

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael - Coiste Átha Cliath

Comhdháil Bhliantúil

Páirc Parnell, Dé hAoine 14ú Nollaig 2018 ar 7.00 i.n.

An Clár

1. Minutes of 2017 Convention.
2. Adoption of Standing Orders.
3. Auditor's Report and Financial Statement.
4. Secretary's Report.
5. Chairman's Address.
6. Appointment of Tellers & Election of Officers.
7. Fixture Planning & Competitions Control Committee Reports.
8. Coiste Éisteachta Report.
9. Coaching & Games Development Reports.
10. Motions
11. Appointment of Delegates to Leinster Convention and Congress.

Standing Orders for Convention

1. The Proposer of a motion, or amendment thereto, may speak for no longer than five minutes.
2. A Delegate speaking to a resolution or an amendment must not exceed three minutes.
3. The proposer of a resolution or amendment may speak a second time for five minutes before a vote is taken, but no other delegate may speak a second time to any resolution or amendment.
4. The Chairman may at any time he considers a matter has been sufficiently discussed call on the proposer for a reply, after which a vote must be taken.
5. A Delegate may, with the consent of the Chairman, move 'that the question be now put' after which, when the proposer has spoken, a vote must be taken.
6. A speaker to the Annual Report or to any other general discussion shall not exceed three minutes.
7. Convention shall not be entitled to consider any matter not on the Agenda, except with the consent of a majority comprising two-thirds of the votes of those present, voting and entitled to vote.

AINMNIUCHÁIN

Cathaoirleach

Seán Mac Seanlaoich (Craobh Chiaráin) **Outgoing**

Leas-Chathaoirleach

Mícheál Ó Saomhar (Oileán na hÉireann) **Outgoing**

Leas-Rúnaí/Cisteoir

Séamus de Róiste (Fionnbhrú Colmcille) **Outgoing**

Cisteoir

Fionnbharr Ó Mathúna (Naomh Pádraig Baile Phámar) **Outgoing**

Oifigeach Forbartha

Cionnaith Ó Súilleabháin (Cuala) **Outgoing**

Oifigeach Oiliúna

Gearóid Ó Liatháin (Uí Duibhir) **Outgoing**

Oifigeach na Gaeilge

Cóilín Ó Cearbhaill (Na Gaeil Óga)

Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí

Fiona Ní Thuairisc (Naomh Bríd)

Oifigeach Leanáí

Dara Ó Gliasáin (Fionnbhrú Colmcille) **Outgoing**

Árd Chomhairle

Seán Mac Seanlaoich (Craobh Chiaráin) **Outgoing**

Comhairle Laighean

Seán Mac Niocláis (Gaeil N. Shéamais An Caisleán) **Outgoing**

Tomás Ó Sé (Naomh Marcais) **Outgoing**

Pól Mac Gabhann (Na Fianna)

Tuarascáil An Rúnaí

Tá sé in am dom arís féachaint siar ar na príomh imeachtaí don bhliain atá imithe. Chomh maith le sin, seo an t-aon seans atá agam, mar Rúnaí Chontae, mo thuairim phearsanta a chur ós bhur gcomhair. Teastaíonn uaim mo bhuíochas a ghabháil le hOifigigh an Chontae agus na gClub as ucht a gcuid oibre i rith na bliana.

Minor Hurling

Dublin's minor hurlers offered a season of huge excitement and promise as they secured the Leinster Championship before bowing out at the All-Ireland semi-final stage to eventual champions Galway.

They started in a suitably entertaining manner in their opening Leinster Championship Tier 1 match against Kilkenny in Parnell Park on May 13 with the Noresiders finishing strongly to prevail by 3 - 23 to 4 - 12.

Dual player, Luke Swan, scored a hat-trick to keep Dublin in contention throughout and with Liam Dunne adding 1 - 7, the sides were deadlocked by the 55th minute.

However, a superb Ciaran Brennan goal and five points in succession by the outstanding Conor Kelly saw the visitors home with eight points to spare.

It proved far more straightforward for Dublin in their next group game as they beat Laois by 2 - 21 to 0 - 7 in O'Moore Park, Portlaoise.

Dunne scored 1 - 10 in total while Dara Purcell bagged 1 - 2 against a Laois team that failed to score from play over the sixty minutes.

Dublin returned to Parnell Park for their final group game and despite making a number of changes to their starting line-up, they still secured a three point win 0 - 16 to 1 - 10 over Wexford.

Donal Leavy was Dublin's outstanding performer on the day with four points from play while scores from Seamus Fenton, Ciaran Foley and substitute, Seán Foran, helped the hosts withstand a late Wexford comeback.

Their reward for finishing second in the group was a quarter-final clash with Antrim in Dowdallshill on 16th June. While they were far from their fluid best, they pulled away in the second-half to register a facile 3 - 16 to 0 - 4 victory.

Purcell and Swan hit the first half goals with early second half sub, Seamus Fenton, making a positive impact in the second half as he finished the game with 1 - 3.

A trip to Wexford was Dublin's next port of call and in a hugely exciting and free-flowing affair, they finished on the front foot to claim a 1 - 22 to 3 - 13 win.

The Dubs enjoyed a 0 - 13 to 1 - 8 interval lead with Dunne, Foley, Purcell and Swan all to the fore and Swan's goal in the first minute of the second-half should have eased them through.

However, Wexford hit back to draw level thanks to the contribution of substitute Darragh Furlong but Dunne's ability from placed balls saw the Raheny player finish with 0 - 12 as they held on with three points to spare.

The subsequent Leinster Final against Kilkenny in Portlaoise will live long in the memory for anyone in attendance as Dublin dethroned the holders by 6 - 19 to 7 - 12 in an enthralling decider.

The Dubs fell seven points behind inside the opening six minutes but three goals in four minutes from Dunne, Swan and Conor Murray ensured they trailed by just 4 - 8 to 3 - 10 at the break.

Any thoughts that defences would tighten up upon the restart proved unfounded as Dublin picked up where they left off thanks to goals from Swan and Dunne inside the opening two minutes.

Conor Kelly replied with a cracking goal in the 37th minute but once Swan completed his hat-trick a minute later, Dublin's triumph looked inevitable.

Hopes were high that Dublin had the quality to improve on a poor record at the All-Ireland semi-final stage in recent years but sadly, the team failed to play to its potential as they were defeated by Galway by 3 - 22 to 0 - 16 at Croke Park.

The holders enjoyed a narrow three-point lead at the break but resumed in a completely dominant fashion as Dublin's challenge unraveled the longer the contest evolved. In the end Galway confirmed their superiority thanks to goals by Niall Collins, Adam Brett and Dean Reilly.

Minor Football

It proved an ultimately disappointing year for the Dublin minor footballers as they failed to show their full potential and did not progress to the knock-out stages of the Leinster Championship proper.

The new format to the championship in 2018 saw the eleven participating counties divided into two groups with Dublin finding themselves in Group 1 alongside Louth, Meath, Offaly, Wicklow and Westmeath.

The Dubs started out their provincial campaign on 7th May with a home encounter against Louth and while they struggled to find their groove initially, they finished strongly to complete a 3 - 15 to 1 - 7 success at Parnell Park.

Louth led by a point with just over 15 minutes remaining but the young Dubs finished the game impressively when scoring 3 - 6 without reply to emerge 14-point victors.

Mark O'Leary, Conor Murray and Liam Dunne grabbed the goals as Dublin suddenly found their scoring touch to leave the Wee County shell-shocked.

A fortnight elapsed before Dublin's next match as they faced a talented Meath side in Páirc Tailteann and, despite a positive opening, they finished on the wrong side of a 1 - 13 to 2 - 8 scoreline.

Luke Swan's first goal in the ninth minute had given Dublin a 1 - 2 to 0 - 1 lead but it was the hosts that finished the half in the ascendancy as Bryan McCormack struck for an injury-time goal to give Meath a 1 - 7 to 1 - 4 advantage.

Meath pushed on after the break but Swan's second goal of the evening and points from Enda Cashman and Malachy Codd offered renewed hope to Dublin but, ultimately, their efforts fell short.

Dublin continued on their travels a week later with a visit to Tullamore to play Offaly and they showed great mettle late on to emerge 2 - 11 to 0 - 10 winners.

Points from Murray and O'Leary edged Dublin 0 - 6 to 0 - 4 ahead at the interval but with Offaly impressing in the final quarter, Dublin regained their authority, thanks largely to the influence of substitute Seán Guiden.

The St Sylvester's player scored Dublin's first goal in the 54th minute to put the Dubs 1 - 8 to 0 - 8 up but he also slotted three pressure frees, two from outside 45 metres, to see his side to victory. Swan added an insurance goal for Dublin in the 59th minute.

Dublin seemed back on track for securing qualification to the semi-finals but they suffered a major setback in their fourth group game as they succumbed to an inspired Wicklow outfit by 2 - 6 to 0 - 8 at Parnell Park.

The concession of two first-half goals to Kevin Quinn and Eoin Darcy left Dublin chasing the game in the second-half as the Garden County led 2 - 4 to 0 - 4 at the break.

Dublin had what wind advantage was going in the second period and dominated in terms of possession with Wicklow operating on the counter-attack. However some errant shooting undermined any hopes of a comeback.

Dublin required favours from elsewhere to advance to the last four and while they held up their side of the bargain by cruising past Westmeath by 5 - 19 to 0 - 9 in Mullingar, Wicklow's win over a weakened Meath ensured Dublin's exit from the championship.

Dublin led by 4 - 9 to 0 - 5 at the break with two goals from Swan added to by Guiden and Seán Foran, while substitute Robbie Bolger netted Dublin's fifth goal.

Dublin then entered the Shield and progressed to the final but, at this stage, the dual players had pursued their hurling commitments and lost out narrowly.

Under 21 Hurling

A talented Dublin U21 hurling team experienced a frustrating campaign as they failed to build on some impressive earlier displays before crashing out of the Leinster Championship at the semi-final stage.

Dublin began their quest for provincial honours with a trip to Portlaoise on 26th May and they experienced few difficulties as they eased to a 4 - 16 to 1 - 10 success.

Seán Currie was the scorer-in-chief as the Na Fianna man hit 3 - 2 from play and was well assisted in the scoring department by his older brother Colin, 0 - 4 (2f, 1 '65'), and Lucan Sarsfields' Ciarán Dowling, who clipped three points from play as well as converting one free.

Dublin made the ideal start with a Seán Currie goal inside a minute and points from Johnny McGuirk and two Colin Currie scores from dead-ball put the boys in blue immediately into the driving seat.

The Dubs led 2 - 9 to 1 - 4 at the break with Currie hitting his side's second goal following great work by Lee Gannon> He completed his hat-trick in the 57th minute as his side pulled clear to record a fifteen-point win.

It proved similarly comfortable for Dublin eleven days later when they made the short trip to Netwatch Cullen Park and came away with a comprehensive 4 - 18 to 0 - 12 victory.

Dublin impressed from the outset and were full value for their 0 - 12 to 0 - 6 interval lead and Paul Crummey's goal in the opening minute of the second-half reaffirmed that impression of Dublin control.

Further green flags were to follow from Cian O'Sullivan, substitute Cillian Costello and a wonderful solo effort from centre-forward, Eoghan Dunne, as Dublin cruised to victory.

A third straight away fixture was Dublin's reward and despite registering nineteen wides on the night, they still managed to overcome Westmeath by 2 - 13 to 1 - 13 in Cusack Park, Mullingar.

Westmeath were overly reliant on the Doyle twins, Killian and Ciaran, who accounted for all of the home side's 1 - 13 throughout the game, with Killian Doyle handing his side a dream start with a second minute goal.

Donal Burke replied with a Dublin goal soon after but some errant shooting undermined the generous amounts of possession that they enjoyed as they trailed by 1 - 9 to 1 - 5 at the interval.

Burke added a second goal within three minutes of the restart and although it remained level pegging up until the 50th minute, Dublin struck five successive scores to pull away.

Dublin finally made their home championship appearance when meeting Wexford in their semi-final clash but it proved the end of the road for the hosts as they succumbed by 3 - 15 to 3 - 12.

Dublin started on the front foot and despite playing into the teeth of a stiff breeze, they managed to build a promising 1 - 8 to 0 - 8 interval lead, with Colin Currie netting in the 14th minute.

A Joe O'Connor goal gave Wexford the perfect start to the second-half and they dominated play from that point. Late goals by Currie and Dunne were of mere consolation value as Dublin somewhat surprisingly bowed out at the provincial last-four stage.

Under 20 Football

Dublin's U20 footballers produced some excellent displays over the early part of the summer but, ultimately, fell short to eventual All-Ireland winners Kildare in the Leinster Final.

Their championship campaign started in a very positive fashion as they overcame Longford by 2 -21 to 0 - 11 in their opening group match in Pearse Park, Longford on May 28.

While far from a one-man show, Dublin were hugely indebted to Dan O'Brien, as the Kilmacud Crokes player delivered an exceptional individual display in which he amassed 1 - 9 from open play.

O'Brien found the net in the eighth minute from an excellent team move and the home defence was split open once again two minutes later as Naomh Olaf's Tom Keane palmed home from close range.

An interval lead of 2 - 8 to 0 - 5 was enhanced upon the restart as Dublin cruised home with captain Seán Bugler and Cormac Howley landing three points apiece from play.

It proved far tighter a week later in Parnell Park as Dublin eventually found their way to a 2 - 16 to 1 - 13 win against Westmeath.

It was all Dublin in the opening 10 minutes, scoring the first four points but Westmeath responded magnificently with full-forward Sean Pettit finding the back of the net.

Adam Loughlin's 22nd-minute point gave Westmeath a 1 - 5 to 0 - 6 advantage but Dublin delivered a hammer blow just three minutes later when centre-forward, James Madden, found the net after a superb solo run. Two further scores from James Doran gave the Dubs a 1 - 8 to 1 - 5 interval advantage.

Dublin pushed on in the second period, scoring the first four points after the interval before Bugler registered a fine point and, moments later, a second Dublin goal after being picked out superbly by Doran.

Dublin confirmed top spot in the group and an automatic place in the last-four when beating Wexford by 1 - 15 to 0 - 11 at Innovate Wexford Park.

The Dubs struggled initially as they trailed by 0 - 8 to 0 - 5 at the interval but resumed in rampant fashion as wing-back Seán Farrelly and Cormac Howley transformed matters to edge ahead by 0 - 9 to 0 - 8.

Ross McGarry's 47th minute goal gave Dublin some breathing space and they pulled away by the end with substitute Tom Keane kicking four second-half points from play.

Dublin delivered arguably their most impressive display of the year in their semi-final against Meath in Páirc Tailteann on June 30 as they comfortably overcame the Royals by 4 - 16 to 2 - 10.

An early goal from Doran set Dublin on their way although a Frank O'Reilly penalty reduced Dublin's lead to three points (1 - 8 to 1 - 5) by half-time.

Doran repeated his trick in the first-minute of the second-half to get his side back on track and, with Keane scoring seven points in total, Dublin cruised to victory thanks to goals in the final quarter by McGarry and substitute Karl Lynch Bissett.

Hopes were high that Dublin could build on that display and claim the inaugural provincial title at this new grade. However, their ambitions unraveled in O'Connor Park, Tullamore as they fell to a disappointing 1 - 15 to 0 - 10 defeat to a dominant Kildare team.

Both teams struggled initially to deal with the occasion and the turning point arrived just as Dublin were beginning to take control of matters as a goal attempt was spurned in the 25th minute.

From that juncture, Kildare kicked six points on the bounce before half-time to lead by double scores (0 - 10 to 0 - 5) at the break.

Dublin failed to make the required impression upon the restart, despite points from Keane and McGarry and with every passing minute, their opponents' confidence increased.

In injury-time, Kildare's Jimmy Hyland was fouled inside the square and Paddy Woodgate's penalty put the final gloss on the scoreboard.

Senior Hurling

With a new management team in place, hopes were high that Dublin's senior hurlers could regain some lost ground.

Their first competitive game arrived in the Walsh Cup on 3rd January and they completed an expected 4 - 18 to 0 - 14 win over Meath.

Four days later, Antrim were accounted for by 4 - 16 to 0 - 17 in Parnell Park but Dublin's ambitions were curtailed at the semi-final stage when they lost to Wexford by 1 - 20 to 0 - 14 at the Donnycarney venue.

An air of positivity preceded Dublin's opening NHL1B fixture but it's fair to say that events didn't go according to plan as they suffered a 2 - 25 to 1 - 15 defeat at the hands of Offaly in Croke Park.

Dublin required a late free from Donal Burke to defeat Antrim by 0 - 23 to 0 - 22 in Corrigan Park, Belfast.

A fortnight later, they resumed with a tricky assignment against Limerick in the Gaelic Grounds and fell 1 - 26 to 0 - 17 with Danny Sutcliffe amassing five points from play.

However, Dublin offered renewed hope when they hosted the then All-Ireland champions Galway, at the end of February. They lost by 1 - 20 to 1 - 14 in a much improved defensive showing.

That left Dublin requiring a win to ensure they avoided a relegation play-off and they duly delivered in their final group game when defeating Laois by 3 - 23 to 0 - 17 in O'Moore Park, Portlaoise.

Ryan O'Dwyer's first-half goal helped Dublin to a 1 - 15 to 0 - 6 interval lead and Ronan Hayes made a positive impression by scoring 2 - 4 as Dublin eased home with fifteen points to spare.

That victory confirmed a quarter-final clash with Tipperary but their interest ended there as the Premier county came back from a poor start to overcome the Dubs by 2 - 25 to 0 - 20.

Dublin led 0 - 9 to 0 - 1 after a blistering start that included points from six different players.

They couldn't sustain that standard, however, as goals from John McGrath and Michael Breen helped Tipperary home by eleven points.

Dublin had a seven-week period to prepare for the group stages of the Leinster Championship.

The Championship was always the focus under the new management as they moulded their team over the course of the league. The work done was noticeable as they opened up against Kilkenny in Parnell Park on 13th May.

First-half goals from Paul Ryan and Fergal Whitely handed Dublin the initiative and when Jake Malone netted after the break, a positive result looked a distinct possibility. However Liam Blanchfield's controversial late goal proved a decisive moment as Kilkenny prevailed by 1 - 24 to 3 - 16.

Dublin lost Conal Keaney to injury during the second-half and, arguably, the absence of his ball-winning ability and experience told against us in the final minutes.

There was similar heartbreak for Dublin a week later as they were pipped at the post for the second successive match when falling to Wexford by 0 - 22 to 2 - 14 in Innovate Wexford Park.

Wexford dominated for lengthy periods and moved into a five-point lead, 0 - 18 to 1 - 10, after 55 minutes with the Dublin goal coming through Rian McBride.

However, Paul Ryan's goal in the 60th prompted a Dublin purple patch that included points from Liam Rushe and David Treacy to edge them ahead before Wexford finished in the ascendancy, through two Rory O'Connor points and a Harry Kehoe score.

There was to be no such drama on 3rd June as Dublin made light work of Offaly with goals from Paul Ryan and Fergal Whitely, easing them past Offaly by 2 - 24 to 0 - 13 at Parnell Park.

The feel-good factor from that victory was evident in Dublin's final competitive match of the year as they pushed Galway all the way before suffering a narrow 0 - 26 to 2 - 19 defeat in Pearse Stadium, Salthill.

Second-half substitute, Paul Winters, scored a brace of goals to raise hopes of a surprise win and those feelings increased when Alan Nolan landed two frees from deep.

However, it ended on a familiar note as Galway struck two late points to edge home with Dublin having to content themselves with thoughts of a team developing along the right lines.

It was with great disappointment that Pat Gilroy had to step away as senior hurling manager. Pat certainly had the team moving in the right direction as they implemented many of the core principles that ignited great times for our footballers.

We now welcome Mattie Kenny on board as our new manager and wish him the very best for the years ahead. Mattie has a terrific track record as a manager and we are confident that he can continue the team on an upward curve.

Senior Football

This has been Dublin's most successful decade ever at senior football level. Dublin's senior footballers have won six All-Ireland titles, only matched in the halcyon days of the 1890s; eight Leinster titles (in-a-row); and five Football League Division 1 titles.

But statistics alone do not capture the majesty of this panel. Their style of play, dedication, attitude and humility make them the standard bearers. *The* team for the ages.

Fittingly, team captain Stephen Cluxton celebrated his 200th appearance for Dublin's seniors (in league and championship) by once again leading his side to glory, the fifth occasion he has lifted the Sam Maguire as he and this panel/management continues to set new records and new standards.

In last September's All-Ireland decider we were a bit slow out of the blocks with Tyrone leading 0 - 5 to 0 - 1 inside 16 minutes but then a switch was clicked as Dublin hit a scoring surge to go in at the interval seven points to the good (2 - 7 to 0 - 6).

This purple patch was the most crucial part of the game. The catalyst was an outstanding kickout from Stephen Cluxton which invited the jet-heeled Jack McCaffrey to accelerate up the Cusack Stand side for the influential Ciaran Kilkenny to ignite his side with a fine point.

The Dubs landed two hammer blows before the interval through goals from Paul Mannion from the penalty spot - expertly dispatched after the Kilmacud Crokes man was fouled himself - and a Niall Scully goal, arriving with impeccable timing, following great work by Con O'Callaghan.

There you have it backs to the wall, solutions were found.

It is this trait which has been one of the most satisfying to watch over recent years - how the team think and work their way around the obstacles that are put in their way, be that packed defences or playing pitches that shrink in the summer heat!

Kevin McManamon perfectly summed up the spirit and special bond of the current Dublin senior football panel after this year's All-Ireland final victory over Tyrone.

"There's a deep friendship, deep brotherhood between the lads.

"Lads I started with in 2010, lads I came on the panel with first, Mick Fitzsimons, Mick Macauley, Eoghan O'Gara, James McCarthy, Cian O'Sullivan, these guys - they are my best mates and I've been through it all with them.

"The likes of Butsy, Paul Flynn, Bernard Brogan, we've been to war so many times. It is a deep bond, a brotherhood, no more so than I have great friendship with so many of the fellas who are only on the panel this year.

"From the guys who joined this year to Clucko, I'm so proud to be part of the team, proud to represent Dublin and so proud to have another title."

Some of the commentary on our senior footballers and management was eye-catching and I think it would be remiss of me not to let it pass unchallenged.

Words such as 'robots', 'automatons', 'emotionless' were used, by a small group of commentators, to describe our management and players on several occasions this summer.

Concerned by this matter we undertook an examination of the sum of the parts of all involved and am glad to report that no microchips, levers, wires, transistors, relays etc. were discovered! However, I can exclusively reveal that we did discover that Paul Mannion and Jack McCaffrey do have a sixth gear!

On a more serious note, I am not sure what purpose this fulfils for some commentators?

When we were less successful, we were ridiculed for being too showy etc. - now it's the opposite.

Perhaps Jim Gavin should run up and down the sideline during games gesturing to the crowd or throwing water bottles around to show his 'passion' or a senior ranking county board official should run to Hill 16 after some victory and throw their tie into the famous terrace?

The subject of Dublin's games development grants is another crude device used by some to try and devalue the achievements of Dublin's senior footballers this decade, those who want to engage in some alt-history of this decade.

The money Dublin has received has been invested in our Games Development programme solely at nursery and juvenile level. Our Go Games programme alone, over the last 10 years, has seen a participation growth of 58% in football and 98% in hurling and 11,500 fixtures scheduled annually for children in the Under 8 to Under 12 age groups.

Massive numbers attend nurseries the length and breadth of the county on a weekly basis. The focus is on enjoyment, fun and introducing young boys and girls to Gaelic games and their local clubs, while also trying to strengthen the link between the local primary schools and the clubs.

Many stay and enjoy great years with their local club, while others, unfortunately are lost to the game, concentrating eventually on other pursuits.

However, to draw a simple straight line, some linear equation, directly connecting this investment at nursery/juvenile level and the success of Dublin's senior footballers years later is inaccurate.

I have read articles using the figures of adult players in the capital to suggest that the grants have been invested in our adult games and indeed directly towards our senior footballers and hurlers. This is untrue and at best is mischievous.

We all learned to join the dots in the early years of primary school but we didn't all make it to the status of artists like Jack B. Yeats!

Results

The following is a record of the performances of our various teams in official competitions during the past 12 months:

Allianz Hurling League

27/01/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 15	Offaly	2 - 25
04/02/2018	Corrigan Park	Dublin	0 - 23	Antrim	0 - 22
17/02/2018	Gaelic Grounds	Dublin	0 - 17	Limerick	1 - 26
25/02/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 14	Galway	1 - 20
11/03/2018	O'Moore Park	Dublin	3 - 23	Laois	0 - 17
25/03/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 20	Tipperary	2 - 25

Leinster Senior Hurling Championship

13/05/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	3 - 16	Kilkenny	1 - 24
20/05/2018	Wexford	Dublin	2 - 14	Wexford	0 - 22
03/06/2017	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 24	Offaly	0 - 13
09/06/2018	Salthill	Dublin	2 - 19	Galway	0 - 26

Walsh Cup Senior Hurling

03/01/2018	Abbotstown	Dublin	4 - 18	Meath	0 - 14
07/01/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	4 - 16	Antrim	0 - 17
14/01/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 16	Wexford	1 - 20

Leinster U21 Hurling Championship

26/05/2018	Portlaoise	Dublin	4 - 16	Laois	1 - 10
06/06/2018	Carlow	Dublin	4 - 18	Carlow	0 - 12
13/06/2018	Mullingar	Dublin	2 - 13	Westmeath	1 - 13
20/06/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	3 - 12	Wexford	3 - 15

Leinster Minor Hurling Championship

13/05/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	4 - 12	Kilkenny	3 - 23
19/05/2018	Portlaoise	Dublin	2 - 21	Laois	0 - 7
27/05/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 16	Wexford	1 - 10
16/06/2018	Dowdallshill	Dublin	3 - 16	Antrim	0 - 4
23/06/2018	Wexford	Dublin	1 - 22	Wexford	3 - 13
30/06/2018	Portlaoise	Dublin	6 - 19	Kilkenny	7 - 12

All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship

28/07/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 16	Galway	3 - 22
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Allianz Football League

27/01/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Kildare	2 - 10
03/02/2018	Healy Park	Dublin	2 - 13	Tyrone	1 - 11
10/02/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 20	Donegal	0 - 15
24/02/2018	Castlebar	Dublin	2 - 10	Mayo	0 - 12
11/03/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Kerry	0 - 11

18/03/2018	Pearse Stadium	Dublin	0 - 13	Galway	0 - 13
25/03/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 17	Monaghan	2 - 12
01/04/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 18	Galway	0 - 14

Leinster Senior Football Championship

27/05/2018	Portlaoise	Dublin	4 - 25	Wicklow	1 - 11
10/06/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 25	Longford	0 - 12
24/06/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 25	Laois	0 - 10

All-Ireland Senior Football Championship Series

14/07/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 15	Donegal	0 - 16
21/07/2018	Omagh	Dublin	1 - 14	Tyrone	0 - 14
05/08/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	4 - 24	Roscommon	2 - 16
11/08/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 24	Galway	2 - 12
02/09/2018	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Tyrone	1 - 14

O'Byrne Cup Senior Football

03/01/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 13	Offaly	0 - 16
07/01/2018	Enniscorthy	Dublin	0 - 14	Wexford	1 - 12

Leinster U20 Football Championship

28/05/2018	Pearse Park	Dublin	2 - 21	Longford	0 - 11
04/06/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 16	Westmeath	1 - 13
16/06/2018	Wexford	Dublin	1 - 15	Wexford	0 - 11
30/06/2018	Navan	Dublin	4 - 16	Meath	2 - 10
06/07/2018	Tullamore	Dublin	0 - 10	Kildare	1 - 15

Leinster Minor Football Championship

07/05/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	3 - 15	Louth	1 - 7
23/05/2018	Navan	Dublin	2 - 8	Meath	1 - 13
30/05/2018	Tullamore	Dublin	2 - 11	Offaly	0 - 10
27/06/2018	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 8	Wicklow	2 - 6
03/07/2018	Mullingar	Dublin	5 - 19	Westmeath	0 - 9

All All Stars

Of course it was another unforgettable year in terms of on-field achievement for Dublin football. Four-in-a-row success in a row in the modern game is quite simply remarkable. But, in a purely personal capacity, I would like to touch on another aspect of this team. In every walk of life we aspire to role models, especially for our youth. It is hugely important that we have people that we can all look up to and seek to emulate. I suppose the current terminology, at least in our walk of life, is ‘sporting ambassadors’. We are very fortunate in Dublin GAA that we have a group of young men who epitomise the very best of what the city and the GAA is about. They contribute to their communities, to charities, to the GAA and to causes or issues that are important to them. Sometimes this can be very public in nature - and hugely valuable for that. Other times it is things that can go unseen and unstated – and that’s the way the lads want it. I have huge admiration for this work.

In a world that too often seems to dwell on negativity and pessimism it is wonderful and heartening to see a group of young men who see positivity in everything they do. Encouraged and assisted by management they contribute hugely to city life and beyond. They readily engage with their clubs, with their communities and with the supporters. They are selfless in their efforts and with their time and I know it is hugely appreciated both in the county and even further afield. I know I am not alone in my opinion when I say that it makes every one of them an All Star.

Land issues

Everybody is acutely aware of the housing crisis in the country and particularly in the Dublin area. There is huge pressure to build more houses, and quickly. This puts even more pressure on land in the county. The result is that sports clubs in Dublin find it increasingly difficult to acquire land and develop facilities as there is already little or no land availability and when there is, the cost is often exorbitant.

As if to exacerbate the situation and to further outline the unique problems facing the GAA in Dublin, we had a well-publicised scenario this year that could have resulted in a flagship club being literally sunk by a major Government-funded capital project. Thankfully that matter has been resolved and Na Fianna can continue their excellent work in catering for their community in Glasnevin. Nevertheless it again underlines the huge challenges facing the GAA in the capital.

Even beyond Dublin, many schools are built nowadays with no provision for sporting activity – with no fields or land adjoining. Too often, the local GAA club has to assist in rectifying this shortcoming. In my opinion, it is vitally important that suitable amenities are provided alongside any new housing projects and school builds as a matter of course.

Dublin cannot be allowed to become a city of concrete with no outlet for our youth to play sport and engage in healthy activities. I have previously mentioned the huge pressure that GAA clubs here face in terms of accommodating their growing membership and it is not a problem that is going to go away. Proper planning and provision is vital if Dublin is not to become a place to just work and sleep.

NAMA has largely delivered on its remit for both the Government and the tax payer. Is there a need now to sell off lands in bundles or at unnecessary haste when there could be a potentially major social dividend attached to them? What is left in the NAMA portfolio may not be massively attractive to investors but it could be gold dust to communities. The potential for a social dividend needs to be considered and weighted – it should not be all about money.

As NAMA winds down now and former employees move back into the development and construction sector it is more important than ever that the right - and fairest - decisions are made.

I would be more than happy to work closely with the Government in terms of developing facilities from property that is controlled by NAMA or indeed any other State body. With the GAA's deep penetration in our communities I feel that there is great scope for the Government to maximise the return to the taxpayer through partnership with sporting organisations who can provide much needed recreational amenities if land is made available at a reasonable and practical cost. The Government and the citizen would enjoy a massive and immediate return on investment – a clear case of value for money with the emphasis on value.

Tweaking The Super 8s

Twelve months ago, as we all awaited the arrival of the 'Super 8s' and various pundits queued up to ridicule the concept, I pleaded for patience. "Let's not rush to judgement. The

Super 8s are here for a three-year trial period so please give them a chance to sink or swim,” I wrote.

After one weekend, it seemed, the GAA’s latest big wheeze had sunk without trace. After two Croke Park double-headers on the same weekend produced four relatively ordinary contests, the jury was in with a unanimous verdict: game over, burst ball!

But that was a typically Irish response to change; maybe a typically kneejerk Gaelic games reaction too.

One weekend later, after an intriguing battle up in Omagh between Dublin and Tyrone, a Kildare/Galway showdown that ebbed and flowed at a frantic pace, and a roller-coaster Clones thriller between Monaghan and Kerry, finishing in dramatic deadlock, we were all heading for the Appeals Court. Maybe the Super 8s was a great idea, after all!

The truth, as ever, lies somewhere in between these polar opposites. It is neither the root of all fixture-making evil or a panacea for football’s ills. It is rather, I suspect, the first of several significant moves towards a different football championship.

But can it be improved? Yes. Should it be tweaked? Undoubtedly. You might accuse me of bias when I resist the argument that Croke Park cannot be considered an appropriate venue for hosting any neutral quarter-final fixture involving Dublin.

I still believe the Super 8s deserve an audition on the biggest stage and that all four neutral games should be played at HQ – but not on the first weekend, rather the last.

One obvious weakness in this year’s structure was the fact that Donegal opened their campaign with two games on the road, against Dublin and Roscommon, hence their understandable anger. They were, after all, Ulster champions – is that due reward?

The danger, here, is that Donegal could have been eliminated even before hosting a game. As it transpired, when it came to the crunch, they lost to Tyrone in Ballybofey ... but that doesn’t mask the unfairness of a scenario that was designed to foster a competitive round-robin series but has had the effect of punishing provincial champions.

My solution..... let all four provincial winners open the Super 8s with home advantage on the first weekend.

A New Football Landscape – Fears For Tiers?

Amid all this talk of the Super 8s, we shouldn't forget that there's a whole swathe of counties with little chance of advancing that deep into summer. I was struck by comments from Longford's Mickey Quinn, who admitted last September that he'd welcome a second-tier football championship – even though he didn't foresee one happening during his career.

"The most disappointing thing for ourselves was three championship games this year, same last year," Quinn remarked. "There's no continuity from year to year. You can't see progression from two or three games."

Hard to disagree. Don't forget that Longford have been an example of a so-called weaker county who can 'punch above their weight'. But to what end? An occasional big scalp?

And Longford aren't alone. In the summer just gone, counties from the lower divisions have suffered a series of crushing defeats against top-flight opposition. Waterford's delight at securing a rare qualifier win (over Wexford) was followed by the grim reality of a 27-point loss to Monaghan. Sligo shipped a 21-point defeat to Galway. Limerick conceded 5-19 to Mayo. Even Clare, who have made great strides and established themselves in Division 2, endured a 22-point setback against Kerry.

Dublin may have reached dizzy new heights under Jim Gavin, but it's doubtful whether all those counties suffering double-digit defeats to us have benefitted greatly from the experience.

The solution? Not for one second am I advocating abolishment of the provincial championships. Even those counties with little chance of silverware, still want to play in them. But what then? Have the qualifiers run their course? It seems to me, at this stage, that a second-tier championship is the next logical step.

The recent survey conducted by the Gaelic Players Association, revealing that 60pc of its football membership now favours a tiered SFC structure, was quite telling. On a cautionary

note, I'd be interested to know the results of a poll confined to players from Divisions 3 and 4 i.e. the ones directly affected.

Still, the GPA survey suggests that, even within a couple of years, the mood has altered and there's an appetite for change.

However, this will only work if there's buy-in from the counties affected. We can try and sell the benefits of a second-tier but we cannot impose one.

Ultimately, the competition must feel like something worth winning. Stage the final on the same Croke Park bill as the All-Ireland itself - that's a no-brainer. Why not also have the carrot of a team holiday for the winners, along with promotion to the Sam Maguire competition? And a separate All Stars scheme?

A lot can be achieved through imaginative thinking and marketing and the first rule for the PR gurus..... don't call it a B championship!

A Roaring Round-Robin Success

Last summer saw the first ever staging of round-robin groups in the Leinster and Munster senior hurling championships. After a century and more of the old knockout format (even with the addition of qualifiers to soften the blow), this was a quite radical departure for the GAA.

For Dublin, as alluded to elsewhere in this report, it was a case of close-but-no-cigar. What if we'd held on against Kilkenny? And then Wexford? How might the summer have unfolded?

But just because Dublin fell short, I have no inclination to query the initial year-one success of this three-year trial. It was hell-for-leather, metaphorically as well as literally, from the middle of May until the final round of group games.

Never before has hurling enjoyed early-summer centre-stage quite like this. For a few frenetic weeks, it felt as though the football – with its same old, humdrum provincial structure – was operating in the shadows.

You could argue that the GAA got lucky, aided by the current competitiveness of hurling with so many of the ten tier-one counties operating at a relatively similar level. Thus, we had

a litany of close matches, including several draws in Munster, as well as jaw-dropping comebacks and several dollops of controversy.

Was the structure perfect? Clearly not, and the fact that two counties in each province had to play on four consecutive weekends was the most obvious inequity. But this weakness has already been addressed in the schedule of games for 2019.

Experimental Rules

While we should never be afraid or reluctant to embrace the challenge of new rules, it is with equal measures of interest and apprehension that I await the trial period of the new rules.

From the outset it should be stated that no rule changes will affect the footballing philosophy of managers/coaches who worship at the altar of massed defences and the more negative game-plans that certainly have become more prevalent in the past few seasons. And I'd argue certainly that some of the current trial rules won't either.

I thought it would be more interesting if a 13-a-side game was trialled without any alterations to the playing rules to see if it would alleviate some of the gridlock that sometimes permeates Gaelic football.

In a summer just passed the comparison of hurling and Gaelic football was always going to make the 'big ball game' look like the ugly duckling. But even that is interesting.

When a game of hurling is not of five-star quality, the analysis will more often than not concentrate on positives within the game, the defensive work, the hooking/blocking, or some individual acts of great skill.

Less so in football, where the implementation of defensive tactics make it a more difficult game to score in, and such strategies seldom enjoy success in hurling because of the long-range accuracy of players on summer days.

Unfortunately when it comes to football, more of a 'Statler and Waldorf' tone is set from the get-go by some of Gaelic football's leading analysts, if the game does not enrich our summer afternoons. This tone spreads like St Brigid's cloak and by midweek the end of the world is nigh!

Football and hurling are two separate sports, under the one sporting umbrella, and that should be reflected more in analysis. Constantly comparing the two will inevitably result in misleading conclusions.

Back to the experimental rules there are three in particular that I would be apprehensive about:

- *The restriction to a chain of three consecutive handpasses* - handpassing can be the most effective skill in prising open a massed defence. So are we trying to turn the clock back on our games by a few decades, back to the days of the inaccurate drop-kick and crepe paper hat ('Up Down' was a particular favourite!)? Only recently in this year's Ulster Club SFC final, a fine point from Odhran Mac Niallais for Gweedore against Scotstown would have been ruled out under the experimental rule. The same for James McCarthy's crucial goal against Tyrone in Omagh in the Super 8s and Michael Farragher's stunning goal for Corofin in last March's All-Ireland Club SFC final. But they're not all in the present ... Mick Galvin's stunning goal in the 1994 All-Ireland SFC semi-final against Leitrim not to mention Kevin Foley's chilling strike that helped settle the 1991 epic saga would have been ruled out too!
- *The kickout rule* - the quick restart is an important option in the modern game where defensive teams only come out of the shell on occasion. The new 20-metre line rule will have the effect of slowing down restarts and hence slowing down the game. It could also have the unintended consequence of goalkeepers having to contend with interference from opposition players as they attempt to get through the traffic out to the 20-metre line. And then when they get there they will be forced to wait until all players have retreated 13 metres back from the 20-metre line.
- *Sideline rule* - again another tweak that could prove counter-productive with the defensive team overloading their own sector of field and the team in possession end up hoisting aimless ball in the direction of their opponent's goal.

In conclusion, when taken as a package I fear the new rules will be detrimental to the game and, will in fact, strengthen the hand of those who worship at the altar of the more defensive/negative game.

Páirc Uí Chaoimh Controversy

This Summer saw our Association embroiled in an issue which was none of our own making, regarding the use of Páirc Uí Chaoimh. As is the nature of such things in recent times, a huge and unnecessary controversy had blown up on social media days before the GAA were even approached about the event. It is maybe ironic that a progressive organisation like the GAA can be accused of being archaic when all the evidence says otherwise. We have excellent clubs and infrastructure - and a young and vibrant membership. Our funding is transparent, hugely efficient and is the embodiment of added value.

The nature of the criticism from some quarters was disappointing but unfortunately in keeping with an increasing propensity to engage in megaphone diplomacy and soundbites. It was most unfortunate to hear pejorative terms such as 'dinosaur' being used. Maybe those that engaged in this manner should call down to their local GAA club to see what's going on. They are more likely to see training tops than triceratops. I am happy that the matter was ultimately resolved to the satisfaction of all and I would commend our Uachtarán for his handling of a delicate issue, often in the face of a sustained, unfair and ill-informed attack.

The Scourge of Violence

Despite the above, we can't forget that social media has some very positive uses, even when it involves casting a spotlight on negative events.

The autumn just gone brought with it a flurry of violent outbreaks at club matches. Games around the country became headline news for all the wrong reasons.

Much of the brawling, on the pitch and off it, was captured by mobile phone video-recording and duly went viral on various social media platforms.

Here is one example where new technology can be for the long-term betterment of the Association. Notwithstanding the negative PR, it is far better that culprits are exposed and punished under rule ... and for the wider GAA family (players, mentors and supporters) to realise, not just the stupidity of their actions, but the serious dangers involved.

In the past, if there were unsavoury incidents in games, ones often resulting in injury, there was often a code of omerta or you'd hear the following ... 'nothing much happened' 'it is

being blown out of all proportion' ... 'it's part and parcel of the game'. Mobile phone evidence proves to the contrary.

A recent spate of brawls and assaults in schoolboy and junior soccer matches underlines that this problem is not confined to the GAA. So is it a broader societal issue as well as a sporting issue?

Thankfully, in recent years, Dublin GAA has not been blighted by violence to any great extent that there are no grounds for us to be complacent.

The GAA president, John Horan, struck precisely the right note when he said: "We cannot allow people to believe that they can behave differently than they would on the street just because they are wearing a jersey or a team tracksuit top or are attending a game ... the perpetrators of these incidents are not above the law."

For those of you still not convinced, consider the words of Tyrone All-Ireland winner Enda McGinley, a clinical specialist physiotherapist working in the Trauma and Orthopaedics ward of Craigavon Hospital.

"Everyone has heard of the one-punch fatalities and there are shocking incidences. But all you have to do is catch one person correctly and you can do massive damage," McGinley warned.

"As much as it is bad PR, bad PR goes away. Serious damage doesn't. I work in the health sector, so you are aware that these things that change lives happen in split seconds and there is plenty of regret afterwards."

Abuse Of Managers

When Éamonn Fitzmaurice marked his resignation as Kerry football boss with the admission that he had a "box full of anonymous letters" at home, he opened a floodgate of similar revelations from fellow managers.

Recalling his first spell as Mayo manager, James Horan said some of the letters he received were so bad that he felt the need to contact Gardaí.

Like Fitzmaurice, Limerick hurling boss John Kiely has a box of letters that is vetted by his wife. “The anonymous stuff is just nasty,” he commented.

Even at minor level, Galway hurling manager, Jeffrey Lynskey, cited an incident from last summer where board members were verbally attacked over his non-selection of certain players.

"And you're thinking, 'Right, is this the time now to go to the guards with it to protect myself?' This type of stuff, does it concern me? The incident a couple of weeks ago did because of the vitriol that was there and the angst that was there and the toxicity of it," said Lynskey.

I could go further but I'm sure you get the picture. Perhaps the most depressing element is touched on by a further comment from Kiely: “It has no place in the game, it's unfortunate, but it's just there.”

Is there anything we can do to halt this race to the bottom? It's hard to be sanguine given the cruder facets of social media discourse and the readiness of anonymous keyboard warriors to vent their fury after a result goes awry and he (or she) is seeking a scapegoat.

But then again, as the boxes of evidence testify, the abuse isn't confined to online tirades. Perhaps even more alarming, was Fitzmaurice's subsequent revelation that one of his Kerry players received a letter in which he was told “to jump off a cliff and take three or four other players with him. They were named in the letter.” He added that “when it goes to a player, it's gone too far”.

It has certainly gone too far. You may need a thick skin to survive at this elite level but if this spiral of abuse continues, there may come a day when more and more potential managers decide it simply isn't worth the hassle.

Sorting Out The Club Season

It's hardly a State secret that the GAA has a long-running problem with club fixtures. The imbalance between club and county activity has grown over the years and has left a huge cohort of disaffected club players who, let's not forget, provide the overwhelming majority of our playing membership.

In fairness, Croke Park has taken several seismic decisions to correct the disparity – congesting the championship season, bringing forward the All-Ireland finals, and creating a ‘club-only’ month in April.

Should we judge these moves after just one season? No, that strikes us as premature. The new calendar needs time to bed in and, more specifically, some county boards are likely to have treaded cautiously this year, keen to see how the new inter-county structure worked in practice.

Going forward, however, the onus is now on all counties to make the season work. To ensure that our own club championship structures are fit-for-purpose – and to ensure that players don’t walk away from Gaelic games, disillusioned by the fixture calendar and scheduling of games.

Despite reaching (and winning) another All-Ireland SFC final, Dublin still succeeded in running off its senior football championship on schedule, finishing on the October Bank Holiday weekend. Doubtless, it helped that we had played two rounds of games, in our new group format, back in April.

Several other counties, eliminated from the championship much earlier in the summer, found it more of a struggle. I appreciate that several local factors – including replays and the cross-over county final involvement of dual players – contributed to an unfortunate dilemma in some counties.

There is also the need for greater honesty in the overall discourse on the fixture issue.

The carping of some former intercounty players, who had no issue being lured to the States when their county was eliminated from the championship but are now insisting on a ‘club comes first’ approach, is interesting to say the least. We should all take a look in the mirror once in a while!

The intercounty game is the dynamo from which clubs are assisted in terms of club grants etc. so we need to be mindful of the importance of our intercounty games in our blueprint, our vision for the future.

That said, in the long term, all stakeholders in the GAA must come together to ensure that some of the scenarios that occurred in recent seasons are never repeated.

U20 Football Development Grade

A Football Development U20 grade is to be introduced next year. Teams will get a minimum of four league games and one championship game. Once again this will impact on clubs, taking more and more players away from club games. It seems strange that the GAA proposes to make more time for club games by having MORE county games rather than less!

Inter County Minor Grade

While the idea of making things easier for the Leaving Certificate student by moving minor to U17 is welcome, it has had unintended effects. With more and more schools introducing a compulsory Transition Year and with U16s now able to play at the minor grade two issues have arisen. Firstly, some U16s can be called into a minor set up in Third Year, which of course is the year they do their Junior Cert. And secondly having completed Transition Year many students are actually too old to play U17 in their fifth year in school. And with the move from U21 to U20 these students may well be called into U20 squads in their Sixth Year, which is arguably more of a problem than when Sixth Year students were playing minor. We need a year or two more of this experiment to see how things pan out but the law of unintended consequences does seem to be raising its head at minor level.

Club Competitions

Cuala retained their All-Ireland club hurling title with a heroic display of determination to defeat Na Piarsaigh (Limerick) by 2 - 17 to 1 - 17 after a replay. In Dublin, Cuala were aiming for a fourth consecutive Dublin Senior Hurling Championship title. They advanced to the semi-final stage of the competition but were defeated by Kilmacud Crokes by 3 - 13 to 0 - 17, following a pulsating game. Both Kilmacud Crokes and Ballyboden St. Enda's were seeking their seventh Dublin senior hurling title but it was Ballyboden who took the honours after a replay, on the scoreline of 2 - 15 to 1-15.

Ballyboden St. Enda's have had a hugely exciting Leinster campaign with extra time needed to beat Westmeath's Clonkill and extra, extra time needed to account for Coolderry from Offaly before booking their final spot against Kilkenny kingpins, Ballyhale Shamrocks.

However Ballyhale were very impressive in a one-sided game and won convincingly 2 - 21 to 0 - 11.

Kilmacud Crokes won their seventh Dublin Senior Football Championship title when defeating St. Jude's, who were seeking their first title, by 2 - 12 to 0 - 13 in the final. It was their first victory since 2010. Crokes have progressed to the Leinster Final with victories over Dunboyne and Portlaoise and will play Mullinalaghta St. Columba's on 9th December.

Faughs and Thomas Davis won the Senior 2 Hurling and Football Championships respectively. Congratulations also to Round Towers, Lusk, who won the Intermediate Football Championships and will now compete at senior status in 2019.

The format of our club football championships is an issue that I have highlighted for many years in my Convention reports. I suggested that the one chance knockout system of football championship was not best suited to the needs of our players or clubs. There was also a view, among smaller clubs especially, that they were not getting a fair chance, by having to compete against second or third teams from larger clubs, in their efforts to achieve championship success or representing Dublin in provincial competitions.

Our new 16-team Senior Football Championship (SFC) 1 and SFC2 arguably worked well for the most part. I have written in the past about the number of totally one-sided SFC games and, this year, the new format incorporated a very competitive round-robin stage which culminated in some fine contests during the knockout phase. One tweak we should possibly make is that two teams are promoted from SFC2 each year, with two heading in the opposite direction.

The new proposals give the club player more meaningful games against opposing teams of a similar standard. The Junior 2 Football Championship Final was played before the Senior 1 Final in Parnell Park and this was a great occasion for the players, mentors and supporters from both Ranelagh Gaels and Ballyfermot De La Salle.

Inter-Club Transfers

GAA clubs rely on the support of volunteers. If it wasn't for their help, enthusiasm, talent and commitment, on top of their full-time jobs, clubs wouldn't even exist. Team mentors invest their time in coaching young players and take great pride in these players reaching adult

status and possible county representation. The more talented players from clubs participating in the lower divisions are often targeted by top Division 1 clubs to boost their squads to achieve championship success. If these transfers are approved, it often has a detrimental effect on the morale of the club/team affected.

All clubs should look at the “bigger picture” when processing transfer applications. Before a Club Secretary signs the transfer application for an incoming player, the Club Executive should contact the player’s club to discuss the situation with their counterparts. Regretfully, this does not happen and I would encourage a greater respect for the work that each club does. In certain cases, transfers are instigated by a Team Manager who, in many circumstances, is a hired hand. Club Officers should not delegate authority to their team managers to recruit members to their club.

Metro Link

In late March, Na Fianna GAA Club were advised by representatives from Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) that the construction programme for the proposed Metro Link (formerly known as Metro North and due to commence in 2020), would involve the acquisition of the front pitch and both all-weather pitches on Mobhi Road. This area would become a Tunnel Boring Depot for the duration of the Metro Link construction project, for a minimum of 3 years or potentially, and more likely, 6 or more years. So potentially no main Mobhi Road pitch or any All-Weather pitches for the best part of a decade!

This proposed development would have been irreparably damaging to the club generally and to a generation of young Na Fianna members. With its ability to field teams and run its Nursery for its youngest players severely impacted, the continued existence of one of the most vibrant, inclusive and progressive clubs in the country would have been in serious jeopardy. While I acknowledge that the development of a Metrolink rail line between Sandymount and Swords will be an essential addition to the city’s transport infrastructure, such projects should never be at any cost - and certainly should not be at the expense of a club with 3,000 members that is at the heart of their community. Indeed, I studied the route and I could not find anywhere else along the line that would have had a more negative and devastating impact.

I wish to congratulate Na Fianna for the dignified and professional manner in which they addressed this serious issue. Their consultation with their membership underlined the spirit

and unity in the club and their engagement with the National Transport Authority meant that they made their case in the most cogent and comprehensive way possible.

Arising from this turn of events, the County Board has undertaken a study in measuring, managing and accounting for the social value and impact of Na Fianna GAA Club. The findings will then be extrapolated to all clubs and, from this process, we will have a measure of the contribution and value of Dublin GAA across our communities and in the county in general.

Spawell Complex

Since the completion of our strategic plan - *The Blue Wave Strategy 2011 - 2017* - the Dublin County Committee has focussed on identifying and procuring additional GAA facilities in Dublin to meet the demands of the growing numbers of participants who wish to play our games. This work is being carried out at a time when most clubs are finding it impossible to acquire land to develop additional pitches, due to both the shortage and the increasingly high cost of land in Dublin.

In addition to acquiring land close to new and developing clubs the County Committee recognises that the optimum way forward is for Dublin GAA to acquire sites around the county to allow it provide cluster facilities with floodlights and all-weather capacity for use on a shared basis by Dublin GAA clubs.

The concept of developing cluster facilities has the following advantages:-

- They allow maximum utilisation of the pitches as they are not subject to the impact of individual club life-cycles where pitches can often be underutilised for several years;
- They assist the County Committee in putting forward a cohesive plan to Government or to the Local Authority to obtain development funding; and
- They allow the clubs to focus on other areas such as recruitment, retention and coaching of players of all genders and age groups.

The Dublin County Committee recognised the Spawell complex, as one of the locations, which represented a unique opportunity to house a cluster facility which would achieve all the above objectives. The site is in a pivotal position at the south east corner of Tymon Park. It is immediately adjacent to the M50 at the Tallaght exit (at N81), servicing the entire Dublin

Motorway network and thus provides convenient access by road from all parts of Dublin. It is serviced by several bus routes (including QBC routes along the N81 boundary of the site) and rail (Luas to Tallaght at about 2 kilometres) and has excellent pedestrian and cycle access. It is immediately adjacent to a number of Dublin GAA clubs and is within convenient travel distance for most Dublin GAA clubs from all catchment areas.

The County Committee finalised the purchase of the complex in 2017 through a subsidy company, Blue Clusters CLG. This company is mandated to develop, operate and manage the Spawell Complex on behalf of Dublin GAA. In the intervening period, the company's board of directors - under the chairmanship of Sean Benton - has continued to manage the operations on site and work on the development of the masterplan for the entire complex.

The development of the masterplan necessitated the commissioning of several reports:

- Topographical survey of the site where the pitches will be located;
- Survey of existing drainage system;
- Survey of the internal layout and the elevations of the buildings; and
- Preparation of a feasibility study for the site.

Some of the surveys are completed and the remaining reports will be completed in early 2019. The board expect that the site will allow for one All Weather Pitch, three Prunty Pitches, Floodlights, Training Areas, Hurling Wall and dressing rooms. It is expected that work will commence on site in mid-2019.

I wish to thank Sean Benton and the other members of project team - Sean Shanley, Michael Hand, Jim Brogan Brendan Waters, Gerry McGreevy - for their commitment to this development. The support for this project from Árd Stiúrthóir Tom Ryan and the GAA Director of Finance, Gerard Mulryan, is also appreciated.

GAA Investment

I am proud that the GAA can say that for every euro the organisation takes in, 80 cent is invested back at grassroots level. This is a phenomenal percentage and the proof can be seen in every parish in this country in terms of infrastructure, facilities and an ever increasing coaching and games development network. The GAA is the very essence, the very social fabric in almost every corner of Ireland. This is possible through a deep and sustained

investment in our people and our society. And it is not merely a financial investment. It is an investment of time and of effort. It is thousands of hours of volunteering and selflessness. It is in providing transport, in lining pitches, in selling lotto tickets, in coaching, in mentoring, and in building self-esteem. It is being an active and willing participant in a vibrant community. That is the GAA family.

I have no doubt that any Government investment in our Association is among the most cost effective and productive of any Government investment in any sector. I believe that the value of every cent granted is returned in multiples. The GAA provides a service in communities - both on and off the pitch - that is unmatched and that goes right to the heart of these communities. Aside from the playing activity, the organisation has increasingly involved itself in programmes dealing with social issues such as mental health, gambling addiction, alcohol abuse and other health and welfare issues. I think any member of Government would agree that any investment in the GAA can be held up in any forum as a shining example of not just cost effectiveness, but investment that consistently delivers for Irish society with a real and tangible return and reward on the ground.

Sponsorship

Under the management of Tomás Quinn, Commercial and Marketing Manager, our sponsorship portfolio continues to develop and the outstanding performance from our teams make us an attractive marketing platform for brands and organisations. I wish to thank Tomás for his outstanding work in the area of sponsorship and marketing.

Our thanks to AIG CEO - Declan O'Rourke - and all of his colleagues for their sponsorship and friendship as we regard AIG as real team players, integral to our development. In addition, to the commitment that AIG bring to Dublin GAA, they continue to be a central part to growing our participation rates across the county through their support for a number of initiatives. We were delighted to extend our partnership agreement with AIG for another five year term.

I would like to welcome our new partners Intersport Elvery's who, along with AIB, Britvic, Subaru and our family of partners, provide valuable support to Dublin GAA. Our playing gear sponsorship was renewed in the past year and our thanks to Tony Towell and his team in O'Neill's for their support over the years. We value our partnerships with the corporate sector and look forward to another year working to our mutual benefit.

The GAA – A True Community Organisation

The local GAA club is the beating heart of every community in the country. It provides a base and structure which is the catalyst of much community activity and volunteerism. It fosters a spirit of participation, cooperation and belonging. As well as all this, many local clubs provide for specific needs in a lot of our communities and this often goes unnoticed.

When asked what it is like to be the parent of a child or young adult with special needs, parents often describe feelings of abandonment, exhaustion, hard work and a sense of isolation. The experience of some parents is that those with disabilities can become detached from their communities and have extreme difficulties building friendships. In essence, they don't have the same opportunities as others.

I was, therefore, delighted to hear about the All-Stars initiative at Raheny GAA club. This innovative initiative sees a group of children with special needs learn GAA skills with a dedicated group of coaches at the club every Friday. The All-Stars is the brainchild of club-member, Maria Curtis, who started the venture in 2016 and has seen it go from strength to strength. Every one of the children involved has benefitted massively from this inspiring sporting and social outlet. It has also helped to create a tightly-knit network among the children's parents.

One of the main ingredients for 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. It would be wonderful to see this brilliant idea and initiative spread around the country, through our GAA clubs. We could genuinely then have All-Stars at every club.

Corporate Trustee

The Corporate Trustee is a separate legal entity, a Trust Company, called “Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Teoranta”, set up by the GAA. The Trust Company holds the property for and on behalf of the Club. Clubs can now opt to hold property through the Corporate Trustee. Holding property through the Corporate Trustee does not affect the ownership in any way but can have advantages in the way of continuous amendments to the title is avoided when trustees die or retire. The Corporate Trustee is optional. There are three options available to clubs:-

- *OPTION 1 - Clubs may elect to do nothing and to continue to hold Club property through personal Trustees;*
- *OPTION 2 - Clubs may elect to introduce a partial change in that case property is held by a combination of personal trustees and the Corporate Trustee; or*
- *OPTION 3 - Clubs may elect to have property held only through the Corporate Trustee.*

The advantages of changing to Option 3 where property is held only by the Corporate Trustee are:-

- Individuals are no longer trustees and therefore not exposed should the club/unit be sued;
- It is straightforward manner of holding title. Currently, when individual trustees retire or die there can be delays and cost in having them removed from title and the property transferred into the name of the incoming trustees. Accordingly, over a period of a number of years this can give rise to significant difficulties when dealing with club property. This does not arise in the case of the Corporate Trustee;
- If a personal trustee was to get into financial difficulties, resulting in a judgment being obtained and registered on the club property, this can cause complications and delays in any dealings with the property; and
- Any dealings with club property will be streamlined without having to have multiple documents executed by a number of different personal trustees.

The Management Committee recommend option 3 for the following reasons:-

- No change in local Executive power;
- Corporate Trustee must comply with local Executive directives;
- No delay/cost due to the death or retirement of a Trustee;
- Individuals are no longer trustees and therefore cannot be exposed to litigation; and
- Any dealings with the club property will be streamlined without the need for multiple documents to multiple trustees.

Injury Benefit Fund

The GAA Injury Benefit Fund is not insurance. The Injury Fund is a benefit cover funded entirely from Club and Central Council contributions. The Injury Benefit Fund is not an

Insurance Scheme and is, therefore, not regulated by the Central Bank. The Fund provides cover for registered members participating in an official fixture or official supervised training session as part of a team registered with the fund. Willis are the appointed Administrators of the Fund and they administer the fund on behalf of the GAA.

There is no legal obligation on the GAA to provide an Injury Fund. Risk is an inherent factor in sport, as in life. When members voluntarily take part in Club activities they accept the risks that such participation may bring. Legal representation is not required and there is strictly no legal expenses cover amongst the benefits provided.

The Injury Benefit Fund does not seek to fully compensate but to supplement other covers such as Private Health Insurance, National Health Insurance, Personal Accident Cover, Employment benefit covers and Income Payment protection covers. The Fund only provides cover for otherwise unrecoverable losses up to the benefit limits. Ultimately, the responsibility to ensure that adequate cover is in place rests with the individual member, commensurate with their specific individual needs.

Registration of teams is completed by clubs via GAA Management System (Servasport) Cover is provided on an annual basis and the period of cover runs from 1st January to 31st December. Clubs are required to register teams annually as soon as possible after 1st January. Payment of team subscriptions is due to Croke Park on or before 31st March annually. Clubs are provided 3 months grace to submit payment of subscriptions. Members and teams will be covered to 31st March, provided payment is received on or before 31st March.

Hurling Helmets

A horrific injury suffered by an adult player in a recent club game has illustrated the potential dangers posed by defective hurling helmets. A recent medical study carried out by the School of Health and Human Performance in DCU and Athlone IT's Department of Sport and Health Sciences claimed that almost a third of 304 players contacted admitted to modifying their helmet in some way.

Hurling helmets at every age and level for training and playing of matches has been compulsory since 2010. However, there has been anecdotal evidence of a culture of players removing bars from faceguards to improve their vision – but at the risk of leaving them exposed to potentially significant eye and facial injuries.

The rule book states it is the player's responsibility to ensure their helmet meets the safety standard of IS355 (i.e. is not tampered or modified in any way from purchase). There is also an exclusion in the terms of the Injury Benefit Fund mentioned earlier: *If a claimant sustains an injury while participating in Hurling and he \ she is not wearing a helmet with a facial guard that meets the standards set out in IS355 or other replacement standard as determined by the National Safety Authority of Ireland (NSAI) as per the Official Guide, the claim will be declined.*

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 Injury Benefit Fund.

Development Officer

During the year, our Development Officer, Ken O'Sullivan, organised the new phase of the Club Leadership Development Programme for Clubs. The training programme was designed to support the club Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, PRO, with the core knowledge and key leadership skills to effectively carry out their important roles.

A Club AGM workshop was held on 1st November to help clubs to run an effective AGM, in compliance with the rules and guidelines set down in the GAA's Official Guide and Club Constitution.

The Annual General Meeting is an important event in a GAA Club's calendar and should incorporate a review of the work and club activity of the previous year, an analysis of financial statements, the election and/or appointment of Club Officers and Executive Committee Members, and a discussion among members on Club and Association policies.

Rules 8.1 to 9.6 inclusive of the Club constitution govern the calling and voting procedures at an AGM. In summary:-

- At least 28 days' notice in writing must be given to members of the date of the AGM;
- In advising members of the date of the AGM, invite nominations for positions on the Club Executive for the following year and include a 'notice of motions' form;
- Specify the return date of motions and nominations;
- Note that this date must be at least 21 days before the AGM;

- Documentation, including a copy of the agenda, a copy of the Secretary's report, a copy of financial statements, details of nominations to the Executive Committee and a copy of any motions for consideration. must be sent to members at least 10 days before the AGM; and
- 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 each year) 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.

GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has been in effect since 25th May 2018. Data Protection legislation is intended to protect the right to privacy of individuals and seeks to ensure that Personal Information is used appropriately by organisations that may have it.

Data protection relates to any information that can be used to identify a living person such as name, address, phone number, date of birth etc. The onus is on the person or entity that uses a person's information to comply with the legislation and to demonstrate compliance. This new law affects all GAA clubs and has an impact on every club's use of personal data, so it is very important that each Club is aware of how these new laws affect them.

Conal Markey, IT Officer, briefed the County Committee on the steps to be taken by clubs in order to comply with GDPR. He also arranged a further presentation for clubs in the autumn with Kelly Cunningham, GAA Data Protection Officer.

The obvious and immediate impact for clubs is on membership applications. Legal advice has been obtained and the appropriate wording is reflected in the sample membership form in the Official Guide.

Health and Wellbeing

The County Health and Wellbeing Committee have been very active during the past year and when challenging times arise, as they inevitably do from time to time, they rally to support those affected. Our website www.dublingaa.ie/health-wellness is a source of information for clubs and individuals containing important contacts and health and wellbeing information and resources. A number of high profile initiatives were also undertaken during the year including:-

- Healthy Club Officer Training;
- Physical Wellness;
- Social Interaction; and
- Emotional Wellness.

Dublin GAA is committed to promoting health and wellbeing within our membership, our clubs, and our communities. We aim to achieve this through the provision of information, initiatives and campaigns to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Our sincere thanks to Chairperson, Michael O'Toole (Craobh Chiaráin) and the committee for their excellent work in this area. This is a service for all the clubs and the committee volunteers are selfless and their immense contribution is done quietly and confidentially.

Press and Communications

I wish to thank The Herald for their continued coverage of Dublin GAA. The Fingal Independent and local community newspapers also give excellent coverage and analysis of our games. It is important that juvenile games are covered prominently in these newspapers as it will help to retain the interest of our young members. Our thanks to the members of the press and radio for their on-going co-operation during the year.

Mick Hanley and Fergus Carroll from Dublin City FM (103.2) and Near FM (90.3) respectively, give wide coverage to our games with live broadcasts from both inter-county and club games.

Our website www.dublingaa.ie continues to attract new visitors and our social media accounts are increasing as the quality of our content remains high with improved offering on match days. This allows us to keep our supporters at home and abroad up-to-date with the latest news and views on Dublin GAA. We also produced a number of DubZone Newsletters during the year. These Newsletters provide some exclusive content relating to teams and also facilitates our commercial partners in publicising product messages.

This year we also began live streaming some Dublin senior football and hurling club championship matches on our DubsTV YouTube channel. Where possible we will look to work with TG4 or Eir Sport to ensure maximum coverage of our club games but when this is not possible we hope to cover games through our own channels.

Hearings Committee

Our Hearings Committee adjudicate on all disciplinary matters where a hearing is prescribed and requested, relating to the enforcement of rules arising from matters under the jurisdiction of the County Committee. The CCC proposes a penalty which is either accepted or rejected. If an individual or unit does not accept the proposed penalty, a hearing is granted. The Hearings Committee (decision makers) either impose a penalty or exonerate based on evidence presented during the hearing. If a penalty is imposed by the Hearings Committee, and the defending party is not willing to accept the imposed penalty, then an appeal can be lodged to the Leinster Council.

We have been very fortunate in the high calibre of individuals who have agreed to serve on our Hearings Committee and I can testify to their fairness, meticulousness and efficiency. I wish to thank Michael Errity and Tom O'Shea and their committee members for their commitment to this process.

Coiste na nÓg

Coiste na nÓg achieved their principle objectives this year of providing the juvenile sections of our clubs with a programme of meaningful games of a quantity and frequency to satisfy players, mentors and parents. CCC1 & CCC2 arranged almost 16,000 fixtures covering the and all competitions have now been completed.

Damian Murphy has included in this booklet his excellent and comprehensive report to the Juvenile AGM and I wish to thank him and Kathleen McPoland, Anne O'Dea, Declan O'Leary, the Officers of CCC1 and CCC2 and Coiste na nÓg Chairperson Bernie MacLaughlin, for their outstanding commitment to juvenile games in the county. The foundation for the recent successes at inter-county level is due to the positive impact of an organised frequent fixtures calendar programme provided by Coiste na nÓg and the buy-in from our clubs.

All Ticket Matches

This year we were involved in a total of eighteen all-ticket games commencing with the Spring Series and concluding on 2nd September with the All-Ireland Senior Football Final. The revised format for the senior inter-county championship and the Super 8s placed a heavy burden on the staff, particularly when games are scheduled for consecutive weeks. The

collection and reconciliation of payments are also very time-consuming. The co-operation of all the clubs was appreciated, especially the individual club co-ordinators who have the unenviable task of satisfying their members requests. A special word of thanks to Fiona Waters and her staff for their exemplary commitment and assistance for the duration of the ticket season.

Grounds

Requests for the use of our County Ground continue to increase. Apart from our local competitions at adult and juvenile level, our grounds are used by Central and Leinster Council, Dublin and Leinster Colleges, Third Level, Camogie and Ladies Football Organisations, Cumann na mBunscol and Fingal Primary Schools.

Parnell Park was in excellent condition for the majority of the 172 games played at the venue during the year, despite the extremes of weather. I am indebted to our grounds-man, Noel Brady, for his efforts. Everyone wants to have the pitch in pristine condition for their game but no natural playing surface can cope with our comprehensive schedule without damage to the pitch.

Accordingly, at certain times of the year, it is necessary to close Parnell Park in particular. While it is understandable that the majority of clubs wish to play important games in Parnell Park, it is not possible to host all adult finals there, although every effort is made to host juvenile finals.

Attendances at the majority of championship games in Parnell Park were extremely disappointing during the year. It was remarkable to witness the mass exodus of spectators after some games, as a second attractive fixture was about to commence. The County Board and clubs both need to look at ways of promoting the games - both to club members and members of the public - through publicity in the club, around the local community and on social media.

A special word of thanks to Charlie Canavan for his attention to Parnell Park. His willingness to cater for the games programme, training sessions, coaching seminars and all committee meetings is very much appreciated. €21,000 was collected and donated to St. Francis Hospice from a Coffee Morning arranged by the staff and from the distribution of team sheets in

Parnell Park for championship games co-ordinated by O'Tooles GAA Club. The total amount raised to date, since these initiatives commenced is a staggering €200,000.

The numerous games programmes staged in Parnell Park entails a significant amount of time for the essential preparation and planning. This involves communicating with all the statutory agencies to ensure the safety of all our patrons. I am also indebted to Noel Murphy and the very small team of regular stewards for their assistance, their attention to their different duties and their courtesy to our patrons, all of which adds to the presentation of our games.

I would appeal to clubs to provide additional stewards for Parnell Park and to co-operate with requests from stewards. I would also appeal to Club Officers to instruct their club management teams to co-operate with the stewards on match days and, in particular, to control their antics on the sideline during the course of our games.

Friends of Dublin Hurling

A very enjoyable and successful evening was held recently by the Friends of Dublin Hurling who were established to support all Dublin teams at colleges and inter-county level, including development squads. New hurling Manager, Mattie Kenny was in attendance and County Chairman, Sean Shanley, presented the Lar Foley Hall of Fame Award to Tom O'Donnell from Dublin Colleges.

Chris Crummey won the 'Senior Hurler of the Year Award' and Paddy Smyth won the 'Young Hurler of the Year'. In addition, the work being done by clubs and schools for the development of hurling in Dublin was recognised through the 'Club of the Year' awards at Senior (Naomh Fionnbarra) and Juvenile (Kevin's) and also the School of the Year Second Level (St. Mac Dara's Templeogue) and Primary (Griffeen Valley ETNS Lucan).

Games Promotion Officers

The deployment of Games Promotion Officers (GPOs) within clubs / communities in Dublin has provided a resource, which if managed and utilised in an efficient manner, can support the volunteers in providing a games and skill development programme that will increase our participation numbers within Dublin. The ethos of our Association is that we are a voluntary-led organisation and it is essential to the long-term viability of this deployment that we have management structures, which reflect this ethos.

The single most important element of the GPO scheme is the steering committee within clubs. The capacity of the initiative to deliver real value for each club is determined by the focus and drive that these steering committees bring. Each club has its own individual challenges and the capacity of the steering committee to address these challenges, with the deployment of the GPO and to set up sustainable structures within the coaching and games element of the club, is essential.

The area of nursery development has been central to the activities of GPOs over the last number of years. We have achieved growth rates in excess of 20% each year and the challenge is to maintain these figures, maintain the excellent juvenile games programme and to recruit the appropriate mentors to facilitate these growing numbers. The recruitment of these new volunteers and the on-going development of our current volunteers should, I believe, be our number one focus. The capacity to deliver on this focus will determine our ability to continue to grow. The Coaching and Games Development Committee, in conjunction with the clubs, must continue to analyse each component of work that the GPO carries out.

Kevin O'Shaughnessy

Kevin O'Shaughnessy was employed in 2004 as Strategic Programme Manager to administer the resourcing of Games Promotion Officers (GPOs) to clubs where none existed and to manage the Regional Development Officers (RDOs) to foster new clubs and invigorate existing clubs, which were considered to be under-performing.

There is little doubt that Dublin GAA witnessed massive changes in our coaching structures and Kevin had a huge impact introducing many significant changes and improvements to the organisation in his role as Strategic Programme Manager. I wish to acknowledge Kevin's commitment to this project and he played a key role in the formulation of our Strategic Plan.

I would like to pay tribute to Kevin who is retiring at Christmas and who has worked tirelessly to develop our games. On behalf of Dublin GAA, I wish him a happy retirement.

Club Constitution

The Club Constitution is the single most important document in the club and every club must adopt this, in accordance with rule 3.5 of the GAA's Official Guide.

The Club Constitution provides a means whereby the GAA Club can be operated and managed by the Executive Committee of the club. The Constitution provides for control of the assets of the Club and the operation of activities within the Club regarding membership, management structure, sub-committee structure, club property, AGM etc. A club can make certain alterations to the Constitution at their AGM, but these must be passed by the County Committee. Any amendments cannot be contrary to a rule in the Official Guide.

Teachers/Schools Games

Despite being told that the financial emergency is over, there is still pay discrimination in the education sector. Young teachers, often the lifeblood of our games in primary and secondary schools, labour for lower wages and inferior conditions to their older counterparts. It is time for the social good done by these young and enthusiastic people to be valued properly.

I want to thank all teachers for their contribution to the Association in Dublin. At primary level, they introduce young people to our games and at second level, they try to keep as many of our young people involved in sport as possible while at the same time developing our very best players by giving them another outlet for games and training. Sooner rather than later, I hope that all teachers engaged in promoting our games are valued equally by the country.

The last AGM of Cumann na mBunscol Áth Cliath witnessed the changing of the guard. Chairman Edward O’Riordan, Secretary Tom Fitzpatrick and Treasurer Fintan Walsh all stepped down from a lifetime of service to Gaelic Games in Dublin. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work, commitment and dedication to the promotion and development of our games.

These men who have spent between 30 - 40 years in their roles have contributed greatly to the success of Gaelic Games in the capital and have seen many of the current crop of Dublin GAA stars pass under their stewardship. Even more impressive, however, is the number of children in that time that have been involved in Cumann na mBunscol activities over those years.

Tom was a key member of the Dublin Minor Hurling management team that won the Leinster Championship in 2005 and, after a long career as a primary teacher, he joined the staff of St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra, as the GAA Officer in 2001. He helped to establish the development of multiple college teams and was the go-to person and confidant to the GAA

community in the college. I wish the incoming officers of Cumann na mBunscol every success in their new roles.

With regard to second level schools competitions, I want to pay tribute to Tom O'Donnell, who retired last month. Tom was a teacher in St. David's before he began work as the Dublin Schools Development Officer, a role he has held for nearly thirty years. In that time, Tom was responsible for running second level schools competitions in Dublin, a mammoth task in itself. He was also one of the driving forces behind the Dublin Colleges teams, something which has benefited hurling enormously in Dublin. No doubt, the Dublin Colleges' All Ireland victory against St. Flannan's from Ennis in 2006 was one of the highlights of Tom's long and distinguished career as an administrator in Dublin.

Referees

I used to report annually that the lack of referees available to cover fixtures was a serious problem. However, that is no longer the situation. Coiste na Réiteoirí are responsible for the recruitment and training of referees in the county and have been very successful in enrolling new recruits to officiate at games. They are also responsible for the administration and development of refereeing in the county, including the assessment and classification of referees.

For a number of years, Dublin referees had been poorly represented at inter-county level but Coiste na Réiteoirí developed a plan where young referees were identified and mentored through an intensive mentoring programme. Their efforts have been rewarded when Barry Tiernan took charge of the 2017 Leinster Club Senior Football Final. During the year, Darragh Sheppard also had the rare distinction of refereeing two Leinster Football Finals in the same year, controlling the Minor and Junior deciders. James King and David O'Connor were also regular representatives of the county at provincial inter-county level in Leinster.

In hurling, Dublin had the distinction of seeing three of our referees (Sean Stack, Chris Mooney and Thomas Gleeson) elevated from the Provincial Panel in Leinster to the National Panel in Croke Park in the same year, and all three went on to represent the county in Christy Ring, Lory Meagher and Nickey Rackard fixtures in 2018. Sean Stack had the pleasure of being appointed linesman for the 2018 All Ireland Minor Hurling Final in Croke Park, an exceptional achievement in his first year on the National Panel.

During 2018, Dublin also sent six new Referees (Seamus Farrelly, Dan Stynes, Willy O'Connor, Mark Ryan, Ciaran Reilly and Colm McCarthy) to take their first steps as inter-county referees in Leinster, and we wish them all the very best for the future.

I wish to sincerely thank Noel O'Donoghue, Tom Quigley, Eamon Morris, Frank Brady and Aidan Shiells and the members of Coiste na Réiteoirí for their exceptional commitment to refereeing matters.

Cuimhne na Marbh

Sadly, during the past year, a number of our colleagues were called to their eternal reward. I know I will be excused if I refer to a number of people that I knew personally – John Burke (Craobh Chiaráin), Derek McCormack (Craobh Chiaráin), Nicholas Quill (Cuala), Willie O'Reilly (St. Anne's), Paddy Byrne (Erins Isle), Eddie McCann (Kilmore), Mick Reilly (Crumlin) and Patsy Phelan (St. Brigid's), To all our members who suffered bereavements, I want to convey my sincere sympathy.

Achill Boothman (St. Columba's / Crumlin) played for Dublin for many years and was left-half forward on the Dublin team that lost the All-Ireland Final to Tipperary in 1961.

John Keeley served for many years on Dublin Juvenile Boards, including Chairman of Coiste na nÓg. He was also a member of the County Board Management Committee. A loyal St. Maur's man, he served on club committees including the posts of Treasurer and Chairman and was a Club Trustee.

Gerry O'Brien was a proud Tipperary and St. Vincent's man and was synonymous with Scoil Mhuire, Árdscoil Rís and St. Vincent's for more than fifty years. He coached teams at school and club level all his life and served as chairman of the club for a period in the mid -1990s.

Deirdre Lamb was Club Secretary in Na Fianna having previously served on the Executive Committee for a number of years, including as Vice-Chairperson. She was an outstanding administrator who performed her duties in a thorough and efficient manner.

Con Ryan (Na Fianna) was a former Junior Hurling Board Chairman and Secretary. He served the GAA throughout his whole life at club and county level. Con had a precise and

discerning mind in regard to GAA rules and attended County Board Conventions and GAA Congress on a regular basis.

It is heartening to witness the community solidarity and support by GAA clubs at funerals and I'm sure that anyone who has had a bereavement appreciates this support.

Buíochas

I wish to thank our Chairman, Seán Shanley, for his assistance and support during the year. Seán has worked tirelessly in the past year and was always willing to attend any operational / sponsorship / business / provincial or central committee meetings during the year. Seán has often remarked to me during the year that one of the great privileges of being Chairman of the County Board is visiting clubs around the county and seeing, at first hand, the increase in underage participation, the new developments and meeting so many enthusiastic volunteers.

Thanks also to Mick Seavers and Jim Roche for their help and assistance and their willingness to attend fixtures or meetings, as required. I would like to pay a personal word of thanks to all the office staff - Aileen, Alan, Fiona, Gabrielle, Kathleen, Ronan and Sharon - for their continued support and loyalty. They work diligently to ensure the efficient running of our organisation.

The work of Gerard O'Connor, Games Manager, and the Coaching & Games Development Staff and the GPOs is appreciated, as they face the challenges of increasing our participation rates and establishing new clubs.

I am indebted to Finbarr O'Mahony for the ongoing outstanding commitment he gives as Board Treasurer, resulting in another operating surplus this year in a very challenging environment. All financial matters are handled smoothly and efficiently by Finbarr.

I wish to thank John McNicholas and Tom O'Shea for representing us diligently during the year at Leinster Council. It is important to have individuals of experience on these provincial committees.

Special thanks to the members of our Blue Clusters Board - Sean Benton, Michael Hand, Brendan Waters and also to Jim Brogan and Gerry McGreevy. Their encouragement and advice have been invaluable.

I wish to acknowledge the support that I received during the year from the Árd Stiúrthóir, Tom Ryan and his staff. Michael Reynolds and his colleagues at Áras Laighean are always on hand to give assistance when called upon.

A special word of thanks to Ken O'Sullivan, Colm Crowley, John McNicholas, Carol Monahan and the members of the CCC for their work in scheduling and implementing a games programme for our players. Also to Michael Errity and Tom O'Shea and the members of Coiste Éisteachta for the huge volume of work undertaken during the year. Thanks also to the members of our various sub-committees for their commitment.

I wish to acknowledge the efficiency of Bernie MacLaughlin, Damian Murphy, Kathleen McPoland and Anne O'Dea of Coiste na nÓg. A special word of thanks also to all the board officers, delegates and club officials for their dedication and co-operation with me during the past year.

I must again express appreciation on behalf of all involved in our game for the commitment of time and expertise by the many voluntary administrators at club and county level. Our games cannot function without them. I think that we can look back on a successful year for the Dublin GAA as we strive to be even better and face head-on the many challenges ahead.

A busy year indeed! Finally, I would like to finish by paying tribute to the legions of team mentors who, week in and week out, perform minor miracles to keep our games healthy and growing in Dublin.

Seán Mac Coisdealbha

Rúnaí

Na Rúin

1. Amend Byelaw 1.2 of the Dublin GAA Byelaws 2018 to read:-

The County Committee shall consist of: -

- the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Development Officer, Coaching Officer, Officer for Irish Language and Culture, Public Relations Officer, Children's Officer, P.R.O., the Chairperson of the Adult Competitions Control Committee, the Chairperson of the County Youth Committee and a representative from Blue Clusters Company in accordance with the provisions of An Treoraí Oifigiúil as amended from time to time;
- the Central Council representative and the two Provincial Council representatives;
- the County Referees' Administrator;
- one named representative from each affiliated Club.
- one named representative each from the County Handball, the County Primary Schools and the County Post-Primary Schools Committees;
- All members, with the exception of the Secretary, shall have voting rights.

(Fionnbhrú Colmcille)

2. Amend Byelaw 3.1 of the Dublin GAA Byelaws 2018 to read:-

The County Management Committee shall consist of the following County Committee members:- the County Chairperson, County Vice-Chairperson, County Secretary (without voting power), County Assistant Secretary, County Treasurer, Chairperson of the County Youth Committee, along with the Central Council Representative, the Leinster Council Representatives, a representative from Blue Clusters Company and two members of the County Committee, to be elected each year at the first meeting of the County Committee to be held after the Annual County Convention, one of whom shall be nominated from representatives of Hurling Clubs and one of whom shall be nominated from representatives of Football Clubs.

(Fionnbhrú Colmcille)

3. Amend Byelaw 26.2 of the Dublin GAA Byelaws 2018 to read:-

The CCC shall open a re-grading season for the month of January each year. Applicants for re-grading shall, on a prescribed form, provide the following information; Name, address, date of Birth, club, grade and number of games played in the previous year, grading requested for the current year, reason for application and applicants signature.

(Tomás Dáibhís)