 2017.

The emphasis, of course, is on enjoyment. Six games take place simultaneously on the pitch each hour from 9am to 4pm, during which many new friendships are forged. Attack-minded Gaelic football and skillful ground hurling contribute to the excitement and everyone goes home a winner.

It's a compliment to all the players, mentors, referees, stewards and organisers that the reaction to the initiative is so positive.

Oh, and just in case any parent was wondering, no-one has ever received a black card!

The 2017 dates for the Activity Days in Croke Park will be April 11th and 12th.

Here's just some of the reaction to the experience on social media:

**Grattan Gaels (LD)**

*"What a team! What a day! Thanks to Leinster GAA and Longford GAA for a great U-8s day out!"*

**Clara (OY)**

*"Super day had by Clara GAA Club under 8 hurlers in Croke Park today."*

**St Anne's (WX)**

*"Thanks for the great day at Croke Park from St Anne's under 8s."*

**Confey (KE)**

*"Super excitement for Confey GAA u-8 hurlers at Croke Park Leinster GAA Go Games today."*

**Sean O'Mahony's (LH)**

*"Our under 8 boys had a great day in Croke Park today."*

**Asca (CW)**

*"Go Games in Croke Park in full swing. Big thank you to Leinster GAA and Carlow GAA."*







## LONGFORD

As with all counties, Longford GAA would always have Transition Year students on work placement. This year two of our post-primary schools decided to do their transition year work placement one day a week for ten weeks. We in Longford GAA took this opportunity to take on ten Transition Year students and run Primary School 2nd, 3rd and 4th class blitzes from the end of September to the middle of December. The blitzes ran every Friday in club pitches close to the participating schools so as to save on travel. Each blitz day consists of 2/3 blitzes which allows us to accommodate between 180 & 270 kids.

We take a maximum of 90 kids per blitz so that's ten 9-a-side teams. Each Transition Year student is a Manager of one team and then one of those Managers acts as the referee of the game. Sometimes all 90 kids are from one

school but mostly the blitz is made up of two or three schools. We divide up all the kids to make the ten teams therefore even our smaller schools are able to take part.

This program has many benefits; namely kids from 2nd, 3rd and 4th classes getting to play organised football where, normally, the school system does not facilitate this. It also allows us to give a very practical placement to ten Transition Year students, allowing them to take ownership of setting up the pitches, managing the teams and referee the games.

We are delighted with the success of this initiative and the cooperation we get from the Primary Schools and Transition Year students and we look forward to continuing this in the future.

*"I really enjoy my placement because I get to help kids enjoy playing Gaelic Football and it's really nice seeing kids improve because of something I've done or said and seeing the enjoyment they have is great."*

**Eoin Gray, T.Y. Student, St. Mels College**

*"Well done Longford GAA - this is a fantastic opportunity for our school children to participate in the sport. You've awoken a love of the game in the children and many of them have taken up gaelic since the programme began. The TY's are fantastic and work so well with the children".*

**Mary Corkery & Orlaith Ní Ghealagáin, Gaelscoil Longfoirt**



## WESTMEATH



On the week of October 24th over 1,500 children took part in thirteen 3rd/4th class football blitzes coordinated by Westmeath Coaching and Games Development in conjunction with Cumann na mBunscol Iarmhí. For each of the thirteen blitzes, approximately 120 children took part involving four to five schools. Schools were mixed on the day with a number from each school forming individual 9-a-side teams.

The games were a whole class activity – not just for those who have a keen interest in sport. Getting all children to participate and enjoy sport is hugely important and can be habit forming as they get older. Typically there were three blitzes running at each venue with all playing three games – the venues chosen so as to have minimal travel for all schools participating.

The blitzes were a follow-on from seven weeks of coaching which has been running in almost all schools in the county since September. The games gave all children an ideal opportunity to develop their skills in a game setting as well as also giving children the opportunity to meet and get to know children from neighbouring schools. Clubs were also made aware of the games and in some cases club mentors were in a position to attend.

A feature of each blitz was that the games were refereed by Transition Year students. This was a natural extension of a GAA Coaching Module the students are taking with Games Development Administrators James Heffernan and Eddie Bouabbse as part of their overall TY Programme.

While school-based activities give the students a good introduction to coaching and dealing with children, getting the opportunity for hands-on experience was very beneficial for the TYs as well as ensuring that the various blitzes could go ahead.

The standard from the referees was excellent – James McGrath and Barry Kelly watch out!

In December, Indoor Hurling Blitzes were offered in a similar format with additional blitz days coming in 2017. With Cumann na mBunscol games generally facilitating 5th and 6th classes, these localised blitzes serve to compliment the overall games programme offered within the county.



Teacher Aidan Reynolds from Coosan NS with his class at one of the Primary School 3rd/4th class Blitzes which took place in Athlone at the end of October.



Ballinagore NS, with teacher Áine Farrell, taking part in a 3rd/4th Class blitz in Kilbeggan during October.



T.Y. Students Shauna Harte, Eleanor O'Connor, Thomas Finnegan and Frank Hanevy who refereed the 3rd/4th class blitz games in Kilbeggan with Blitz Coordinators Alan McCormack and Enda Dowd.



# WEXFORD

## Club Cluster & Coaching Support

During 2016 over 500 coaches took part in more than 40 workshops throughout the county.

The program will continue in 2017 with a number of changes to reflect needs of coaches along with highlighting clubs who engage most in ensuring best practice is encouraged.

Each club within the groups will be ranked on their overall games development planning. The winners will then progress to a regional and overall county award.

Prizes will include a number of special program and equipment packs to assist in all aspects of coaching & games development.

Workshops will include: Foundation Award Locally - Each Club is to have a minimum of 3 participants to a maximum of 10. If your club has more the coaching office will be able to facilitate a club course.

The foundation course will take place over two days and participants must also take part in a code of best practice workshop. GAA 15 workshop - The GAA 15 workshop gives a coach at youth & adult level

practical exercises and the knowledge how to warm up players.

The workshop will also cover activities at child level for appropriate warm ups. Games Based Coaching - This workshop will work with child/youth players and showcasing how games can be introduced to develop specific skills of the game.

Coaches will leave with new ideas and new techniques on how to coach a skill through a games based model.

FUNDamentals: This workshops purpose is to show activities to work on ABC's & the RJT's of Gaelic Games.

The aim is to show coaches at child level appropriate activates and the ideal structure of a nursery / child coaching session.

**GDA Support:** The GDA is on hand to assist the club in all areas of games development. If your club has a proposal for a workshop or an idea your GDA will be on hand for advice and support.

## Coach Education Plan Launch

Coach education/training and subsequent continuing coach development is considered to be essential to both sustaining and improving the quality of coaching.

Coach development is assumed as an all-encompassing term that refers to the process leading towards enhanced expertise.

This learning occurs from accessing a range of opportunities (informal to formal). In an attempt to support this development, the GAA coach education systems offers programmes for child

youth and adult coaches across three levels.

Our programme is designed to support all coaches working at child youth and adult level through specifically planned courses and workshops' incorporating all that is good in terms coaching best practice. We have an array of brilliant tutors to take some great workshops in Football & Hurling.

Details of the program can be downloaded from: Wexford GAA Coach Education Plan 2016 & 2017

# Leinster GAA initiative to provide more games for U-13 & U-15 Players



Extra games will be provided for young players early next year thanks to a new initiative by Leinster GAA.

A large number of clubs have already signed up to participate in Cross-County U-13 and U-15 Leagues in both hurling and football.

The leagues will present an opportunity for clubs from adjoining counties to compete against each other for the first time.

Games will start at the end of January 2017 and run throughout February and March – a period when most counties do not fix matches for these age groups.

Former GAA President, Liam O'Neill chaired a Leinster GAA focus group which identified the potential for more GAA activity for U-13 and U-15 in the first few months of the year.

Clubs who enter the leagues will be grouped and graded under the guidance of relevant personnel within each county, with geography, club size and standard all taken into account.

A fixtures plan has been drawn up which proposes to run six rounds in football between the 28th January and 25th March, and four rounds in hurling between 18th February and 26th March.

Leinster GAA Games Managers Alan Mulhall and James Devane have been co-ordinating with clubs and are delighted with the positive response shown to date.







# More than 40 recipients of GAA student bursary grants

Leinster GAA Chairman, John Horan, presented more than 40 third level students with a GAA bursary grant at a special presentation ceremony in Áras Laighean in Portlaoise on Wednesday night.

Young people from across all 12 of our counties were represented.

It brings to almost 800 the number of students who have received a bursary towards their third level studies through Leinster GAA.

The scheme is supported by the GAA at national level who in the last 10 years have provided more than €2m in funding.

Leinster GAA Chairman John Horan said: "The GAA is about people. In our clubs and counties we invest in people through coaching and games. We do so much more than that in a holistic way off the field in the benefits that accrue from being involved in sport and with a club and this scheme is another part of that.

"These grants represent an investment in talented young people who give us confidence in our future knowing that men and women of this calibre are committed to our games.

"I want to congratulate all of those who were selected and wish them well with their studies."

**For further information, contact:**  
**Colm Clear, Learning and Development Manager**  
**at Leinster GAA – 057 8682000**

## Student Bursary Grants 2016/17

**ATHLONE IT:** A Coffey (Westmeath), D O'Connell (Westmeath)

**CARLOW IT:** C Branagan (Dublin), E Buggie (Laois), S Casey (Wexford), C O'Toole (Carlow), M Ryan (Dublin), R Treacy (Laois)

**DCU:** G Bailey (Wexford), A Cox (Westmeath), A Deering (Laois), T French (Wexford), C Mangan (Offaly), S Morrissey (Kilkenny), C Ó Dalaigh (Dublin), C O'Flaherty (Dublin), R O'Sullivan (Dublin), B Ryan (Kilkenny)

**DIT:** D Gordon (Meath), M Murphy (Dublin), E O'Hehir (Kildare)

**DUNDALK IT:** C Rowe (Dublin)

**MARINO:** C Carthy (Louth)

**MAYNOOTH UNI:** F Bass (Kildare)

**ST PAT'S:** G Kelly (Kilkenny), D Lyons (Westmeath)

**IT TALLAGHT:** D Gogan (Dublin)

**TRINITY:** L Breen (Dublin), A Haberlin (Laois), C Heaney (Dublin), B Mallon (Meath), PJ McGrane (Meath), A Reynolds (Longford)

**UCD:** S Carroll (Wexford), D Connolly (Laois), S Cullen (Wicklow), I Mitchell (Dublin), F Mac an tSaoi (Meath), C O'Shea (Dublin), E O'Byrne (Wexford)



Among the students in receipt of bursary awards for the current academic year were groups from DCU - St. Pat's (above) and UCD (left).

The official magazine of Leinster GAA

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There are many ways to generate power from nature. We're inspired by all of them.



At Bord na Móna we're powering 150,000 homes with renewable energy.

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**BORD NA MÓNA**  
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## M. Donnelly "GAA Football for All" Inter-provincial Tournament Croke Park 2016



The "Games for All Football" organising committee photographed with John Horan, Cathaoirleach, Comhairle Laighean. Tony Watene, Brian Carberry, Michael Geoghagan, PRO Ulster, Pat Lynagh, John Horan, Denis O'Boyle, Gerry McNamara and Tim Maher.

The Irish Special Schools Sports Council (ISSSC) is a voluntary organisation which provides sporting and cultural activities in schools, designated by the Department of Education and Science for pupils with mild general learning disabilities.

Following a meeting of "Leinster Games for All" in 2015 the idea of a football tournament in Croke Park was mooted. This was acted upon at National level and through much collaboration with the Irish Special Schools Sports Council (ISSSC) and the GAA a fixture plan was implemented.

Prior to this, in 2014, the link with the GAA was made through Jim Bolger (Chairman, Leinster Coaching and Games) with Paul Kelly (St Francis School, Portlaoise), organising a coaching / blitz day and again in 2015 for all ISSSC schools, in Portlaoise with an excellent return.

On Monday September 26th 2016, students from the ISSSC competed in Croke Park for the first time.

In preparation for the inaugural inter-provincial tournament, the GAA Inclusion officer – Tony Watene and his committee were instrumental in linking ISSSC schools with coaching officers to select and prepare teams for the tournament, providing lead-in coaching/selection sessions.

On the day there were 110 players, boys and girls from Connacht, Dublin, Munster, North Leinster and South Leinster representing their schools.

The games were really competitive and exciting with some very skilful players on view. It was very encouraging to see the camaraderie and team play of players that had only been together over a session or two. The excellent behaviour and co-operation and excitement from the players was palpable and a fond memory for all of us involved. Our immediate instinct would be to follow those players pathway and encourage their continued participation in the GAA.

Mr Richard Doran (Chairman, ISSSC) reports that the feedback from all the schools has been great with plans to improve next year by getting more GAA coaching in all ISSSC schools to improve skills and game awareness.

The teachers inform us that most students would never have been exposed to playing Gaelic football let alone play in Croke Park, so as an organisation the ISSSC are delighted to be involved and included as part of the GAA family.

We are grateful to Mr John Horan (chairman, Comhairle Laighean) for his presence and support on the day.

The highlight of the day was the presentation of the cups to the Boys and Girls winning captains by An tUachtarán, Aogán Ó Fearghail. An tUachtarán welcomed everyone to Croke Park and spoke at length to the players, teachers, family members, organisers and the ever-present, obliging stewards. He stayed for a period of time and was in great demand for individual and group/team photographs. He later tweeted about the day, which was seen, shared and liked by many of his followers including both Dublin GAA and the GAA twitter accounts.

On the back of this very successful fixture we would be very hopeful that the Monday after the All-Ireland Ladies Football Final will be pencilled in as our day in Croke Park.

Once again even as this is about to go to print the incoming feedback is phenomenal.

### FOOTNOTE

We tried to be neutral throughout this report, but we have to rise above that and congratulate the Province of Leinster for providing the outright Boys and Girls winners and runners up from the province, Dublin and South Leinster.

Planning for 2017 is already in progress, as a result of our positive links with the ISSSC schools.

## Leinster Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial Champions 2016



Dublin-based Kerry-native Timmy Maher is the driving force responsible for the existence of a 'wheelchair hurling' game in Ireland.

It is designed to make our national sport accessible to disabled as well as able bodied players and is growing in popularity.

All four provinces have teams that compete against each other at regular intervals during the year and with Leinster the 2016 championship winners.

Pictured are the Leinster panel, together with coaches, mentors and organisers after that win in IT Blanchardstown, last October.

**GREENFLAG**







For the early mornings, the late nights, the miles travelled, the hard yards and heroics. Thank you for playing your part...



## Leinster GAA Staff Members receive Leadership & Management Certificates

Leinster GAA staff members who completed the Leadership and Management (Gaelic Games) course at I.T. Carlow received their certificates at a ceremony at the end of October.

Eleven employees of Leinster GAA undertook the course which aims to support the Association's managers, coaches and officers to learn new ways of leading in a sporting context.

They were complimented for their commitment to the course by David Denieffe on behalf of IT Carlow, while Leinster GAA were represented by Chairman, John Horan; Operations Manager, Shane Flanagan; and Learning & Development Manager, Colm Clear.

Run in the off-season, the course comprises of six contact days spread over a three month period, with continuous assessment coursework throughout. It is a formal qualification at Level 7 on the QQI framework and guest speakers include leaders from within and outside GAA.

The certificate recipients from Leinster GAA were Donal Brennan, Noel Delaney, Tadhg Fennin, Paul Garrigan, James Heffernan, James Kelly, Hugh Kenny, Seamus Kenny, Liam O'Reilly, Jamie Queeney and Brian Ryan.

Here is a link to the course promoted by I.T. Carlow:

<https://www.itcarlow.ie/study/lifelonglearning/part-time-courses-dublin/cert-leadership-mgt.htm>



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# Pearse Medal

## Player of the Year Awards for Connolly and Farrell



Dublin footballer Diarmuid Connolly and Jonjo Farrell are the inaugural winners of the Pearse Medal for 2016.

The duo were selected as the outstanding performers in the 2016 Leinster GAA senior hurling and football championships.

Leinster Chairman John Horan presented Jonjo and Diarmuid with a specially commissioned Pádraig Pearse medal in recognition of their achievement which is part of the province's activity to mark the centenary of the Rising - and also symbolises the link between Comhairle Laighean and Pearse.

Jonjo Farrell was a scoring revelation for Kilkenny in the Leinster hurling championship. The Thomastown forward scored 2-9 from play over the course of their victories over Dublin and Galway as the Cats secured a third straight Bob O'Keefe cup.

Diarmuid Connolly had another stellar season for the Dublin footballers. The St Vincent's all-star was man of the match for the Dubs in their wins over Laois and Meath and helped them overcome Westmeath in the Leinster final for what was a record equalling sixth Delaney Cup in a row.

John Horan said: "Pádraig Pearse was passionate about incorporating Gaelic Games into the curriculum that was taught in his school in St Endas.

"He was also Vice President of the Leinster Council Colleges' Committee. We wanted to honour our proud link to Pearse and this player of the year award does that and both Jonjo and Diarmuid are two very worthy inaugural winners after their stunning exploits of last summer."

The winners were chosen from a short list of top performers in Leinster GAA last summer and deliberations were carried out by a panel comprised of national media and Leinster GAA officials.