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GAA ANNOUNCES NEW DIRECTOR GENERAL

The GAA is pleased to confirm that Central Council has today approved the appointment of Tom Ryan as its new Director General.

The 48 year-old father of three joined the GAA from Brown Thomas in 2007 and has served the Association as Director of Finance for the past 11 years. In that position he has played a central role in overseeing the prudent management of the GAA's finances and has been instrumental in the many of the Association's major infrastructural projects and helping to steer the Association through the economic downturn.

A Carlow native, Tom has had a lengthy involvement with the GAA in his native county and is an active member and current Treasurer of Faughs GAA Club in Templeogue in Dublin.

He becomes the 19th Secretary General/ Director General since the foundation of the organisation and only the fifth since 1929 and is the first Carlow man to fill the role. He will commence in the role at the start of April and his term will span the next seven years. He replaces Páraic Duffy who served in the role for a decade.



Tom Ryan will assume the role of GAA Director General in April.

GAA President John Horan said: "I am pleased to announce that Tom Ryan has been appointed as the new Ard Stiúrthóir of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

"He has served the GAA well in his previous position and has the requisite vision to lead the Association in the years ahead.

"He understands the GAA at every level and is highly active at club level providing him with important insights into the challenges we face as an organisation.

"I look forward to working with him and wish him well in the role."

The new Director General added: "I am humbled and excited to be assuming this position and I am greatly looking forward to serving the Association and its members to the very best of my ability in the years ahead."

DRAWING ON SUCCESS: THE GAA'S NCD HITS THE JACKPOT AGAIN

Now in its fifth year, the GAA's National Club Draw has been hailed as yet another outstanding success for Clubs all over the country - with vital funds raised for them and fantastic prizes awarded to their supporters.

The National Club Draw 2018 took place in Croke Park on the 8th of March and was independently observed by Brian Cormack, Audit, Assurance Director, Mazars.

Clubs sold over 150,000 tickets at €10 each raising €1,532,930 for Clubs across the country. John Horan, an tUachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael presided over the Draw in its fifth year, pulling 20 Winners from the Draw Drum. An tUachtarán encouraged Clubs to take part in the Draw stating that: "It is a great way to help Clubs to gather funds, to promote the Club and develop games within the Club."

The 20 Prize Winners were as follows:

1. A Renault Dynamique - Brendan Bannon of Cashel GAA Club, Longford.
2. Travel Voucher worth €2,000 - Patrick Duggan of Clooney Quin GAA, Clare.
3. All Ireland Hurling & Football Final Premium Package 2018 - Tony McArdle of St. Mochtas GAA, Louth.
4. All Ireland Hurling & Football Final Premium Package 2018 - Tom Power of Sliabh gCua St. Marys GAA in Waterford.
5. All Ireland Hurling & Football Final Premium Package 2018 - Brian Cahill of Belmont GAA, Offaly.
6. Shopping Voucher €1000 at a retailer of your choice - Carmel Somers of Milltown GAA, Westmeath.
7. Shopping Voucher €1000 at a retailer of your choice - Vivian Diviney of Beagh GAA, Galway.
8. Blue Book Voucher €750 - Mary McBrearty of Robert Emmets GAA, Donegal.
9. Blue Book Voucher €500 - Pat Collins of Clarenbridge GAA, Galway.
10. All Ireland Hurling Final package - Sean Murphy of Scotstown GAA, Monaghan.
11. All Ireland Football Final package - Mick Walsh of Butlerstown GAA, Waterford.
12. €500 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - Aoife Ashmore of Blackhill GAA, Monaghan.
13. €500 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - Allison Ryan of St. Brigids GAA, Dublin.
14. All Ireland Hurling Final package - G Redmond of Sean O Mahonys, Louth.
15. All Ireland Football Final package - Billy Feeney, Ballyduff Upper GAA, Waterford.
16. €500 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - John McAllister of Ballinascreen St. Colms, Derry.
17. €500 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - Bernie Moore of Currin GAA, Monaghan.
18. €250 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - Martin Hoey of Ballyfore GAA, Offaly.
19. €250 Supervalu/Centra Voucher - Linda Conlon of Blackhill GAA, Monaghan.
20. Shopping Voucher €250 at a retailer of your choice - John Fleming of St. Brigids GAA, Dublin.



Through the Draw, clubs have the opportunity to sell up to 2,000 tickets, giving each club the opportunity to raise €20,000. All prizes are provided by Central Council, making the Draw completely risk-free. John McMahan, Chairman of Naas GAA, the highest selling Club in Leinster in 2018, stated that Clubs should capitalise on this, "It's no exposure whatsoever to the Club. Every ticket sold, every euro made, stays within the Club. The Club then decides how best to utilise the money that is generated".

CLUB SPECIFIC DRAW

€5,000 Prize Winners:

St. Rynaghs Hurling, Offaly
 Kiltegan, Wicklow
 Naomh Mhuire Lower Rosses, Donegal

€1,000 Prize Winners:

Ulster

Antrim- St. Teresas,
 Armagh- Carrickcruppin St. Patricks,
 Cavan- Mullahoran,
 Derry- Glenullin John Mitchells,
 Donegal- Carndonagh,
 Down- Castlewellan ,
 Fermanagh- Derrygonnelly Harps,
 Monaghan- Emyvale,
 Tyrone- Pomeroy Plunketts

Munster

Clare- Whitegate,
 Cork-Kilbrin,
 Kerry- Gneeveguilla,
 Limerick- Bruree,
 Tipperary- Arravale Rovers,
 Waterford- Roanmore

Leinster

Carlow- St. Andrews,
 Dublin- Bean Eadair,
 Kildare- Straffan,
 Kilkenny-Tullagher Rosbercon,
 Longford- Fr. Manning Gaels,
 Louth- Naomh Mairtin,
 Meath-Skryne,
 Laois- Camross,
 Offaly- Ballycumber,
 Westmeath- Clonkill,
 Wexford- Monageer Boolavogue,
 Wicklow- Annacurra

Connacht

Galway-Renvyle,
 Leitrim- Mohill,
 Mayo-Tooreen,
 Roscommon- Four Roads,
 Sligo- Owenmore Gaels

The highest selling Club in each province received a prize of €1,000.

Ulster- **Naomh Mhuire Convoy CLG**, Donegal and **Sean MacCumhailis**, Donegal.

Each Club sold the maximum of 2,000 tickets raising €20,000 for their Club and receiving an additional €1,000 as highest sellers.

Leinster- **Naas GAA**, Kildare sold 1607 tickets.
 Munster- **Moneygall GAA**, Tipperary sold 1547 tickets.
 Connacht- **Dromahair GAA**, Leitrim sold 1201 tickets.



THE CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



The GAA Club Leadership Development Programme is delivered by the National Officer Development Committee (NODC) and its team of Associates. It is designed to give the principal officers in GAA Clubs an opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles in a confident and competent manner. The Programme is open to all current Club Officers or anyone interested in taking up a role of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer or PRO. For more information or contact your County Development Officer.

[Click here](#) to watch a video about The Club Leadership Development programme.

BE THE BEST YOU CAN BE! IMPORTANT PLAYER WELFARE INFORMATION FOR ALL CLUBS

The first ever GAA Player Conference took place in Croke Park on Saturday 17th February 2018.

To view videos and slides from the expert line up with their advice for club players click on the following link:

<http://learning.gaa.ie/playerconference2018>

The new GAA Player Welfare Booklet provided on the day is also available at the following link:

<http://learning.gaa.ie/sites/default/files/GAA%20Player%20Welfare%20Booklet%20February%202018.pdf>

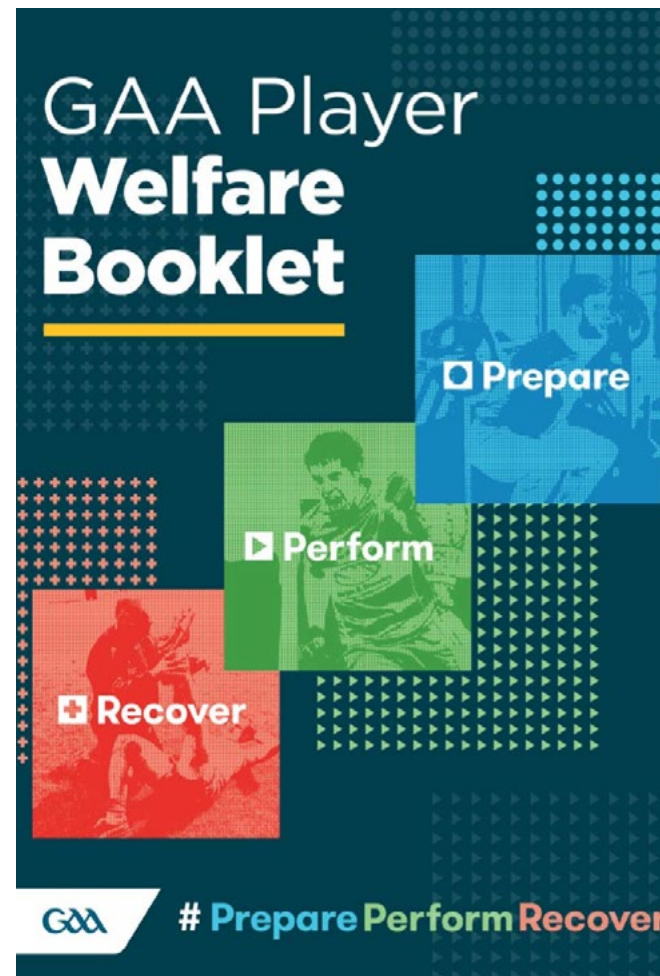
The GAA Learning App is available to download via the App Store and Google Play (ad attached):

<http://ios.me/app/1267856959/gaa-learning>

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.edtap.c_gaa_learning

Club secretaries are encouraged to share these resources with your club members via e-mail, WhatsApp, social media etc: for reference throughout the season.

Further resources are available on <http://learning.gaa.ie/player>



CHILD SAFEGUARDING IN THE GAA – AN IMPORANT Q&A

This month's Club Newsletter Child Safeguarding Q & A looks at a number of recent queries received by the National Children's Office relating to vetting and child safeguarding training requirements.

Vetting and Child Safeguarding Training – what are the regulations in the GAA?

Legislation and GAA rules require that any person working in a 'relevant role' or as we term it 'a role of responsibility' with children or vulnerable persons must be vetted. This now applies on an All-Ireland basis. Vetting carried out by one of the Gaelic Games Associations e.g. GAA will also be recognised by LGFA and By Camogie and vice versa.

These requirements apply to our coaches and mentors of underage teams, referees of underage games, bus drivers employed to drive children or physios employed by the

club and any other person deemed by the club to have a direct role of responsibility with children at Club level.

Attendance at Child Safeguarding training also applies to our underage coaches and mentors as does the requirement that they have a minimum coach education recognition e.g. Foundation level as a minimum.

Please remember that as a result of a long standing agreement between the Gaelic Games Associations, any person vetted by the GAA shall have their vetting outcome recognised by LGFA and Camogie and do not have to undertake additional vetting by either of these Associations. Similarly, each of these Associations recognise each other's child safeguarding training as well.



Has there been an increase in vetting applications to the GAA lately?

Yes there has been an increase in the usual number of vetting applications in the last few months. It appears that this increase can be attributed to applications from people who had not been vetted to date, the annual influx of new coaches who require to be vetted, plus Féile related applications which usually commence at this time of the year. Some of the recent applications are also undoubtedly due to an awareness of legislation that compels all person working (in a role of responsibility) with children to be vetted prior to working with children while other applications are in response to GAA child safeguarding procedures that have been in place for a number of years.

Can we vet other people, apart from coaches, if deemed necessary?

If a person is deemed by the club to have a direct role of responsibility with children at Club they shall be vetted. Please use common sense when making such decisions on additional vetting and avoid introducing a blanket introduction of vetting, regardless of role. Similarly with AccessNI vetting, a specific role when working with children must be specified.

Does everybody who is in proximity of children have to be vetted?

In so far as there is a general acceptance in society, notwithstanding our legal

obligations, that vetting is vital as it contributes to the overall recruitment process of an adult who wishes to work with children unnecessary vetting can have a detrimental and negative impact on our services and can undervalue the benefits of vetting. For some reason a small number of clubs are asking the following to be vetted which is NOT in keeping with our vetting requirements and minimises the central role that vetting plays in recruiting people.

We highlight her but a few examples that do a disservice to the merits of vetting in the GAA, LGFA or Camogie.

- Parents on the sideline who turn up to watch their children play - do NOT require vetting
- Transition Year students putting out cones or goals at a nursery or showing how to solo or catch a ball in a non-coaching role - do NOT require vetting
- A parent who has been asked by a referee to stand in and do umpiring - does NOT require vetting
- Obliging parents who provide tea and sandwiches to visiting teams - do NOT require vetting.

What if your Club has a Go Games referee or a referee under 16 yrs. of age who can't be vetted?

Legislation does not permit us to vet people under 16 yrs. of age. In some instances young referrers under 16 yrs. of age, having



successfully qualified as referees or young whistlers, are anxious to commence their role with games organised for appropriate age groups. Rather than force a referee to wait a year or longer to commence their role Clubs should appoint an adult, who has been vetted, to act in a supervisory capacity and to accompany and monitor the young referee at their games. Once they reach their 16th birthday they can then be vetted, with parental permission.

Where can a club get a list of personnel in their club who are vetted?

Given the legal requirements to ensure that relevant personnel in Clubs are vetted we are obliged to assist Clubs in identifying such vetted personnel in their Club only. This allows a Club to know who is and who is not vetted. If a Club requires a list of vetted personnel in their Club they can seek this list from their County Secretary who was issued with a Club by Club list earlier this year while any personnel vetted in the meantime will have been made known to the Club Secretary as they continue to automatically receive a copy of the vetting acceptance letter for each person vetted in their club.

Is there also an increase in those attending Child Safeguarding Training?

As Child safeguarding Training is also mandatory in law for those working with children, similar increases in demand and attendances have been experienced by the Gaelic Games Associations who have agreed three levels of child safeguarding training that have been designed to be relevant to specific roles. Safeguarding 1 is for coaches etc., Safeguarding 2 is for Club Children's Officers and Safeguarding 3 is for Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs).

With over 100 Tutors now qualified to deliver this safeguarding training Club Children's Officers may contact a Tutor directly or via their County Children's Officer and seek a date suitable for delivering the safeguarding training in their Club.

Contact details for Child Safeguarding Tutors may be accessed at <http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/child-welfare-trainers>

Clubs should be aware that if they host or organise a Foundation Level coaching workshop that the participants on the course must complete the Child Safeguarding Training as part of the workshop, if they wish to receive their Foundation certificate, unless of course they have previously attended Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Training and received their certificate of attendance.

Who else requires Child Safeguarding Training?

Children's Officers should attend the Gaelic Games Children's Officers Safeguarding 2 workshop and Designated Liaison Persons should attend the agreed Gaelic Games Safeguarding 3 training for DLPs. A new safeguarding training programme for Cúl Camp and Club Camp assistants which was launched last year may also be suitable for some club personnel working at these events. All information available from your County Children's Officer.

Will attendance at safeguarding training workshops outside of the GAA be recognised instead of our own internal safeguarding training?

A number of years ago the GAA (also

representing Handball and Rounders) plus LGFA and Camogie agreed that we would join forces and design a series of joint child safeguarding training programmes suitable to the child safeguarding roles we have in our Associations e.g. safeguarding for coaches, for Children's Officers and for DLPs. Over a period of time we agreed the contents of three such courses in workshop format that have been endorsed by Sport Ireland and they all reference our joint codes our policies and our practices.

When an individual attends an external or non-Gaelic Games Safeguarding workshop or completes an on-line these workshops, by their very nature, do not reference any Gaelic Games Associations' policies or procedures. Many if not most of these external workshop are specific to their own Association e.g. a different sports association, a youth group or a church group. It is for this reason that we do not accept attendance at such workshops as fulfilling their obligations of attendance at safeguarding training.

The only exception to this practice is that on a temporary basis we accept attendance at a Sport Ireland workshops which are all non-association referenced workshops, the temporary nature is acceptable provided the participant agrees to attend the Gaelic Games equivalent within an agreed period of time.

Risk Assessment and Child Safeguarding Statement:

Please be reminded that the legal requirement for Clubs to carry out a Risk Assessment of harm to children in the Club plus the need to put the Child Safeguarding Statement

on display should have been completed by Sunday 11 March 2018. Check out <http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/children-first> for this information. If your Risk Assessment at Club level shows that some personnel must still be vetted or have yet to complete child safeguarding training then record this is the risk assessment document.

New booklet issued on 'Maintaining appropriate levels of behaviour in our work with children and young people'

We have just issued a new booklet that will be most useful to clubs in promoting and maintaining appropriate behaviour by coaches, players, parents etc. Titled 'Maintaining appropriate levels of behaviour in our work with children and young people' this booklet replaces the old Code of Behaviour and shall be distributed to those who attend our Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop (Safeguarding 1) and may also be distributed to coaches and others at Club level indicating the levels of behaviour that we expect of them.

The booklet may be downloaded on line at <http://www.gaa.ie/mm/Document/TheGAA/ChildProtectionandWelfare/15/93/53/MaintainingAppropriateLevelsofBehaviourA5Neutral.pdf>

THE GAA – WORKING FOR YOU

Your support of our Games helps the GAA support a range of projects and initiatives to grow and develop Gaelic games all over Ireland.

THANKS TO YOU, IN 2017 THE GAA ...



300+

full and part-time coaches
to work with children in
clubs and schools

€15m

distributed to county boards
and other units



€10m

invested in games development
including €6m on coaching



€2.8m

was invested in county
grounds and training centres



61



€1m

spent supporting
GAA clubs overseas



€2.1m

was allocated specifically to help
clubs with redevelopment
work on club facilities



MÍLE
BUÍOCHAS



€6m

allocated to Player Welfare



CATHAL GREGG LOOKING FORWARD TO NEW ROLE WITH CONNACHT GAA

These are interesting times in the west so Cathal Gregg is delighted to be commencing work as Connacht GAA Provincial Games Development Manager in a fortnight.

Gregg succeeds the popular John Tobin, who is retiring from the role, and the Roscommon footballer is looking forward to taking up the new position.

Having spent five years as Head Strength and Conditioning Officer in Connacht, Gregg laughs when it is suggested that there won't be too many quiet days in his schedule.

"Definitely not, because you have a huge variance of topics, you have your coach education, your Cul Camps which is a huge project for clubs for the summer, you have your academy squads, your schools initiatives, then you'd have all your other initiatives in your clubs like your Go Games and your nursery programmes," the Western Gaels clubman says.

"Then in the Youth Programme you have Feile and your academy squads. There is any amount of initiatives so it is never going to be quiet. It is all about working with the counties individually to get their games programme in place so they have equal opportunities for all players of all ages and all abilities."

"We will be doing a lot of work with a couple of new schools initiatives that are coming out, the Five Stars Centre for the primary schools and then in the secondary schools you have your Super Games Centre and your Future Leader Programmes. Cathal Gregg"

It is a broad remit, but Gregg is hopeful about building on the solid foundations in Mayo, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, and Leitrim.

"I suppose it is pretty broad, but there are a few areas we would like to get to work in," Gregg acknowledges.

"We have a new club mentoring programme which John Tobin initiated at the end of last year which helps getting into clubs and helping them with their coaching structures through coach education. That is something we will be doing right from the get go.

Studies will be undertaken to assess the best way forward in the future. "We will be starting off doing a lot of work with a couple of new schools initiatives that are coming out, the Five Stars Centre for the primary schools and then in the secondary schools you have your Super Games Centre and your Future Leader Programmes which are all new.



Cathal Gregg has made a welcome return to inter-county action with Roscommon in 2018.

“We will be looking to get them installed in the next few years and we will also be looking at the talent academy squads side of things and reviewing where we are at to see are we going down the elitist road too much? Do we need to change that, we will be looking at where exactly we are at on that side of things.”

Cregg is excited about the potential which exists in new developments such as the Future Leaders Programme for Transition Year students.

“The Future Leaders Programme is a brilliant initiative, especially at that age group 15, 16, 17 to give them all an understanding of the values of the GAA and the way it works,” Cregg admits.

“To actually upskill them then in different areas. Going forward in years to come I think that Programme will reap huge dividends for clubs and counties around the country.”

“All counties can learn from each other and implement different programmes.

Cathal Gregg”

Cregg is adamant that the sharing of knowledge between the western counties can lead to further improvements. “I don’t know about the other provinces, but here in Connacht all five counties work really well together, we encourage the sharing of knowledge across hurling and football and all of the initiatives,” Cregg states.

“All counties can learn from each other and implement different programmes. It is not one

size fits all because some counties are bigger than others and some have more rural or urban areas and so on.

“Even within a project like the Future Leaders or Super Games Centre it isn’t going to be implemented exactly the same in every situation. You can always learn from people and we always encourage that.”

During the coming weeks and months Cregg will keep in close contact with the respective Games Managers in each county.

“We would be in constant contact every week through phone and email. I would envisage that we would be meeting up once every month, obviously there could be meetings in between that depending on the time of year and the different initiatives that are taking place.

“It is never a regular job, it isn’t a nine to five, it depends on the time of year, what initiatives you are rolling out.

“In the counties I’d be directly working with the five Games Managers in the counties. Damien Coleman is the Director of Hurling and we have the three GPOs in the three third level colleges.

“Then you’d have the GPOs in the counties themselves. Roscommon have four, Mayo have four, Leitrim have two, Sligo have three and Galway have three as well. You have lots of people working around the province.”

While Mayo, Roscommon, and Galway are serious operators at senior level other success stories exist. Sligo schools have made a significant impact at Connacht Colleges level in the past decade, while Cregg highlights the

always high interest levels in Leitrim schools as a source of encouragement.

“Leitrim is a small county, but they have a very high participation rate,” Cregg adds. “They had one of the highest participation rates in terms of Cul Camps, 46% of all national school going kids attended the camps at some stage during the summer. That is huge, it is one of the highest in the country.”

“If we can get a point or two points at the weekend we are guaranteed to get back to Division One and it would be great to get back to that level.

Cathal Gregg”

Last summer 36% of national school children in the province attended Cul Camps, another source of encouragement. Cregg is ready to make an impact in his new job, while his return to the inter-county playing fields in the primrose and blue for Roscommon is a significant boost to Kevin McStay’s panel.

This weekend’s Allianz Football League Division Two tussle against Cork at Dr Hyde Park is next on the agenda.

“It is nice to be back involved, it is nice to be very competitive in Division Two,” Cregg says. “There is not a whole pile between a whole lot of teams. We just about got over Cavan at the weekend which was great.

“We have to get points on the board this weekend, it is great that it is in our own hands.

If we can get a point or two points at the weekend we are guaranteed to get back to Division One and it would be great to get back to that level.”

Missions will always need to be accomplished so Roscommon and Connacht GAA are fortunate that Cregg is on the beat.



RAHENY ALL-STARS ARE SHINING BRIGHT

By John Harrington, GAA.ie

There were smiles all around in Áras an Uachtaráin yesterday when the Raheny GAA All-Stars met President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins.

The All-Stars are a group of children with special needs who learn GAA skills with a dedicated group of coaches every Friday at Raheny GAA Club.

The brainchild of Raheny club-member Maria Curtis, the All-Stars have gone from strength to strength since the initiative was launched in 2016 and yesterday's trip to the Áras was a well-deserved reward for all the hard work of everyone involved.

"Listen, it was just incredible," Maria Curtis told GAA.ie today.

"It was just very, very special. He (President Higgins) was very focused on us and there was a lot of banter about the Galway colours and that kind of thing. It was just fantastic."

Maria's daughter Ella has Down Syndrome which was what gave her the initial idea of providing her with the same opportunity to play Gaelic Games with Raheny that her son had.



The Raheny All-Stars pictured at Áras an Uachtaráin with President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina.

"I approached the club and asked could I set up a group for children who wouldn't be able to manage in a typical team," said Curtis.

"They were just great. They gave me loads of support and we got our GPO Will Lillis involved. Then a couple of parents came

forward to help, Kevin Woods and Catherine Bedford-Leech, who is a special needs assistant, so she helps with the coaches.



The Raheny All-Stars and their coaches pictured on their way to Aras an Uachtarain.

"I put the word out. I knew some families who might be interested, and that was in 2016. So we're just over 18 months up and running. We started out with Ella and another local boy and now we have 15 kids." promoting Gaelic Games at Club and County level.

All of the kids involved have benefited massively from the sporting and social outlet, and it's also helped to create a tight-knit community among the parents of the children.

"Some of the kids would have older siblings who play for the club," said Curtis. "One man said to me, his son even identifies with putting on the jersey, so wearing the colours was a big thing for him.

"He'd normally be on the sidelines watching his older brother play, so this is his time.

"There's one boy who has autism and his mother was saying to me that he's always on his iPad and this is the only play-time he comes out to and run around for every week,

and he loves it, so that's incredible.

"The kids come every week and the big smiles would just melt your heart. They're fabulous.

"They're really enjoying it and the parents are getting a little bit of a break, a bit of respite. It's just a win-win really for everybody. It's just been fantastic."

One of the main ingredients of the success of the Raheny All-Stars initiative has been the involvement of a number of local transition year students who do great work helping out with the coaching.

"Some of the kids would have high-end needs so they'd need one to one coaching," explained Curtis.

"So we have transition year students, boys and girls, from local schools helping us out with that.

"They came to us the first year and some of them stayed on and then we got a second

batch last year. They've been really fantastic. It's great for them too, because they're getting a great experience with the kids.

"That's what makes it work, that we can give the children one to one coaching because they wouldn't manage necessarily on their own."

Curtis is hopeful the success of the Raheny All-Stars will inspire other clubs to develop similar initiatives.

"The more people see it, the more likely they are to do it," she said. "When I started off I did a very small bit of research with clubs around the area and people would like to do

it but they're a little bit wary and worried.

"But I think once people see how easy it is and how successful it can be, hopefully more will do it.

"We'd encourage people out to have a look at how we do it in Raheny because when you see the kids and the coaches in interact with one another, it gives you a much better idea of how it all works.

"It's hard work and it's not always straightforward because some of the kids obviously have specific needs. But, overall, it's hugely positive."



DEVELOPMENT NEWS: BUSY WEEKEND FOR MEATH AND KILDARE AND MORE!

A very busy weekend recently for camogie development in Meath and Kildare!

The weekend started with a Referee First Whistle course at Blackhall Gaels GAA club, Batterstown, with 17 new referees taking part. On the following evening (Friday), a similar course took place at Clane GAA club, Co. Kildare involving 21 new referees. Both courses were led by experienced camogie referee, Donal Ryan.

On the Saturday, the Kildare Camogie Foundation Course took place at newly established camogie club, Milltown, who were great hosts in their excellent facility outside Newbridge. 23 coaches took part on a very enjoyable and informative course led by expert tutors Lizzie Byrne and Kate Kelly. The fact that the coaches were drawn from 15 clubs in Kildare, including the newer clubs, was a very healthy sign of the efforts of the respective clubs to grow the game locally. Well done to all!



Upcoming Development Events

- The Meath Camogie Foundation Course will take place this Saturday 24th March at Navan O'Mahony's GAA club.
- On Saturday, 31st March, David Herity will lead his expert Goalkeeping workshop for Kildare Camogie clubs (Goalkeepers u14 up to adult, and coaches) at Naas GAA, 11am-1pm.
- A further joint Kildare/Meath Camogie Foundation course will be held at Clane GAA, Co.Kildare on Saturday, 7th April.
- Peter Casey, Clare GAA Development Officer will lead his excellent 'Building Rapport and Communications' workshop at Moorefield GAA, Co.Kildare on Monday 9th April, 7.30-9.30pm

For further information on any of the above, or to register, please email brendan.kenny@camogie.ie

The Camogie Association 'U18 Strike for Glory National Competition 2018'

On the 11th March 2018 the Camogie Association U18 Strike for Glory initiative took place in the Connacht Centre of excellence in Mayo.

The counties participating are in the Tier 3 'Grow the game' category for Camogie and are working hard to raise the playing standard in their counties. There are

three counties involved in the competition this year, with Kerry graduating out of the programme after winning Strike for Glory 2018.



The Camogie Association 'U18 Strike for Glory National Competition' 2018

1. Wicklow
2. Donegal
3. Mayo

After the first Blitz day Mayo are in pole position with two wins from two and sit at the top of the table.

Results from Day 1

Mayo 4.04 vs Donegal 0.0
 Donegal 0.0 vs Wicklow 4.06
 Mayo 3.04 vs Wicklow 0.0

Game schedule for the rest of the programme:

25/3/2018
 Wicklow Vs Mayo (half-way)
 Donegal Bye

8/4/2018
 Donegal Vs Mayo (Donegal venue)
 Wicklow Bye

15/4/2018
 Donegal Vs Wicklow (Monaghan venue)
 Mayo Bye

U18 Strike for Glory Final Sunday

29/4/2018
 Top Two Teams at the end of All Games

First Year Secondary School Blitz in Cavan

Last week saw that the first Cavan secondary school blitz for 1st years. Six teams took part in the blitz from Bailieborough, Breifne College, St Clare's College (Ballyjamesduff), Virginia College and St. Aidan's (Cootehill). There was some great Camogie on show on the day, despite the poor weather conditions.



The Cavan Co board were delighted that Virginia were again able to enter a team this year. Virginia were also able to use girls that had successfully completed a TY program in the school earlier this month to help coach and referee on the day. Well done to students and teachers alike.



Lessons in Leadership Workshop Who is invited?

We wish to invite all those coaches who have a Level 2 Coaching Course qualification or who are coaches/managers of any Adult Inter-County Camogie Team.

When and Where?

On Saturday April 21st in the National Games Development Centre (NGDC) in Abbotstown Dublin 15 from 10.30am - 1pm

Day Overview?

- 1.Coach Development – being better at what you do
- 2.Coach Leadership
- 3.Games Based approaches within team and player development.
- 4.Leadership on and off the field

Is there Speakers on the Day?

There are 3 highly respected and renowned speakers delivering the day. All 3 are held in the highest regard in both their professional and sporting fields and are sure to offer much insight from their experiences as players, coaches, and leaders themselves. They include:

- **Liam Sheedy** former manager Tipperary Hurling Team, has extensive experience of leading high performing teams to deliver exceptional results in both a business and sporting context. He will share his insights into his life experiences focusing on the Importance of leadership on and off the field of play.
- **Mary O'Connor** is CEO of the Federation of Irish Sport. Mary worked with the Camogie Association as Director of Technical Development and Participation. She excelled in this role and led the association in to an unprecedented era of growth. Mary's Keynotes will outline the importance of Coach leadership and Development.
- **Mark Cooney** has more than 15 years' experience coaching both Camogie & Hurling. During this time he has worked with De La Salle (Waterford) Maynooth University, Waterford Camogie, and currently is part of the Kilkenny Senior Camogie & Waterford Senior Hurling backroom teams. Mark will share his plans around leadership from coaches in preparation and implementation of sessions.

How do I sign up?

The places are limited to those with Level 2 coaching qualification and Adult Inter County Managers and Coaches. The entry charge is just €10 Tickets can be secured through the following Eventbrite link <https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/lessons-in-leadership-tickets-43934380916>

MULKERRINS & MCMAHON STAR WITH MAIDEN ALL-IRELANDS

Limerick's Martina McMahon and Galway's Martin Mulherrins



A thrilling night of Handball has ended with Limerick's Martina McMahon and Galway's Martin Mulherrins winning their first O'Neills All-Ireland 40x20 Senior Singles Titles at Kingscourt HC, Cavan.

McMahon faced reigning champion Catriona Casey (Cork) in the Ladies Final, and having lost the first 21-12, fought back from 10-1 in the second to win 21-19 and force a tiebreak. The tiebreak proved to be an epic, with McMahon finally sealing the win 21-20 at her third attempt at match point. This was genuinely a serious candidate for the most memorable and highest quality female match ever played.

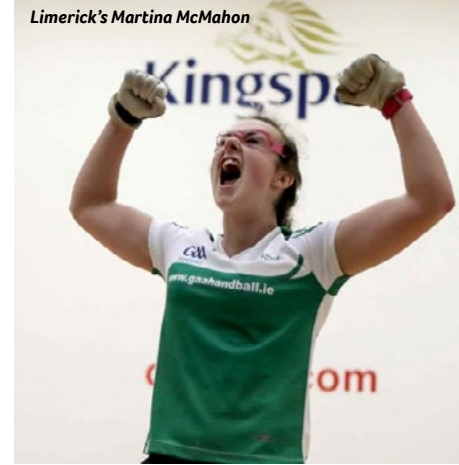
In the Men's Final, questions were being asked if Martin Mulherrins had what it takes

to win an All-Ireland having narrowly lost in the previous two SF's. But the Galway man swatted aside such foolish doubts in a mesmerising performance to dethrone Armagh's Charly Shanks 21-9, 21-11 to become the first Galway man to lift the coveted All-Ireland Senior Singles crown.

Upon winning, both players were also confirmed as Team Ireland Captains for the upcoming 2018 World Championships in Minnesota in August.

Earlier in the day, Clare's Tiarnan Agnew put in a stylish showing to seal the Boys Minor title, defeating Kilkenny's Eoin Brennan 21-8, 21-9. Whilst in the Girls Minor Final, Kildare's Leah Doyle defeated Clare's Caitriona Millane 21-12, 21-16, having trailed 12-5 in the second game

Limerick's Martina McMahon



Galway's Martin Mulherrins



Clare's Tiarnan Agnew



Kildare's Leah Doyle



WELCOME TO CROKE PARK'S ACTIVE RETIREMENT CLUB

Introducing our active offers for active retirement groups.

For your next day trip, why not come and explore the heart and home of Gaelic games with a visit to Croke Park?

We'd love you to join us on our inspiring access-all-areas tour, followed by a spot of lunch overlooking the pitch, finished off with a spine-tingling look around the GAA Museum.

EXCLUSIVE OFFERS DESIGNED TO SUIT YOUR POCKET AS WELL AS YOUR PASSION

THE FULL FEAST - €26 PER PERSON

On arrival, enjoy tea/coffee and freshly baked scones in the museum's renowned Blackthorn Café. Be inspired on your behind-the-scenes Stadium Tour, led by your own private Tour Guide. Relax over a full lunch served in one of our suites overlooking the pitch – a delicious hot meal, followed by dessert and tea/coffee. Round off the day with a visit to our heart and soul – the GAA Museum. Please note that The Full Feast offer has a booking minimum of 15 people.

THE LIGHTER BITE - €21 PER PERSON

The same as 'The Full Feast', but with

the lighter food option of a selection of sandwiches with tea/coffee. Please note that The Lighter Bite offer has a booking minimum of 15 people.

THE 'I LIKE MONDAYS' SPECIAL - €8.50 PER PERSON

If you're tight on time, you could always

skip the food and simply avail of our Seniors' Special. With our access-all-areas Stadium Tour and entrance to the GAA Museum for just €8.50, it's what Mondays are made for.

This offer is valid for individuals every Monday on our public Stadium Tours.

See crokepark.ie/gaamuseum for tour times. Pre-booking not required.

For more information, or to make a group booking, contact us at Tel: 01 8192374 or email tours@crokepark.ie

crokepark.ie/gaamuseum



GOING THE DISTANCE – GAA POC FADA

Poc Fada is Irish for “long puck”. In August every year the All-Ireland Poc Fada Championship is held on the testing mountain course on Annaverna, one of the Cooley Mountains of Co. Louth. The Senior Hurling course measures over 5km so it's not a 3 Poc down the pitch event. This challenging course begins about half way up Annaverna Mountain where the competitors poc a slotar with a hurley (they may lift and strike or hit the ball from the hand). The course takes the players to the top of Carn an Mhadaidh before they continue back down to an uphill finish in Aghameen. All told the Senior Hurling Course takes about 2 hours and up to 75 Poc's (weather depending) over mountain, ditch, ravine and stream.

However it's not just a Senior Hurling Event, Poc Fada is the only Gaelic Games Sport that is recognised by both the GAA & Camogie Associations. Just like Hurling & Camogie it is only the top players who get to compete on All-Ireland Final day on the Cooley's. It's also not just for Senior players, for the Poc Fada is also competed for at U16 level, for both Hurling & Camogie.

Just like every other All-Ireland winning an All-Ireland Poc Fada takes determination, skill, tactical awareness and luck. Just like every other All-Ireland it is only the countries top Poc Fada Hurling & Camogie players who get to compete in the final.

There are only three ways to qualify for the All-Ireland Poc Fada Final. The first is by winning your County and Provincial titles. The second way, return as the defending All-Ireland Poc Fada Champion. The third way is only slightly harder, for that is to be selected as the All-Star Goalkeeper.

We all know how the Galway Senior Hurlers took the All-Ireland Senior title in 2017. However the tribes men & women also took the honours in the All-Ireland Poc Fada, with Tadhg Haran & Susan Earner, being crowned King & Queen of the Cooley's in 2017. While the U16 events went to Molly Lynch of Cork & Offaly's Cathal Kiely Camogie & Hurling respectively.

A Brief History of Poc Fada

In the summer of 1960 the Poc Fada competition as we know it was born. A course measuring 3 miles and 320 yards (5.12km) was laid out by two men An tAthair Pól Mac Seáin and Oliver Hodgers. The course stretched from An Céide on Annaverna Mountain to fields of the Mills family in Aghameen. Then, in late July a notice was put up in the local Youth Club, Cumann Ógra Naomh Moninne Fatima Dundalk, inviting under-16 hurlers to try out the course. The notice drew a response from six young hurlers, Mal Begley, Damian Callan, Peter Crilly, Seán McAneaney, Jerome McDonagh and Peter Myles. Sliotars were purchased in Woolworths, flags were made

from old sheets and all was in readiness for the contest on 8th August 1960. The weather on the day was fine when the competition began however, as the day wore on the rain came down and the wind began to blow hard. By the end of the day the soft sliotars took the shape of miniature rugby balls.

The results were of the very first Poc Fada competition were 1st Damian Callan 115 poc's, 2nd Jerome McDonagh 117, 3rd Peter Myles 125, 4th Peter Crilly 127, 5th Sean McAneaney 134 and 6th Mal Begley 153. The young boy of 15 years who won the first ever Poc Fada went on to have one of the longest inter-county careers of any hurler in the country and he has remained a part of Poc Fada to this day. In fact so much has Damian remained part of Poc Fada that no Poc Fada has ever been held without Damian's, (better know as The Legend,) involvement in some way or the other. In 2017 Damian was honoured with a special life long achievement award which was presented at the start of the 2017 All-Ireland.

The first Senior Poc Fada Final took place in 1961 when An tAthair Pol challenged legendary Kilkenny goalkeeper Ollie Walsh to compete in the “All-Ireland Poc Fada”. However Ollie did not actually win that year. The first All-Ireland Poc Fada winner

was a De La Salle Brother, Vincent Godfrey originally from Bruff Co. Limerick who hurled with Clan na Gael in Dundalk. The Seniors played the same course as the boys did the year before and they continued to play the same course until 1969.

The competition was suspended between 1970 and 1980 and when it was resumed in 1981 the competition was played over a new course, which remains the same to this day. The first winner over the new course was Pat Hartigan from Limerick thus completing the double of Limerick men being the first winners in the competition on the two separate courses.

The new course is 5k in length and has four stages from beginning to end with three turning points, An Céide, Carn an Mhadaigh and An Gabhlan. An added challenge is the ravine on the last leg home which has seen many a dream of victory dashed. In 2004 the competition was expanded with the introduction of Senior Camogie, with the records books recording Galway's Stephanie Gannon as the winner. 2007 saw the introduction of the U16 Hurling competition won by Aaron Murphy of Limerick. In 2015 the U16 Camogie was first competed for and won by Sarah Healy of Galway.

The senior Camogie competition was introduced in 2004 and the first winner was Stephanie Gannon from Galway. Then,



Competitors with Poc Fada sponsor Martin Donnelly of MD Sport, left, Damian Callan, centre, winner of the first ever Poc Fada in 1960, and Poc Fada Chairman Humphrey Kelleher, right, during the 2017 M Donnelly GAA All-Ireland Poc Fada Finals in the Annaverna Mountain, Ravensdale, Co Louth.

in 2007 an U16 competition was included with Aaron Murphy (Limerick) being victorious and in 2015 an under 16 Camogie competition was played with Sarah Healy (Galway) coming out on top.

Winners through the years

Just like every sport there have been multiple winners of the All-Ireland Poc Fada down through the years and it's reads like a whose who of Hurling & Camogie legends. Tipperary's Brendan Cummins is the overall

leader in Hurling with 8 wins, while in Camogie the Waterford's Patricia Jackman leads the way with 7 wins.

Consecutive winners in Senior Hurling include the afore mentioned Ollie Walsh 1962 – 1963, Finbarr O'Neill (Cork) 1966 – 1968, Ger Cunningham (Cork) 1984 – 1990, Albert Kelly (Offaly) 1992-1993, Michael Shaughnessy (Galway) 1994 – 1996, Brendan Cummins (Tipperary) 2006 -2008 and 2011 – 2015. Not to be outdone by the

Senior Hurlers Carlow's Lyndsey Condell (Carlow) 2007-2008 also has consecutive back to back wins in the Senior Camogie.

However the ultimate title for consecutive winners must go to the Kiely family from the Kilcormac/Killoughey Club in Offaly. For in 2012 Cillian won the family's first back to back U16 Hurling All-Ireland's when he repeated his win from the year before. Not to be outdone by his older brother Cathal repeated Cillian's back to back U16 All-

Ireland titles with wins in 2016 & 2017.

But one family stands out ahead of everyone for special mention in the winners list of Poc Fada, and that is the Donnelly family. The year is 1963 and a young man going by the name of, Dinny Donnelly travelled from the Kilmessan Club in Co. Meath to Annaverna to give it a Poc. And give it a Poc he surly did, finishing joint 1st with Ollie Walsh & Tom Geary of Waterford. In 2002 Paul Donnelly (Dinny' son) represented Meath in the All-Ireland Poc Fada final. Paul completed with Annaverna course in 52 poc's the same as his partner of the day Eugene Cloonan of Galway. Well the Poc Fada pull is strong in the Donnelly family for in 2017 Paul's daughter Abbye represented Meath in the Leinster U16 Camogie final, where she qualified to represent Leinster in All-Ireland Final. And so the Donnelly Family became the first family in history of Poc Fada to have 3 generations take part in a Poc Fada All-Ireland Final.

Every sport has it's giant killers and Poc Fada is no different. Over the years a total of thirteen (13) different counties have won the Senior Hurling All-Ireland. They include the Hurling power houses of Clare, Cork, Kilkenny, Galway Limerick, Offaly, Tipperary and Waterford. Annaverna Mountain is a great leveller when it comes to winning. No Hurling strongholds who have won All-Ireland Senior Poc Fada's are the counties of Down, Meath, Louth, Roscommon, Tyrone and Wicklow. This is a true indicator that this unique competition can be won by anyone from any county irrespective of history or status.

It's not just for goalkeepers

Some people believe Poc Fada is only for goalkeepers. However recent history has shown that not to be the case. The 2016 Senior Hurling winner was former Clare centre half back James McNerney. While this year's defending Champion is Tadhg Haran of the Liam Mellows Club in Galway. Tadhg lined out for his Club in the recently played Senior Club All-Ireland Semi Final at Full Forward.

Poc Fada Óg

All-Ireland Poc Fada Final day in 2017 saw the introduction of the first ever Poc Fada for Children or Poc Fada Óg taking place on Annaverna Mountain. The brain child of Paul Cumiskey from Co. Louth Poc Fada Óg is aimed at getting all players from U8 to U12 involved and taking part in a Poc Fada for fun. Poc Fada Óg sees every child who comes to the All-Final event taking part in their own Poc Fada. Each child who takes part in Poc Fada Óg receives a medal & certificate to celebrate their achievement. Much like the more grown up events Poc Fada Óg players travelled from places like Tipperary, Kilkenny & Clare as well as Louth to take part in 2017.

It is the aim of Poc Fada to spread the reach of Poc Fada Óg first out to Provincial Finals and then out to County finals in the years to come.

Who can take part in Poc Fada in 2018?

Entry into a Poc Fada is open to all GAA & Camogie members, regardless of position or level you play or played at. There are two Hurling and two Camogie All-Ireland's to be won, first at County and then at Provincial Level, finally the All-Ireland Final itself.

The All-Ireland Poc Fada Finals are played for at Senior and U16 Level. U16 Level means any player who would qualify to play U16 in 2018, meaning born in 2002 or after.

The Senior competitions are not limited to Senior Players. In the context of Poc Fada Senior means any player who would be old enough to play with any Adult Hurling or Camogie team. This means any Junior, Intermediate or Senior Club and or County player.

How can I take part in Poc Fada 2018?

Poc Fada is organised Nationally by the National Executive of Poc Fada na hÉireann. The Role of Poc Fada na hÉireann is the development of Poc Fada's in every county in the country. We are happy to say 2017 was the first year in the history of Poc Fada that every County held a Poc Fada.

2018 is shaping up to be another great year for Poc Fada. Already Wicklow are the first county to confirm their Poc Fada. The Wicklow Poc Fada will be taking place on Easter Bank Holiday Monday from 10:30 am at the Public Car Park on the Sugar Loaf Mountain. Details of this event can be found on the Poc Fada na hÉireann Facebook page by searching for @gaapocfada.

As well as being included as an Event on the Poc Fada na hÉireann Facebook, Wicklow's Poc Fada has also been advertised on Wicklow GAA's & Wicklow Camogies Facebook pages as well as in local newspapers. Posters including entry details have been delivered to Clubs and Schools around the county.



Camogie winners, Susan Earner of Galway, senior event, left, and Molly Lynch of Cork, U16 event, after the 2017 M Donnelly GAA All-Ireland Poc Fada Finals

If you are not from Wicklow then simply follow the Poc Fada na hÉireann Facebook page @gaapocfada, where every other counties Poc Fada events will also be publicised as soon as we receive them.

Don't have Facebook, Poc Fada na hÉireann also have a Twitter page @gaapocfada. Additionally we are also in the process of creating Instagram & Google + (plus) pages. Alternatively you can email Poc Fada na hÉireann by emailing: communication.pocfad@gaa.ie and we will get back to you as soon as we can.

A thank you.

Poc Fada na hÉireann would like to wish our retiring Chairman Humphrey Kelliher a long and happy retirement. We hope you continue to sneak your hurl into your golf

bag for the odd quick Poc.

We would also like to welcome our new Chairman Tom Ryan into this new position. Tom has a long involvement in GAA and Poc Fada being a long standing member of both Poc Fada na hÉireann and Dublin GAA's CCC. Tom is very excited to be taking over the leadership of Poc Fada na hÉireann and to build on the good work of his predecessors.

Finally a very big thank you to our All-Ireland Poc Fada sponsor, Martin Donnelly of MD Sports myclubshop.ie. Martin has been sponsoring Poc Fada for almost 25 years. Every year including one year with a broken leg, Martin walks the All-Ireland Poc Fada course. For in his own words, "Poc Fada is like no other sport, as the spectators do as much work as the players".



Football

Hurling

Club

General

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

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

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