

FEBRUARY 2017
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FEBRUARY 2017



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Above: The top table at GAA Congress



CONGRESS CHANGES WILL ENERGISE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP AND HELP, NOT HINDER CLUBS

The decision to pass a series of historic motions at Congress to change the senior football championship and alter the entire inter-county season will have a positive impact on club players and the quality of their games programme.

A 'modest' change put forward by the GAA's Ard Comhairle will now begin the job of proving itself.

Its success will be built – not only on the aim of having more excitement involving the best teams in the football championship, but also by providing a definite, clear window for clubs to play important games.

The GAA inter-county season has been cut by three weeks with most counties finishing a month earlier than at present and with the entire month of September handed back to them to play games free of inter-county infringement.

Delegates at Congress 2017 in Croke Park voted overwhelmingly in favour of:

- The introduction of a new eight team round robin quarter final group in the All-Ireland senior football championship
- The end of replays in senior championship matches outside of All-Ireland and provincial finals

- The commitment to playing the All-Ireland senior hurling and football finals before the end of August

The changes have been voted in on a three-year trial basis which will begin in 2018.

The new qualifier group is only the second time in the history of the GAA since the All-Ireland football championship began in 1887 that there has been a significant change in the format of the competition.

It's a move that is in a direct response to the sustained chorus of calls from across the Association to address the race for the Sam Maguire and the fact that it was in need of a new lease of life.

It is also the result of an exhaustive campaign to analyse all previous proposals on championship reform and attempt to find an amendment that, although significant, is also realistic in that it can deliver on what it hopes to achieve.

It's worth remembering that the starting point for the analysis of the Football Championship was framed by a number of issues.

- There was no appetite among either county players or county officials for the end of the provincial football championship
- Counties were unanimous in their opposition to an All-Ireland B or second tier championship
- The fixture crisis at club level would make it hard to configure and justify an expanded number of games for all teams

This new format retains the provincial championships and also the qualifier system for teams beaten in those provincial championships.

The new quarter final group will involve eight teams in two groups of four who will play off in a festival of high quality football at the height of the summer. A team in the quarter final will be guaranteed one game at home, one game away and one game at Croke Park.

There has been some opposition to the plan and some disquiet expressed by the GPA, despite them being initially in favour of the proposals.

The GPA's own proposal to change the football championship involved a massive schedule of games that sought to play 116 instead of 64 inter-county games. The GAA's counter argument was that this increase would have a detrimental effect on the ability of clubs to play.

The newly formed Club Players Association also sought a postponement of this plan. However, having conducted a thorough process of researching every previous proposal and with the plight of club fixtures and club players of paramount importance, it was decided that there was more to be gained from trying this new format rather than entering into another indefinite period of consultation, proposal, and counter proposal.

Some commentators have accused this change of being motivated by money. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Were this proposal a cynical way of making money then all of these games would be listed for Croke Park. Instead only one round will be at Croke Park, just as the quarter finals at present would be. The other two rounds are at home grounds all over the country with big matches destined for provincial venues.

It is also important to note a commitment has been given from GAA management that extra revenue generated by these extra games will be ring fenced to be spent on developing football in lower ranked counties.

Some criticism has focused on the allegation that it will be harder for shocks to take place.

But the definition of any competition or championship is to establish who the best is.



In 2014 there was a capacity crowd in Limerick's Gaelic grounds for the semi-final replay between Kerry and Mayo. The new plan will play more big games at provincial venues

A team that now breaks the mould to reach the last eight is now guaranteed a minimum of three high quality high profile games instead of the 'one big day out' that might previously have been the case.

There is more of a lasting positive legacy to be gained by a county that reaches the quarter finals in this new format rather than going on a qualifier run, making a big quarter final in Croke Park where they are dispatched by a bigger team and sent home after one day.

The inter-county season will now run from January 1 to August 31. To make this happen will mean a new way of approaching inter-county fixtures – namely tightening up and running off competitions quicker than before.

This means extra time will be used in the event of teams finishing level after 70 minutes.

The direct benefit of this is that less time for the inter-county game means more time for the club game.

Clubs who felt that there was lip service being paid to their calls for a definite programme of games should know that they have been put at the heart of this new format.

Some counties will need to embrace best practice when it comes to playing their games. Other counties will need to put their club games ahead of the wishes of their county team managers. These are important issues that are in the hands of ordinary club members within their own counties – not Croke Park.

Improvement starts at home and there is a lot can be achieved through self-help if club members channel their energy on this through their own county boards. The aim of this is to re-energise the race for the Sam Maguire and to also help give clubs a definite window in which to play their games.

GAA Ard Stiúrthóir Páraic Duffy said he was "relieved" it was passed and that it deserved to get the three-year trial that it sought.

DUBLINER HORAN TO BRIDGE NEAR 100 YEAR GAP TO PRESIDENCY

John Horan from Dublin is the GAA's new Uachtarán Tofa.

He was elected by a massive majority of 144 out of a possible 278 votes at Congress and will succeed Aogán Ó Fearghail in 12 months' time.

A life-long member as a player, coach and administrator with the Na Fianna club, the 58 year-old is a principal in St Vincent's CBS in Glasnevin.

He defeated Kerry's Sean Walsh and Galway's Frank Burke who polled 46 votes each. Longford's Martin Skelly received 22 votes with Clare's Robert Frost securing 20 votes.

The last Dublin based representative to be President was Clare native Dr JJ Stewart from 1958-61. It means that Horan will be the first native Dub to be Uachtarán Chumann Luthchleas Gael since Daniel McCarthy 97 years ago.

Like McCarthy, Horan was also Chairman of the Leinster Council – a post he held for a three year term that ended last January.

Thanking his supporters, Horan paid tribute to the other four distinguished men who courageously put themselves forward and contested the Presidency and he vowed to work closely alongside and supporting Uachtarán Ó Fearghail over the next 12 months before taking office.



GAA President Aogán Ó Fearghail congratulates John Horan and his wife Paula after his win in the Uachtarán Tofa election

CLUB LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Club Leadership Development Programme (learning.gaa.ie/clubleadership) is well underway for 2017. So far, 4 different counties have held training events: Tipperary (North) & Tipperary (West), Down, Kildare and Roscommon. Also, 29 modules have been facilitated by different 24 Leadership Associates. Overall, approximately 400 different officers have been trained.

Upcoming events

The following training events are coming up in the following counties:

- Wicklow – 28 February
- Kerry (Killarney) – 1 March
- Cork (West) – 2 March
- Waterford – 7 March
- Fermanagh – 13 March
- Cavan – 20 March
- Dublin (North) – 21 March
- Galway (Connemara) – 25 March
- Dublin (South) – 28 March

For more information on these events, please contact your County Development Officer at [developmentofficer.\[insert county\]@gaa.ie](mailto:developmentofficer.[insert county]@gaa.ie).

Getting involved

Requirements

The programme is open to current club officers or anyone interested in taking up the role of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer or PRO.

Leadership Associate Tracey Kennedy from Cork speaking to county PROs



How to Apply

To apply for the programme, please download an Expression of Interest form from learning.gaa.ie/clubleadership and send it to your County Development Officer. The dates, times and venues will be communicated to Clubs by the Development Officer in each County - <http://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/provinces-counties-clubs/>

Cost

There is no cost for taking part in this programme.

Enquiries

Please contact your Development Officer to find out more about which training events they have coming up in your area.

Office Training Trí Gaeilge

The Club Leadership Development Programme (learning.gaa.ie/clubleadership) will be delivered through gaeilge in the Connemara Coast Hotel on 25 March. Clubs from across the 32 counties will be invited to attend this.

NEW Training & resources on using Microsoft Office 365

Over the course of the past number of months, the Association has teamed up with Microsoft Ireland to develop a training module for club officers on using Office 365. The module is being delivered as part of the Club Leadership Development Programme and the first one will be delivered in Kildare on 22 February and it will also be available for other counties to request through its County Development Officer. It will cover the these areas:

1. Getting started
2. E-mail and calendar
3. One Drive
4. Office 365 Web Apps
5. Phone and tablet usage
6. Resources and supports

In addition, readily-available training materials have been sourced and made available on the GAA Learning Portal.

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

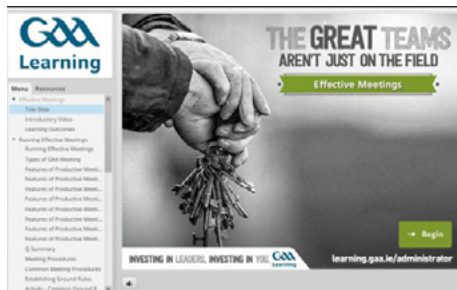
A team of 16 IT Associates have been recruited and are being trained to deliver this training. For more information on this, please contact your County Development Officer.

NEW Running Effective Meetings (Online Module)

Online learning has proven to be an effective way to complement face-to-face training and make continuing learning more convenient. Due to this, an online module on the topic of 'Effective Meetings' has been developed as part of the Club Leadership Development Programme. The module aims to address the essentials of running effective meetings and covers three areas: 1) Running Effective Meetings 2) the Club AGM 3) Tools that are available to support effective meetings.

To access the module, please complete these steps:

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



County Officer Development Conference 2017

The GAA County Officer Development Conference took place on 14 January 2017 in Croke Park and attracted over 200 attendees. Keynote speeches were given to attendees by Aogán Ó Fearghail (Uachtarán CLG), Páraic Duffy (Ard-Stiúrthóir CLG) and Paddy Flood (Chairperson of the National Officer Development Committee). Also, a total of 15 workshops were facilitated on topics such as:

- Leading people
- The changing role of the County Secretary
- Financial distributions
- Using digital and traditional communication methods
- Club planning
- Club leadership development
- Effective strategic planning
- Player welfare
- Fixture analysis
- Governance
- Corporate trustee
- Working with the media
- Health & safety
- Sponsorship
- Insurance and the injury benefit fund

GAA Membership and Registration

Registration Required for Players and Members

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

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

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

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

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

New Club Registrars and Administrators

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

Online Help Guides

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

The GMS provides your Club with functionality to:

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

The GAA Learning and Development Portal contains a GAA Membership Training Manual and videos explaining the system.

To access this information, [click here](#)

E-mail and Telephone Support

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

Email: gaasupport@servasport.com

Phone:

ROI: 04890 313 845

NI: 02890 313 845

International: +44 2890 313 845

Support Times

The usual support times are:

- Monday to Friday: 9 – 5 p.m.
- Out of hours support will be in operation for a 6 week period between the 18th of February and 31st of March. Out of hours support times will be as follows:
- Monday to Friday: 5 p.m. – 10 p.m.
- Saturday and Sunday: 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

GRMA – GAA MEMBERSHIP CARD AND REWARDS PROGRAMME

grma (go raibh maith agat) is the new GAA Membership Card programme providing benefits and rewards to GAA members. It is a 'thank you' or 'go raibh maith agat' for your involvement in GAA clubs, engagement in GAA activities and attendance at games.

Registration for the programme is now open on the gaa website gaa.ie/grma. Members who signup will receive their official GAA Membership Card and be able to avail of partner discounts, special offers and earn points for going to games. Points can be redeemed by individual members or pooled for redemption by GAA clubs.

A GAA membership number is required to receive a Membership Card through grma so we would be grateful if clubs facilitated their members by making this number available to them. The GAA membership number is the unique number assigned to each member registered on the GMS. It is possible for the Club's GMS Administrator to extract a report of all Members, including their Membership Number, to facilitate this process. This report can be found on the GAA Games Management System (Servasport) by logging onto <https://people.gaa.ie>.

- Select the Reports Tab on the left hand side of the screen
- Select the All-Members Report at the bottom of the page

Membership Cards will only be distributed to members who have signed up to grma online. To comply with data protection legislation, GAA Members must self-register on this site for the programme – we cannot bulk register members from the GAA Games Management

System (Servasport). The programme is not mandatory but will ensure fully subscribed GAA Club

Members receive a Membership Card and have the opportunity to earn points on the

grma programme. The programme does not facilitate payment of Club membership registration fees online. There is no cost to join the grma programme. The programme is only available to adult members (over 18's).



PLAYER WELFARE

Hurling Helmets

The GAA would like to remind all players at all levels in all Hurling Games and Hurling Practice Sessions it is mandatory for, and the responsibility of, each individual player to wear a helmet with a facial guard that meets the standards set out in IS:335 or other replacement standard as determined by the National Safety Authority of Ireland (NSAI).

All players are advised that in the event of a head injury occurring, if the helmet being worn does not meet the standard or is modified or altered from the original manufactured state, they are not covered under the terms of the GAA Player Injury Fund.

The attached handout is an information sheet for distribution to players at all levels and is also available on: <http://learning.gaa.ie/mouthguardshurlinghelmets>

If you have any queries in relation to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Mouthguards

Since January 1st 2014, it has been mandatory for players in all grades to wear a mouthguard in all Gaelic football games and practice sessions.

The introduction of this rule has led to a drop of 37% in the number of dental injury claims made via the GAA Injury benefit fund, resulting from incidents in Gaelic football training sessions and matches in grades up to Minor in 2013. At adult level a similar drop of 39% has occurred, proving the benefits of wearing a mouthguard in reducing the risk of dental injuries.

Key Points

- All Gaelic footballers must wear a mouthguard in practice sessions and matches.
- It is the responsibility of each individual player to use a mouthguard
- A properly fitted mouthguard is the best available protective device for reducing the incidence and severity of sports-related dental injuries



- Players can be sent-off in a game for not wearing a mouthguard
- Players will not be covered under the GAA player injury scheme if they don't comply with the mouthguard rule
- No Mouthguard? No Game!

Mouthguard Exemption

A player can apply for a mouthguard exemption application from which can be requested by e-mailing playerwelfare@gaa.ie

The player in question must provide supporting medical evidence clearly stating why a mouthguard cannot be worn

Further information on the above is available at the following link: <http://learning.gaa.ie/mouthguardshurlinghelmets>

If you have any queries in relation to the above please do not hesitate to contact **Gearóid Devitt - GAA Player Welfare Officer** @ gearoid.devitt@gaa.ie / 01-8658610

ONLINE PLAYER TRANSFER SYSTEM

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

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

Answers to frequently asked questions in addition to step-by-step user guides for players, Club Secretaries and County Secretaries can be accessed by visiting – <http://www.gaa.ie/news/transfers-and-sanctions/>

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

(Club and County Secretaries only)

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

Queries can be e-mailed to gearoid.devitt@gaa.ie



ANTI-DOPING – SUPPLEMENTS

The GAA recognises the demands of Gaelic games and indeed the training and nutrition challenges they present. The Association also recognises that there are many factors that contribute to optimal athletic performance such as genetics, training, commitment, motivation, rest and recovery, along with good nutrition and hydration practices. These factors are the cornerstone of performance therefore using a sport nutrition supplement will not substitute for a less than adequate nutrition and/or hydration strategy. Sports supplement companies use powerful marketing campaigns to imply that the use of sports supplements are essential for maximising performance; however, much of the publicity is not based on sound scientific evidence.



Key Points

Vitamins, minerals, herbs, meal supplements, sports nutrition products (e.g. Protein, Creatine, BCAAs), and natural food products are all classed as supplements.

Players may use them to maintain health, recover from exercise, enhance training adaptations, gain weight, burn fat and/or supplement their diet or for medical reasons.

Risks with supplements are categorised in terms of health and possible doping violations?

Batch tested products are not as risky; however, no guarantee can be given on the safety of a supplement.

Be aware that supplements which claim to be muscle building or fat burning are more likely to be associated with contamination.

The use of supplements is not recommend for any player under the age of 18.

Players should seek the opinion of a registered Sports Dietician/Nutritionist and their Team Doctor on any supplements.

Further information: <http://learning.gaa.ie/sites/default/files/Information-Sheet-Sports-Supplements%202016.pdf>

All members of the Association, particularly those involved in the Senior Inter-County scene, are advised to complete the GAA's Anti-Doping E-Learning Courses so as they are aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to anti-doping.

The General Anti-Doping E-Learning Course (2015) is available at the following link:

http://learning.gaa.ie/courses/Anti-Doping_Awareness/

The Senior Inter-County Player E-Learning Course (2017) can be accessed by following the instructions at the below link:

[Accessing the 2017 GAA Senior Inter-County Player E-Learning Course](#)



IMPORTANT DECISIONS AT CONGRESS 2017

Among the other important decisions made at Congress 2017...

The requirement to change a rule in the GAA Official Guide will in future need 60 per cent support and not 66 per cent.

Players, teams, managers and match officials are prohibited from betting on any match that they are involved in.

The GPA will have the right to submit one motion every year to Congress
Christy Ring Cup champions will compete in the All-Ireland SHC qualifiers in the same year they win the Christy Ring Cup.

Minimum age for being allowed to play adult games at club level remains at 17



THE DERMOT EARLEY YOUTH LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE – TUTOR APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

The GAA in partnership with Foróige and NUI Galway (NUIG) is commencing a new delivery of the innovative youth development and leadership project called the *Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative*. The project is dedicated to the memory of one of Ireland's most inspirational leaders and one of the GAA's greatest sportsmen, Dermot Earley (1948-2010). The project is fully supported by the Earley family.

There were eight counties who hosted the programme last year (up from three counties the previous year) and over 40 GAA and Foróige volunteers were trained up to deliver the programme, receiving a Diploma in Training and Education for their efforts. Over 130 GAA participants aged 15-18 years also completed the initiative with 80 of those going on to graduate from NUIG receiving a Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership & Community Action.

We are currently seeking to recruit at least 3 tutors from each of the following counties - **Offaly, Dublin, Galway, Roscommon, Mayo, Antrim, Monaghan and Donegal** - to support the roll out of the programme in September 2017 to April 2018. This is done on an application based process and supported by the County Health & Wellbeing Committees.

Training will be delivered by NUIG and Foróige in the NUI Galway Campus over the following 4 days 8th/9th & 22nd/23rd of April (accommodation provided).

The NUIG Diploma in Training and Education is an excellent opportunity for interested tutors to learn skills that will support optimal performance a modern work or sporting environment. This free accredited 4-day training would normally cost individuals in the region of €1,000.

Following completion of the training, tutors will deliver the Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative to our 'future young leaders' in their respective counties.

Tutors are required to:

- Have an interest in youth development and be over 18 years
- Able to attend the 4 day training (8th/9th & 22nd/23rd of April)
- Commit to deliver the Initiative to 15 participants (September 2017 to April 2018)

If you are a GAA member from **Offaly, Dublin, Galway, Roscommon, Mayo, Antrim, Monaghan and Donegal**, and meet the above requirements then why not apply to receive this training opportunity and get involved in this exciting initiative.

Please note this is not a prerequisite for acceptance on the programme.

For more information, please contact our National Health & Wellbeing Coordinator Stacey Cannon on stacey.cannon@gaa.ie or (01) 8192387



2016 GAA MACNAMEE AWARD WINNERS

T winners of the 2016 MacNamee Awards have been confirmed by the GAA.

The GAA National Communication and Media Awards, the MacNamee winners are named after the late Pádraig MacNamee, former President of the GAA, Chairman of the GAA Commission (1969–1971) and member of the RTÉ authority.

They are presented annually in recognition of outstanding contributions made by individuals and Association units in the area of media and communications.

The awards will be presented by Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, Aogán Ó Fearghail, at a function in Croke Park on Friday next, February 17th.

The GAA President offered his congratulations to this year's winners.

He said: "The late Pádraig MacNamee was a man ahead of his times in many ways and it is fitting that these awards should be named in his honour.

"More than ever, excellence in the area of communications is of paramount importance and has a major bearing on how are games are projected.

"I am delighted to acknowledge that so many of our units, not least those at club level, fully embrace this outlook and utilise technology to further enhance their reach.

"I offer my congratulations to all of this year's winners and hope this recognition not only strengthens their ambitions in this area but inspires others to follow."

The winners of the 2016 MacNamee Awards are as follows:

Provincial Media Award – Kerry's Eye "Sport & Revolution"

The 'Kerry GAA and the 1916 Rising' supplement published by Kerry's Eye, compiled by historian Dr. Richard McElligott, is an eight-page publication that explored the many links between the Rebels of 1916 and Kerry GAA. Well written and informative, it was a timely body of work to mark the 100 year anniversary of the Rising.

Best Website – Clann na nGael GAA Club, Roscommon (www.clanngaa.ie)

This site is vibrant and aesthetically pleasing to the eye, the ease with which the user can navigate and locate information is testament to the developer and it shines a positive light of GAA activity within the county both through its content and its lay-out.



Winners of GAA MacNamee Awards for excellence in Communication

2016 Best Programme – Tyrone GAA Football Final & Replay

These publications were compiled by people who are obviously very familiar with the content that is important to the end user; the supporter. Simple and effectively styled covers lead the reader into thoughtfully designed, easy-to-read and structured match programmes. The primacy of the content decided the design which was excellently planned and executed, while the hierarchy of each of the editorial elements is appreciated and appropriately positioned within the value-for-money publication.

2016 Best GAA Publication – Monaghan Official GAA Yearbook

The Monaghan GAA Official Yearbook takes a thorough review of Monaghan's 2016 season at all levels and at county and clubs levels.

As a record of a defined season, told with the assistance of spectacular photographs, the book is second-to-none and will serve as a lasting record for future generations.

2016 Best GAA Club Publication – Sand in our Boots – Beale GAA Club, Kerry

'Sand in our Boots' charts the history not only of the Beale GAA club but also of its predecessors including the Ballybunion Corncrakes, Cruagharrig Emmets and Faha. Using a variety of sources including internal records, newspaper reports and the folk memory of the club, the authors have succeeded in successfully charting the history of the club and its place within the wider GAA organisation.

2016 National Media Award – Neil Loughran, Irish News (article on former Down footballer, Peter Withnell)

Peter Withnell was a key member of the Down team which in 1991 brought the Sam Maguire back to Ulster after a lapse of 23 years and was honoured in Croke Park last September as the Jubilee winners. It was his first time back in Croke Park, having missed out on the 1994 triumph after turning to soccer at semi-professional level. Other than being regarded at club level as a star in the making, he had been unknown in the county prior to excelling in the All-Ireland semi-final win over Kerry.

Known as a private person off the field, he agreed to be interviewed by Neil Loughran in the Irish News. The result was a revealing and fascinating account, published over two days and notable for the depth of detail on both his sporting prowess and his philosophical approach to life. The writer's interviewing technique and the excellence in which he presented Withnell's narrative made for an absorbing story, expertly told.

2016 Best GAA Related Radio Programme – Máire Treasa Ní Cheallaigh (programme with former Clare Manager, Davy Fitzgerald)

This programme captured the personality of Davy Fitzgerald perfectly. It gave the listener a unique insight into Fitzgerald's lifestyle and how he coped with the pressure during his time as Clare manager, while struggling with health issues.

2016 Gradam Gaeilge (Irish Language Award) – www.tuairisc.ie

Breis agus dhá bhliain ó shin nuair a cuireadh tús le tuairisc.ie, scríobhadh leathanach nua i stair na hiriseoireachta i nGaeilge, direach mar a déanadh os cionn 40 bliain ó shin le

bunú Raidió na Gaeltachta agus le teacht TG4 ina dhiaidh sin.

Chuir tuairisc.ie seirbhís spóirt agus nuachta ar fáil nach raibh a leithéid feicthe cheana, seirbhís laethiúil ar-líne, agus an cineál seirbhíse atá fite, fuaite leis na hathruithe ollmhóra a tháinig leis na meáin nua chumarsáide agus shóisialta.

Ón tús, chruthaigh tuairisc.ie go raibh ar a gcumas leas a bhaint as na meáin sin, mar rinne siad leis an taifead de chaptaen Chill Chainnigh 2014, Lester Ryan, ag tabhairt óráide eile i nGaeilge agus gan é ach 10 mbliana d'aois.

As an gclúdach a thugann siad do Chluichí Chumann Lúthchleas Gael go náisiúnta agus go háitiúil agus as an réimse leathan colúnaithe atá acu, tá Gradam Mhic Con Míde na Gaeilge 2016, á bhronnadh ar tuairisc.ie.

2016 Best Photograph – John McIlwaine

A ghostly image of one of the world's fastest field sports which captures the action in perfect form in an image which would grace any portfolio taking in conditions which most other photographers would have packed up and left.

2016 Best New Digital Initiative – [Armagh TV](http://www.armagh.tv)

Linwoods Armagh TV was chosen as the Best New Digital Initiative. They live streamed the McKenna Cup final, produced a huge mix of content from audio to Facebook live and reached a massive amount of people globally, using technology to connect the global Armagh community.



Uachtarán Ó Fearghail presents Donal Keenan with his Hall of Fame award

The breadth of their coverage was really impressive and included live, archive, club championship, club league, preview shows, u21, camogie etc.

2016 Hall of Fame Award – Donal Keenan

It was inevitable that Donal would be deeply immersed in GAA life, having grown up in a house where the Association always played such a significant role. His father, Dr. Donal Keenan was a key member of the great Roscommon team that won the All-Ireland senior football double in 1943 and 1944, before going into administration where he rose all the way to the Presidency, serving in 1973-76.

Donal junior learned the football trade with the Roscommon Gaels club and when it came to choosing a career path he opted for journalism. He worked with his local paper, The Roscommon Champion for three years in the late 1970s before moving to the Westmeath-Offaly Independent where he spent a year.

He joined the Irish Independent as a general sports reporter in 1981 and was appointed GAA Correspondent in 1985, replacing Donal Carroll who retired.

Donal continued with the Independent until 1994 when he moved to the Sunday Times, remaining there until 1996 when he joined the newly-founded sports newspaper, The Title. It later became the sports section of Ireland on Sunday, which was subsequently taken over by the Irish Daily Mail. Donal continued his association with the paper until 2015.

He has also been involved with several books as author and publisher, mainly in the GAA sphere. He co-wrote the autobiographies of 'Babs' Keating and Teddy McCarthy and also produced the 'Ultimate Encyclopaedia of Gaelic Football & Hurling'. An All Star selector for many years, he served as the scheme secretary/coordinator between 2001 and 2010.

In 1997, he won a MacNamee National Media Award.

LÁ NA gCLUBANNA

In 2017, the GAA plans to celebrate the importance of your club in your community.

Lá na gClubanna will take place on 6/7th May.

This is an opportunity for the GAA to highlight the important role of members, players, supporters' and families in our Association and for the local community to have fun.

We would encourage every member to mark this special day of celebration by participating at events in their club in recognition of the vital role that our clubs and members play at the heart of the GAA.

A booklet advising clubs on communicating the day, budget and fundraising, volunteer recruitment and activities, can be downloaded [here](#)

[Click here to register for your
Lá na gClubanna
toolkit](#)



AIB ALL IRELAND JUNIOR FOOTBALL VICTORY FOR GLENBEIGH-GLENCAR

GLENBEIGH-GLENCAR (KERRY) 1-14 ROCK ST PATRICK'S (TYRONE) 1-11

By Paul Keane at Croke Park

Kerry star Darran O'Sullivan led the line superbly at Croke Park with 1-3 as Glenbeigh-Glencar came out on top in a dramatic AIB All-Ireland club football final.

O'Sullivan nailed a goal after just two minutes, picked up a worrying leg injury that left him hobbling for all of the second-half and fisted over an insurance point deep into injury-time.

There was even time for the four-time All-Ireland winner with Kerry to be dismissed on a black card offence with full-time looming.

Gavan O'Grady was excellent for Glenbeigh-Glencar also and hit six points on a famous day for the club, who have kept the title in Kerry for a third consecutive season.

But it was a tense affair and just 26 players finished the game with Rock reduced to 12 men and Glenbeigh-Glencar going down to 14 following four red cards.

But Glenbeigh-Glencar will only look back with fond memories after subjecting the Tyrone champions to their second All-Ireland final defeat following a loss in 2008.

O'Sullivan's extensive achievements with Kerry marked him out as one to watch and he delivered within seconds of the contest starting with an excellent goal.

O'Grady made the run through the centre before laying off to O'Sullivan who found space to swivel and shoot left footed to the right corner of the net.

The livewire forward, closely tracked by Aidan Girvan, escaped his man again in the ninth minute for a point to put the favourites 1-1 to 0-0 up.

Rock were the better side for the remainder of an intense and often edgy first-half and recovered to draw level at the break, 0-9 to 1-6.

It opened out in a terrific contest with Conor McCreech displaying his full range of talents up front for Rock, kicking two points and creating several more with some clever play.

O'Grady was excellent at the other end of the field for Glenbeigh-Glencar and cut through Rock's defence with some searing runs, helping himself to four first-half points.

Rock closed out the half strong and Girvan booted a brilliant score from the wing before



an errant O'Sullivan pass led to a McGarrity point that tied it up.

Both sides finished the half with 14 men. Rock's Enda McWilliams was first to make his exit after a second yellow card in the 22nd minute for a challenge on O'Sullivan.

Glenbeigh-Glencar then lost attacker Daniel Griffin following a straight red card offence in injury-time.

There were scuffles as the sides departed the pitch for the interval and the ill temper spilled over again when O'Sullivan clashed with a Rock backroom team member in the 43rd minute.

A 49th minute Pdraig Ward goal for Rock, following great work by Thomas Bloomer and

Eamon Ward, put the Ulster outfit two clear, 1-10 to 1-8.

But they only scored once more, a 57th minute McCreech point, as Glenbeigh-Glencar made sure of the win with a strong finale.

That McCreech point left the scores at 1-11 apiece, but three Glenbeigh-Glencar points in a row set the seal on victory with sub Bernard Murphy, O'Sullivan and Jason McKenna all on the mark.

Rock's afternoon ended in frustration with two more dismissals, Diarmaid Carroll and Niall Mullan joining McWilliams in leaving the fray early. O'Sullivan was also sent off, but for a black card offence deep into injury-time.

AIB ALL IRELAND JUNIOR HURLING VICTORY FOR MAYFIELD

MAYFIELD (CORK) 2-16 MOONCOIN (KILKENNY) 1-18



Mayfield v Mooncoin - AIB GAA Hurling All-Ireland Junior Club Championship Final

Nicky Kelly delivered a man of the match performance as Mayfield claimed the AIB All Ireland Club Junior Hurling title at Croke Park.

A thrilling encounter was decided by Kelly's late score as the Cork and Munster champions prevailed. Kelly drilled over 0-11 for Mayfield, who led by 2-9 to 1-6 at the break.

Patrick Duggan and David Malone hit first half goals for Mayfield, while John Fitzgerald registered a major for Mooncoin.

An eventful second half followed as Mooncoin responded impressively with Eamonn Hennebry hugely effective.

It was level in the closing stages before Kelly's injury time point ensured Mayfield were crowned All Ireland champions at GAA headquarters.

Scorers for Mayfield: N Kelly 0-11 (6fs, 165), D Malone 1-2, P Duggan 1-0, K Punch 0-1, D O'Neill 0-1, S Duggan 0-1.

Scorers for Mooncoin: K Crowley 0-8 (5fs, 165), J Fitzgerald 1-1, E Henebry 0-3, A Walsh 0-2, R Wall 0-2, M Grace 0-1, P Walsh 0-1.

Mayfield: R O'Keefe; K Brosnan, D Lucey, B O'Leary; G Lehane, S O'Donovan, G Looney; K Punch, D Hayes; D O'Neill, N Kelly, D Malone; S Duggan, S Kelly, P Duggan.

Subs: I Looney for S Duggan (51 mins), C O'Sullivan for Punch (57 mins), K Walsh for S Kelly (57 mins).

Mooncoin: E Purcell; C Brophy, N Mackey, L Henebry; C Daly, E Henebry, S Kearns; C Fleming, K Crowley; S Walsh, A Walsh, R Wall; M Grace, E Henebry, J Fitzgerald.

Subs: E Ryan for Fleming, K Kirwan for S Walsh, P Henebry for Grace, P Walsh for Wall.

Referee: C Cunning (Antrim).

WESTPORT EDGE THRILLING AIB ALL IRELAND INTERMEDIATE FINAL

WESTPORT (MAYO) 2-12 ST COLMCILLE'S (MEATH) 3-8

By Paul Keane at Croke Park

Lee Keegan and Westport clung on in tense circumstances at Croke Park to claim the AIB All-Ireland Intermediate club title, a first for both the club and their county.

Reigning Footballer of the Year Keegan returned to the venue where he and Mayo were denied by Dublin in last October's All-Ireland final replay and finally claimed silverware.

But Westport had to do it the hard way with two goals from Oisín McLoughlin helping them to the narrowest of wins in front of an appreciative 9,075 crowd.

East Meath outfit St Colmcille's, led by Royal County ace Graham Reilly, trailed by seven points at one stage in the first-half and were still six down with 57 minutes on the clock.

But a 1-2 scoring blitz from Colm Nally's men left just a point in it and they had a goal chance moments before full-time sounded, but came up just short.

Reilly, the new Meath captain, continued his fine form with three points overall and turned in a strong performance which included the game's opening score after

four minutes.

But it was one-way traffic for the next 20 minutes or so as Westport took over and opened up a seven-point lead that would go a long way towards winning the tie.

Shane Scott levelled the game at 0-1 apiece and begun a spree of scoring for the westerners that saw them boot eight points in a row.

Free-taker Fionn McDonagh and Colm Moran were also on the mark as Westport opened up with some exciting football and cut the east Meath men apart.

Westport lost Kevin Keane, a former All-Ireland finalist with Mayo, to an early injury and their progress was halted by a James Conlon goal in the 28th minute.

Reilly set it up with a great run and lay off to the corner-forward though Westport's response was emphatic with a McLoughlin goal 90 seconds later.

Colmcilles closed out the half with points from Cathal Hillard and Reilly to trail 1-9 to 1-3 and felt they were still alive and kicking.



A strong third quarter then saw them reduce the deficit to just two points following points from Ben Brennan and Reilly before Brennan netted in the 43rd minute.

Reilly, again, was the creator though he was also fortunate as his free-kick cannoned off the post for Brennan to claim possession and rifle home from close range.

Westport pulled decisively clear again with points from Phil Keegan and goalkeeper Patrick O'Malley and looked to be in the clear when McLoughlin netted his and the team's second goal after 52 minutes.

He flicked in from close range after a great run and pass from Moran and Westport led 2-12 to 2-6.

But the concession of a third goal, a Jack Reynolds penalty conversion for Colmcilles, allied to several bad wides from Westport left just three in it entering injury-time, 2-12 to 3-6.

The margin was down to the minimum following injury-time Colmcilles points from Eoin Woods and Brennan, but Westport showed all their character to cling on for a famous win.

CLASSY CARRICKSHOCK EARN AIB ALL IRELAND INTERMEDIATE HURLING TITLE

CARRICKSHOCK (KILKENNY) 2-15 AHASCRAUGH-FOHENAGH (GALWAY) 0-6



Favourites Carrickshock produced a dynamic display to win the All Ireland Intermediate Championship at Croke Park.

O'Sullivan nailed a goal after just two Carrickshock dominated the first half accumulating a commanding 1-6 to 0-2 interval lead. Jamie Power's 23rd minute goal was a crucial score for Carrickshock, who were firmly in command against Ahascragh-Fohenagh.

The Galway and Connacht champions only registered two first half scores courtesy of Cathal Mannion against Carrickshock, who had reeled off the opening six points of the match.

Four minutes after the break Damien Walsh blasted a second Carrickshock goal as Ahascragh-Fohenagh trailed by nine points.

Former Kilkenny stars Michael Rice and Richie Power added fine scores for Carrickshock, who were never seriously troubled in the closing stages.

Scorers for Carrickshock: R Power 0-6 (1f), D Walsh 1-1, John Power 0-2, K Farrell 0-2 (2fs), D Brennan 0-1, P Tennyson 0-1, M O'Dwyer 0-1, M Rice 0-1.

Scorers for Ahascragh-Fohenagh: C Mannion 0-5 (3fs), L Cosgrove 0-1.

Carrickshock: Jamie Power; D Franks, J Dalton, J Grace; J Cahill, J Tennyson, N Tennyson; B O'Donovan, M Rice; John Power, R Power, D Walsh; K Farrell, D Brennan, M O'Dwyer.

Subs used: J Butler, S Power, P Tennyson, J Murphy, M Rohan.

Ahascragh-Fohenagh: D Kelly; B Kilroy, J Kelly, P Gavin; JP Egan, P Mannion, J Finnerty; S Kelly, L Tully; L Cosgrove, E Delaney, F Donnellan; C Mannion, R Kelly, M Kelly.

Subs used: S Conneely, E O'Ceallaigh, C Cosgrove, S Smyth, D Smyth.





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2017 ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIPS

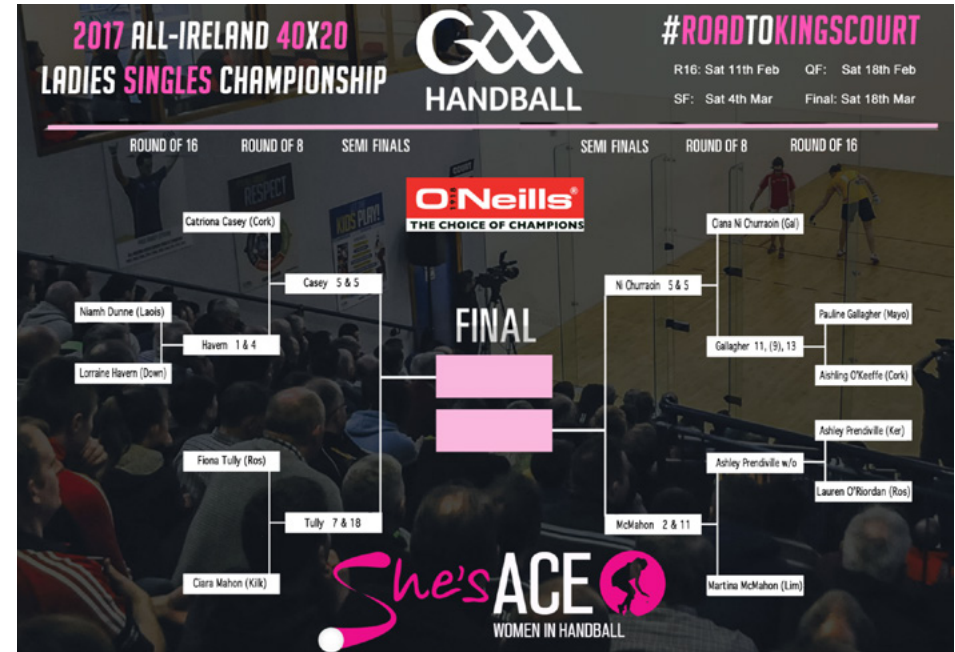
After the overwhelming success of last years All-Ireland's 40x20 Finals Weekend, the #RoadToKingscourt is back for the 2017 O'Neills All-Ireland 40x20 Singles Championships, with the finals weekend confirmed for March 17th - 19th.

Rough Provisional Scheduling Dates:

- Friday 17th March - Masters Finals
- Saturday 18th March - Open, Adult & Masters Finals
- Sunday 19th March - Juvenile Finals

Ticket Details will be announced in the coming weeks as we again expect to quickly sell out our Finals Weekend, sponsored by O'Neills.

Westmeath's Robbie McCarthy is the man to beat in the Men's Championship as the silky Mullingar player bids for a 4 in a row. He will be chased down by the likes of finalist of the last two years Charly Shanks (Armagh), 2015 finalist Diarmuid Nash (Clare), Galway power hitter Martin Mulkerrens, & 2004 champion and experienced campaigner Eoin Kennedy (Dublin).



Catriona Casey will be favourite to retain her 2016 crown, even more so given her huge rival Aisling Reilly has withdrawn through injury. But she faces stiff competition from

the likes of Limerick leftie Martina McMahon, Galway's Ciana Ni Churraoin & Kilkenny's ever improving Ciara Mahon.



THE WEIRD & WONDERFUL WORLD OF EUROPEAN GAA CRESTS



Augsburg

It's not every day that you see a Roman helmet as the focal point of a GAA crest but the German club of Augsburg have just that. Why the Roman helmet you say? Well, as with many of the crests on our list, the clue is in the club name. The club's full Gaelic name is Rómhánaigh Augsburg Óg which translates to Young Romans. Why the Young Romans you say? Well the city of Augsburg just happened to be an ancient Roman stronghold once upon a time. The slightly odd looking plant that's not a shamrock is a zirbelnuss (pine cone in English), which was originally the Roman insignia for the area known as Raetia, of which Augsburg was a part of. The zirbelnuss has since been adopted as the emblem of Augsburg.



Basel

Not too many clubs in the world of sport can claim to have a Basilisk on their crest, let alone in the GAA, but that's just what Swiss club Basel have on theirs. The Basilisk seen here is based off the real life statue of a Basilisk that can be seen in the city of Basel and it is overlooking the Rhein river which runs through the city.



Belgium

The Belgian crest is the first of two crests on our list that prominently feature a skull. The significance of the skull can be found in the Gaelic name of the club "Craobh Rua" which translates to "Red Branch" in English. The Red Branch Knights were legendary, elite warriors who, as the stories go, would psyche themselves up for battle by playing Hurling. Cúchulainn, happened to be one of these knights and was considered Ireland's greatest hurler. These Knights belonged to the House of the Red Branch and it was here that the severed heads of their enemies were kept as trophies, hence the skull as the centrepiece of the crest.

GAA crests in Ireland are all pretty similar when you think about it. Take a quick glance at the crests for the county sides and you will see common elements popping up again & again. The Celtic Cross is everywhere, as are round towers, ships, books, crowns and the classic two crossed huris with a ball in the middle. A lot of the GAA crests in Europe don't stray too far from the tried & tested formula but there are plenty of examples where European clubs have crests that are not only a million miles from what we are used to but completely bonkers at the same time. In Part 1 of this series we will go through a selection of some of the most unique GAA crests you can find in Europe and we will try to explain some of the more interesting elements of them.



Clermont

Clermont recently welcomed Donegal All-Star Michael Murphy to one of their training sessions while he was in the city to film the latest installment of "The Toughest Trade" with ASM. We are sure he would have had a double take when he laid eyes on Clermont's unique crest. In order to understand the crest we must first look at the team's nickname; "Les Bougnats." A Bougnat was a person who moved from rural France, to Paris, predominately from the Massif Central region, of which the city of Clermont is a part of. The mustached man clutching a Gaelic football is a Bougnat wearing a Bougnat's traditional garb of a hat and a neckerchief.



Clermont ladies

The Clermont Gaels recently started a Ladies team and "Les Bougnates" did not want to be outdone in the crest department by their male counterparts. The Ladies team's crest takes its inspiration from the WWII American wartime propaganda poster "We Can Do It!" which was used to boost worker moral during the war.



Fillos de Breogán

The Fillos de Breogán (Sons of Breogán) club are one of the most feared clubs in the Galician region of northern Spain and their ominous crest only adds fuel to the fire. The significance of the eerie skull & crossbones can be found in both ancient Greek & Gaelic legend. On one hand, the skull & crossbones represents the three-headed giant Geryon which was killed by Hercules. Geryon's remains are said to be buried under the Tower of Hercules which was built by the Romans, which leads us nicely onto Breogán. Breogán built the city of Brigantia, which is modern day A Coruña where the club is based. Íth, one of Breogán's sons spied Ireland from the top of the Tower of Hercules and he along with several of Breogán's other sons sailed to Ireland to conquer it. Many of Breogán's sons died during the conquest hence the skull & crossbones to symbolise their remembrance.



Holland Ladies

The Holland Ladies football team is made up of an amalgamation of players from two separate clubs and this is where significance of the two birds and the crosses comes from. The windmill is a well-known symbol of The Netherlands so no need to explain that. The two birds seen on the crest are storks and these are linked to the first of the two clubs that make up the amalgamation; The Hague. The official symbol of The Hague is the stork and it can be found on the city's coat of arms, so this is why the birds were included. The crosses represent the players from the Amsterdam club. The Amsterdam coat of arms contains three St. Andrew Crosses and these crosses are repeated here with the blades of the windmill making up the third cross.



Jyväskylä

Jyväskylä (No, we won't attempt to pronounce it) in Finland have one of the more minimalist, yet striking crests in Europe. The quite scary looking creature that dominates the crest is an Irish Wolfhound. Irish Wolfhounds are featured heavily in Irish mythology, being linked to both Fionn mac Cumhall & Cú Chulain. The club also sees themselves as the "lone wolves" of the Nordic GAA scene (Yes, that's a thing!) due to their extremely diverse player base which brings with it its own unique playing style. The design of the crest itself takes inspiration from an NHL logo.



Madrid

At first glance the crest of the Madrid Harps team appears to be like any other traditional GAA crest. Celtic harp after which the club was named, two hurleys crossed with a sliotar and a football. So far so good....wait, is that a bear grabbing a tree? Like lot's of the crests in Europe, features that appear at first to be out of place can be explained quite simply and it's no different with Madrid. In Madrid's most central square, La Puerta del Sol, you will find the "El Oso y El Madrono" (the Bear and the Strawberry Tree) statue. This statue is the official symbol of the city. The Strawberry Tree or Arbutus unedo also happens to be extremely prevalent across Ireland so there is a nice coincidental link there.



Trégor

The final crest on our list comes from Brittany club Trégor. The province of Trégor or "Bro Dreger" in Breton was founded by Saint Tudwal. Saint Tudwal is also the patron saint of Trégor and his emblem was a red dragon which the province adapted as their own emblem. The emblem also has links with King Arthur who, according to legend was born in Trygger (Treger in Breton) in British Cornwall and whose tomb was depicted with the emblem of a red dragon.



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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.