

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael - Coiste Átha Cliath

Comhdháil Bhliantúil

Páirc Parnell, Dé Céadaoin 14ú Nollaig 2016 ar 7.00 i.n.

An Clár

1. Minutes of 2015 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. Health & Wellbeing Report.
11. Appointment of Auditor.
12. Appointment of Delegates to Leinster Convention.
13. Appointment of Delegates to Congress.

Standing Orders for Convention

- A. The Proposer of a Resolution, or Amendment thereto, may speak for 5 minutes but no longer.
- B. A Delegate speaking to a Resolution, or amendment, shall not exceed 3 minutes.
- C. The Proposer of a Resolution, or Amendment, may speak a second time for 5 minutes before a vote is taken, but no other Delegate may speak a second time to any Resolution or Amendment.
- D. The Chairman shall, at any time he considers a matter has been sufficiently discussed, call on the Proposer to reply, after which a vote will be taken.
- E. 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.
- F. A speaker to the Annual Report or to any other general discussion shall not exceed 3 minutes.

AINMNIUCHÁIN

Cathaoirleach

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

Leas-Chathaoirleach

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

Cisteoir

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

Leas-Rúnaí/Cisteoir

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

Oifigeach Forbartha

Cionnaith Ó Súilleabháin (Cuala)

Oifigeach Oiliúna

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

Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí

Fiona Ní Thuairisc (Naomh Bríd) **Outgoing**

Oifigeach Leanaí

Eibhlín Uí Bhroin (Dúthamlacht) **Outgoing**

Oifigeach na Gaeilge

Árd Chomhairle

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

Comhairle Laighean

Gearóid Ó hArrachtáin (Naomh Mearnóg) **Outgoing**

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

Mícheál Ó Briain (Naomh Jude)

Tomás Ó Sé (Naomh Marcais)

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 claimed their first Leinster title in four years but their dreams of winning national honours were dashed when they were beaten by Limerick at the All-Ireland semi-final stage.

The minor hurlers started their championship campaign when facing Wexford away on 23rd April and they struggled to show their potential when falling by 0 - 21 to 1 - 14 after extra-time in a titanic battle. A Ronan Hayes goal looked to have done enough to see Dublin home in normal time but the hosts, inspired by captain Rory O'Connor, claimed a deserved win as they dominated in extra-time.

The following weekend, the Dubs availed of the back-door route to comfortably overcome Laois by 1 - 18 to 0 - 12 in Portlaoise. Dublin did enough to keep the hosts at arm's length with a Davy Keogh goal and the free-taking of Johnny McGuirk helping to separate the sides.

Dublin's reward was a Leinster semi-final against Kilkenny, with extra-time involved once again, as they did excellently to prevail by 2 - 18 to 1 - 19 in Parnell Park. Dublin's profligacy in front of goal looked likely to prove fatal as they trailed by three points with time almost up but a wonderful Donal Burke goal salvaged a 1 - 12 to 0 - 15 draw after sixty minutes. The hosts seized the initiative in extra-time as a Colin Currie goal and two Ciarán Dowling points saw Dublin home by two points.

The Leinster Final saw Dublin renew their rivalry with Wexford with two late goals seeing Dublin prevail by 2 - 12 to 0 - 12 in Croke Park. Wexford largely controlled the first-half with only a sublime save from Dara De Poire keeping Dublin within reach and they took full advantage as Johnny McGuirk and Donal Burke added goals in the final six minutes to confirm their 15th provincial minor title.

In what was another inspirational display from captain Paddy Smyth, it was Dublin's defence that once again earned the plaudits, restricting their opponents to just eight points from play over the hour.

Hopes were high that Dublin could add an All-Ireland to their Leinster crown but a lethargic first-half showing proved their undoing as they fell to Limerick by 1 - 18 to 0 - 15. The beaten Munster finalists raced out of the blocks with a goal from Cian Magnier-Flynn putting daylight between the teams as Limerick enjoyed a healthy 1 - 13 to 0 - 7 interval lead. Dublin improved significantly upon the restart, with Conor Ryan showing well at midfield but the goal required to reignite a comeback proved elusive. Meanwhile at the opposite end, the free-taking excellence of Brian Ryan secured the win for Limerick.

Overall it was a positive year for the team and management led by Johnny McGuirk. During the past month or so, three of this year's minor hurling panel have been invited onto the Dublin senior panel which, in itself, is a great achievement for the three selected - Donal Burke, Cian O'Sullivan and Paddy Smyth.

Minor Football

Ultimately, it proved to be a disappointing year for the county's minor footballers as they endured an early exit from the Leinster championship for the second successive year.

Despite retaining their Leinster Minor Football League title in some fashion during the spring, Dublin's preparations were undermined throughout the year by injuries to key personnel, with a talented Meath outfit taking full advantage in a fairly one-sided provincial quarter-final in Navan.

There was a fair degree of optimism during the early part of the year with the aforementioned league success as Dublin began their championship campaign with a home tie against Offaly in mid-April. Dublin started that game on the front foot through scores by Seán Bugler and Conor Hynes and their lead was extended as the half progressed through two superb points from Tom Keane.

Offaly goalkeeper Barry Rohan was in inspired form for the visitors, making a fine block to deny Kevin Callaghan a goal, while Conor Hynes was unfortunate with another goal attempt

that cannoned off the Offaly keeper's upright. Leading by 0 - 8 to 0 - 3 at the break, Dublin put daylight between the teams as Aaron Bradshaw netted in the 33rd minute following an incisive pass from substitute Dan O'Brien before Conor Hynes had a penalty saved by Rohan eight minutes later.

Offaly took heart from that and netted four minutes later through midfielder Micheál Molloy. However, Dublin managed to regain their momentum through a Seán Bugler penalty before finishing strongly through a brace of points by wing-back Conor Lennon in the closing stages.

Dublin's reward was a tricky quarter-final against a Meath team that they had defeated at the semi-final stage of the Leinster Minor Football League. However, there was to be no repeat of that 1 - 13 to 1 - 7 victory as the hosts dominated from the outset to register an emphatic 1 - 18 to 2 - 5 victory.

Meath raced into a three-point lead early on with Daragh Campion, James Conlon and Seán Reilly on the mark but Kevin Callaghan had the Dubs back in contention when finding the net from an awkward angle to equalise on six minutes. Far from building on that goal, Dublin played second fiddle for the remainder of the half with the excellent James Conlon helping to build a 0 - 12 to 1 - 2 interval lead for Meath. Dublin threatened briefly to cut into the Meath advantage but the loss of Cormac Howley to a second yellow card made an uphill battle an impossible mission.

Subsequently, the County Board has undertaken a review to see if there are areas where preparation could improve to reignite Dublin at this level as we are currently enduring something of a lull. That said, several of the players on this year's minor panel went on to enjoy good seasons with their clubs' first adult football teams so, hopefully, they can continue their development into the future.

U21 Hurling

It proved a case of what might have been for the county's under-21 hurlers. The joy at clinching a first provincial title in five years was tempered somewhat by a disappointing defeat to Galway in their All-Ireland semi-final.

In what was their third year in charge, Joe Fortune and his management team of Dwaine Moore and Eimear Dignam could not have asked for a more difficult opening fixture, drawn away to Leinster holders of the past three years Wexford.

However, the Dubs produced an excellent performance on 1st June in Wexford Park with only some errant shooting keeping the hosts in any kind of contention. The 2 - 12 to 1 - 8 victory, with the goals coming from Seán Treacy and Seán Ó Riain, reflected the potential within the panel and raised hopes of a prolonged and successful campaign.

Those hopes remained as Dublin recovered from a sloppy opening to eventually defeat Westmeath by 2 - 17 to 1 - 14 in their provincial semi-final in Parnell Park a fortnight later. Westmeath, who had defeated Kilkenny in the previous round, started brightly but some fine scores by AJ Murphy and Chris Bennett ensured Dublin remained in the hunt at half-time. Chris Bennett seized control of the game upon the resumption and his two sublime solo goals allowed Dublin to ease home by six points.

Their reward was a Leinster Final clash with Offaly in Tullamore where the offerings in the first-half made a mockery of the heavy favourite's tag afforded to Dublin. The hosts were sharper with Oisín's Kelly penalty in the 12th minute helping Offaly to a deserved 1 - 6 to 0 - 5 interval lead, as Dublin were held scoreless from play for 28 minutes.

Dublin finally found their groove after the break with an early goal from Seán Treacy helping settle matters. The Cuala attacker landed the decisive blow with his side's second goal, with AJ Murphy landing four second-half points to confirm a 2 - 15 to 1 - 10 win.

After a six week break, Dublin eventually resumed their campaign with an All-Ireland semi-final against Galway with the latter finishing strongly in extra-time to claim a 0 - 21 to 0 - 19 victory. With the wind at their backs, Dublin started brightly and with Rian McBride landing some fine scores, the Dubs enjoyed a 0 - 10 to 0 - 7 interval lead.

Galway dominated the third quarter, however, and inched two points clear with only a last-gasp point from the impressive Cian Mac Gabhann forcing extra-time for Dublin. Dublin looked well set as they maintained parity after the first period of extra-time but failed at times

to turn possession into scores leaving the door open for the Connacht county to enjoy a narrow two-point success.

U21 Football

Dublin's under-21 footballers made history by claiming a third successive provincial title before losing in the All-Ireland semi-final by the minimum margin to Mayo. Given that the corresponding minor team of 2013 had struggled in Leinster, winning the province and falling narrowly to the eventual All-Ireland winners, was arguably a better achievement than was acknowledged at the time.

Dublin began the defence of their provincial crown on 2nd March with Con O'Callaghan inspiring them to a 1 - 12 to 0 - 9 victory. The Cuala attacker was in sublime form with his goal before the break proving the pivotal score as he ended up with 1 - 7 in total. Aaron Byrne added two key points for Dublin, who ended the game with thirteen players, following the dismissals of Martin Cahilan and Killian Deeley.

Next up for Dublin was a home tie with Laois in Parnell Park and they finished strongly to register a 2 - 17 to 2 - 5 win. A first-half goal from Chris Sallier helped to negate an earlier effort from Evan O'Carroll from Laois with the introduction of Colm Basquel after the break adding greater quality to the Dublin attack.

The Ballyboden player starred with 1 - 3 as Dublin took over to slot over seven points without reply and close out the match. Martin Cahilan, Colm Basquel (2), Seán McMahon, Con O'Callaghan, Lorcan Molloy and Glenn O'Reilly all raised white flags to seal their triumph.

The Leinster final saw Dublin come face-to-face with a talented Kildare outfit with the Dubs overcoming an early seven point deficit to eventually prevail by 2 - 14 to 0 - 17 after extra-time in a thriller in Navan. Trailing by 0 - 9 to 0 - 2 after 25 minutes, Con O'Callaghan's 27th minute goal helped Dublin gain a foothold against a Kildare team for whom Neil Flynn and Ben McCormack shared fifteen points.

Dublin improved significantly after the break but two late points by Neil Flynn ensured a 1 - 11 to 0 - 14 stalemate at full-time. The crucial score in extra-time arrived through Cillian

O'Shea's 69th minute goal, with Con O'Callaghan adding an insurance point to seal the three-in-a-row.

It proved equally dramatic in Dublin's All-Ireland semi-final against Mayo in Tullamore with Dublin on the receiving end on this occasion as they succumbed by 1 - 15 to 1 - 14. Another slow start saw Dublin trail by 1 - 4 to 0 - 0 by the end of the first quarter but despite trailing by six points at the break, they received a lifeline through Con O'Callaghan's 40th minute goal.

Dublin then moved into a four-point advantage - 1 - 13 to 1 - 9 - before Mayo rallied for that final push with three Liam Irwin frees and a Matthew Ruane point bringing Mayo level before Colm Basquel edged Dublin back in front. However, Conor Loftus was to have the final word with two late frees, the second in the fifth minute of stoppage time, proving fatal to Dessie Farrell's charges.

Outside of the results on the field it was encouraging to see 'new' names emerge on this Dublin team. These players have not necessarily caught the eye at minor level highlighting that players can develop at different rates and that the door is never closed with regard to the team personnel.

Senior Hurling

The calendar year started on a promising note for Dublin as they completed five successive wins in January to claim the Walsh Cup. After defeating UCD, Antrim and Laois in the group stages, the Dubs defeated Galway by 1 - 28 to 1 - 19 in the semi-final at Parnell Park with Eamonn Dillon chipping in with 1 - 3 of that total.

Dublin's reward was a final date with Wexford at Croke Park and they enjoyed another straightforward success, prevailing by 1 - 22 to 1 - 12. Eamonn Dillon once again found the net and with Paul Ryan contributing ten points, Dublin eased home with David Treacy and David O'Callaghan adding three points apiece.

Confidence was high as Dublin began their National Hurling League Division 1A campaign in mid-February but they received a rude awakening in their opening fixture as they succumbed to Tipperary by 1 - 23 to 0 - 12 in Semple Stadium.

It was imperative that Dublin secure a positive result in their following match and so it proved as they finished strongly to defeat Galway by 1 - 17 to 0 - 13 at Parnell Park in an encouraging display. Seán McGrath scored Dublin's goal on the night, with Niall McMorrow's influence reflected in four vital points over the seventy minutes.

A fortnight's break ensued before Dublin maintained that momentum when comfortably getting the better of Cork by 4 - 21 to 2 - 17 in Croke Park in another fine performance. Eamonn Dillon scored 2 - 3 for Dublin with the other goals coming from Seán McGrath and David Treacy with only two late goals making the final scoreline any way palatable for Cork.

Dublin produced arguably their most impressive display of the year the following week as they travelled to Walsh Park and secured a hugely encouraging 0 - 19 to 0 - 14 victory against Waterford. The defensive sextet were committed and disciplined throughout and with David Treacy firing over nine frees, Dublin pulled clear with Eamonn Dillon adding four critical points from play.

With their quarter-final spot all but assured, Dublin lacked intensity in their final group match against Kilkenny in Nowlan Park and they were duly punished as they fell by 0 - 23 to 1 - 14. Eamonn Dillon was Dublin's most potent attacker again with three points, while Fionntán Mac Gib added 1 - 1 on a disappointing afternoon for the panel.

Further disappointment was to follow on 2nd April when Dublin produced a below-par display when falling to Limerick by 1 - 21 to 1 - 19 in their quarter-final at Parnell Park. Treacy's 1 - 8 and the seven points shared by Niall McMorrow and Eamonn Dillon kept Dublin in contention in a tight encounter but Limerick finished strongly to complete a deserved win.

Dublin had to wait seven weeks for their next competitive action but they showed few signs of rustiness as they defeated Wexford by 2 - 19 to 0 - 12 in their Leinster Senior Hurling Championship quarter-final at Croke Park. First-half goals from Eamonn Dillon and Darragh O'Connell laid the foundation for the win with Niall McMorrow once again impressing in attack as Dublin cruised home.

Scores proved far harder to find in Dublin's provincial semi-final against Kilkenny in Portlaoise three weeks later as they were comprehensively beaten by 1 - 25 to 0 - 16. The Dubs managed just six points from play over the duration, with Kilkenny in the ascendancy from the outset as they eased to victory with TJ Reid scoring ten points and Jonjo Farrell adding 1 - 5.

That defeat took Dublin into a premature route into the qualifiers with the first-half dismissal of Chris Crummey proving vital as they narrowly lost by 1 - 26 to 1 - 23 against Cork in Páirc Uí Rinn. A youthful Dublin were more than a match for their hosts for the large part with Eamonn Dillon's second half goal and four points by Chris Bennett offering encouragement. However, their numerical disadvantage proved ultimately fatal as Cork prevailed, thanks to 1 - 5 from Alan Cadogan and twelve points by Pat Horgan.

In conclusion, could I briefly address some allegations that were made about the county board and their aspirations with regard to hurling in the county by a former senior hurler. It has never been Dublin's way to air any perceived 'dirty linen' in public so I have no intention of doing so here. However, the allegations that were made are totally wide of the mark and those entrusted with the control of Gaelic games in the capital do so with a fair and impartial manner, in terms of both the hurling and football codes.

Fingal Hurling

Fingal opened their Kehoe Cup campaign against Louth and gave an impressive display in Darver before eventually losing by two points. However, heavy defeats followed against Maynooth University and Wicklow. The team had high hopes of getting promotion to Division 2B of the League but a one-point defeat to Roscommon and a two-point loss to Monaghan ended that ambition.

In the Nicky Rackard Cup, Fingal recorded victories against Longford and Monaghan and qualified for the semi-final of the competition. However, Armagh, were outstanding on the day and won comprehensively. My thanks to Michael Kennedy and his management team for their dedication and commitment to the Fingal team. A special words of thanks to the clubs that hosted games and training, particularly Naomh Barróg.

In September the committee discussed the repercussions for local championships following the receipt of correspondence advising that clubs, understandably, wished to have their players available for 6 days prior to a Fingal inter-county fixture. The effect of this proposed change would mean that - based on the 2016 Nicky Rackard programme - no club championship hurling in senior 'B', intermediate and several junior grades where Fingal players were involved could have been played from 16th April to 11th June (in the event that they had reached a promotion play-off). This was deemed totally unacceptable. However, the committee have agreed to arrange a number of coaching sessions for individual clubs throughout Fingal during 2017 and the details will be announced early in the New Year.

Senior Football

What an incredible year for our senior footballers. National League champions again, Leinster champions again, All-Ireland champions again as they dominated the Gaelic football landscape at senior level.

Jim Gavin's men went the entire league and championship season unbeaten and they continue to set new records as they both play some excellent football and continuously evolve as a team unit.

Dublin showed the mark of true champions when they retained the Sam Maguire in a pulsating All-Ireland SFC final replay against a brilliant Mayo team at Croke Park, in front of an attendance of 82,249 last October.

In the modern era, securing back-to-back titles has become an impossible mission for most teams but Jim Gavin's men bucked that trend and, for the first time since 1977, the boys in blue are champions for successive years.

We are privileged to witness this Dublin side who continue to write their own history with captain Stephen Cluxton becoming the first player in history to captain his county to three Sam Maguire Cups. In doing so he joins such men as John Kennedy of Young Irelands, Dublin (1891, 1892, 1894) and Seán O'Kennedy of New Ross, Wexford (1915-17) to lead their county to three All-Ireland titles.

The Dubs also played in some of the best games of the season, particularly the epic All-Ireland semi-final victory over Kerry. Dublin and the Kingdom have served up some of the most fabled duels over the years and this year's championship battle was a game for the ages.

Jim Gavin's men led 0-9 to 0-4 by the 24th minute and were well in control of the game but, by the break, were 2-8 to 0-9 in arrears after Kerry had shocked us with 2-4 without reply. It proved to be only a temporary blip in the Dublin defence, however, who for the most part defended heroically in the face of some great Kerry interplay and movement.

Time and again the likes of Jonny Cooper provided a high-wire act as the timing of his interceptions was perfect to help his team out of what were tricky situations. In a pulsating conclusion to the game, once again it was the Dubs who staged the grandstand finish. Philly McMahon, Dean Rock (two) and the tireless Kevin McManamon had Dublin in front 0-20 to 2-13 by the 70th minute, but only momentarily, as Stephen O'Brien equalised and a replay loomed large.

But Dublin continued to drive forward and were rewarded with two brilliant late, late scores from Eoghan O'Gara and Diarmuid Connolly to seal victory and see the Dubs record their fourth senior championship victory in-a-row against the Kingdom.

The Dubs showed the same incredible will to win also during the league, a campaign that culminated in defeating Kerry in the decider to capture their fourth NFL Division 1 title in-a-row.

Massive credit is due to the entire panel, management and back-room staff. The absence of such players as last year's Footballer of the Year, Jack McCaffrey, and one of the best full-backs of the modern era, Rory O'Carroll, had some suggesting that it would be too much of a blow to Dublin's playing resources. But once again, Dublin illustrated their powerful self-belief coupled with superb footballing ability as they adapted their style of football to find the winning formula once again.

Results

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

Allianz Hurling League

13/02/2016	Thurles	Dublin	0 - 12	Tipperary	1 - 23
20/02/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 17	Galway	0 - 13
05/03/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	4 - 21	Cork	2 - 17
13/03/2016	Waterford	Dublin	0 - 19	Waterford	0 - 14
20/03/2016	Kilkenny	Dublin	1 - 14	Kilkenny	0 - 23
02/04/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 19	Limerick	1 - 21

Leinster Senior Hurling Championship

21/05/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 19	Wexford	0 - 12
11/06/2016	Portlaoise	Dublin	0 - 16	Kilkenny	1 - 25

All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship

02/07/2016	Cork	Dublin	1 - 23	Cork	1 - 26
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Walsh Cup Senior Hurling

07/01/2016	Belfield	Dublin	4 - 15	U.C.D.	3 - 12
07/01/2016	D.C.U.	Dublin	3 - 25	Antrim	1 - 17
17/01/2016	Portlaoise	Dublin	2 - 20	Laois	1 - 9
24/01/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 28	Galway	1 - 19
30/01/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 22	Wexford	1 - 12

Allianz Football League

30/01/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 14	Kerry	0 - 14
06/02/2016	Castlebar	Dublin	0 - 9	Mayo	0 - 7
27/02/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 14	Monaghan	0 - 16
05/03/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 14	Cork	2 - 10
12/03/2016	Newry	Dublin	1 - 15	Down	1 - 7
26/03/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 10	Donegal	0 - 7
03/04/2016	Carrick-on-Shannon	Dublin	1 - 13	Roscommon	1 - 12
10/04/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 20	Donegal	0 - 13
24/04/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 18	Kerry	0 - 13

Leinster Senior Football Championship

04/06/2016	Nowlan Park	Dublin	2 - 21	Laois	2 - 10
26/06/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 21	Meath	0 - 11
17/07/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 19	Westmeath	0 - 10

All-Ireland Senior Football Championship

06/08/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 15	Donegal	1 - 10
28/08/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 22	Kerry	2 - 14
18/09/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 9	Mayo	0 - 15
01/10/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 15	Mayo	1 - 14 (R)

O'Byrne Cup Senior Football

03/01/2016	Enniscorthy	Dublin	0 - 12	Wexford	2 - 6
06/01/2016	Blanchardstown	Dublin	3 - 24	IT Carlow	2 - 8
10/01/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 16	DCU	1 - 12
17/01/2016	Longford	Dublin	1 - 9	Longford	1 - 12

Leinster U21 Hurling Championship

01/06/2016	Wexford	Dublin	2 - 12	Wexford	1 - 8
15/06/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Westmeath	1 - 14
06/07/2016	Tullamore	Dublin	2 - 15	Offaly	1 - 10

All-Ireland U21 Hurling Championship

20/08/2016	Thurles	Dublin	0 - 19	Galway	0 - 21
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Leinster U21 Football Championship

02/03/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 12	Meath	0 - 9
19/03/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Laois	2 - 5
02/04/2016	Navan	Dublin	2 - 14	Kildare	0 - 17 (AET)

All-Ireland U21 Football Championship

16/04/2016	Tullamore	Dublin	1 - 14	Mayo	1 - 15
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Leinster Minor Hurling Championship

23/04/2016	Wexford	Dublin	1 - 14	Wexford	0 - 21 (AET)
30/04/2016	Portlaoise	Dublin	1 - 18	Laois	0 - 12
14/05/2016	Dublin	Dublin	2 - 18	Kilkenny	1 - 19 (AET)
03/07/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 12	Wexford	0 - 12

All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship

07/08/2016	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 15	Limerick	1 - 18
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Leinster Minor Football Championship

16/04/2016	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 14	Offaly	1 - 7
21/05/2016	Navan	Dublin	2 - 5	Meath	1 - 18

Allianz Hurling League

14/02/2016	D.C.U.	Fingal	4 - 18	Warwickshire	1 - 6
21/02/2016	Omagh	Fingal	4 - 10	Tyrone	1 - 17
06/03/2016	Athleague	Fingal	0 - 16	Roscommon	1 - 14
13/03/2016	Kilbarrack	Fingal	1 - 18	Monaghan	3 - 14
20/03/2016	Dundalk	Fingal	2 - 9	Louth	5 - 12

Nicky Rackard Cup

23/04/2016	Kilbarrack	Fingal	3 - 21	Longford	3 - 15
30/04/2016	Castleblayney	Fingal	2 - 19	Monaghan	3 - 14
21/05/2016	Kilbarrack	Fingal	1 - 11	Armagh	3 - 19

Kehoe Cup Senior Hurling

17/01/2016	Darver	Fingal	1 - 17	Louth	4 - 10
24/01/2016	Swords	Fingal	1 - 11	Maynooth UV	7 - 14
31/01/2016	Blanchardstown IT	Fingal	0 - 12	Wicklow	3 - 14

Football Championship Reform

A comprehensive discussion has taken place within GAA circles over the last two years about the need for change in relation to how our flagship inter-county football competition is played off.

Despite the length and depth of this discussion, very few attractive championship restructuring proposals were put forward and fewer still with a realistic chance of gaining the required support at Congress that are needed for change.

It is worth pointing out that the GAA Football Championship, as we know it, has only been changed once, when the 'backdoor' or qualifier system was introduced in 2001. Change does not take place on a whim.

Páraic Duffy said it himself last August when launching his blueprint for reform of the senior football championship. "We are not making any great claims that this is absolutely radical," said the director-general. "It is a modest and, we think, sensible proposal." This plan deserves our attention and in my view, our commendation.

The key proposal involves replacing the knockout nature of the All-Ireland quarter-finals with two round-robin groups of four. Each last-eight contender would play one game at Croke Park, one at home and one away. The top two in each group would advance to the semi-finals.

Cynics might argue that this is a money-spinning wheeze, flooding late summer with extra fixtures at a time when the club game is being suffocated. I'm inclined to accept Páraic Duffy's explanations to the contrary, especially when taken in conjunction with moves to condense the inter-county season and thereby create badly needed space for our club championship programme.

Overall, in fact, I can see merit in the overall plan. Some white elephant provincial venues will get the big games they've long craved for. It might even silence some of the plaintive wails about Dublin "playing all their matches in Croke Park" - although I doubt it, for I can already hear mutterings if and when we play two of our three group fixtures at Headquarters.

My support comes with a few caveats. The undeniable truth is that some county grounds will need to be upgraded if they are to be deemed suitable for such major championship games. There are lots of provincial venues that tick most boxes when it comes to overall standard of facilities and ground capacity. There are several more that patently do not. Even

more crucial is the issue of seating capacity - you need a stand (or stands) that can accommodate families and all of the season-ticket holders from the competing counties.

I believe the new proposal is definitely worth a try because, let's be honest, the current knockout format has thrown up plenty of damp-squib quarter-finals at a half-empty Croke in recent summers.

Of itself, will the blueprint facilitate weaker counties seeking to close the gap? Probably not, but that's a far bigger conundrum requiring multiple solutions. And will it do anything to counter the apathy of a public that seems to have fallen out of love with the provincial championships? Unlikely. That battle remains to be won and that's why this could be an important opening step on the way to a more imaginative championship, one that breaks from some of our other historical traditions.

Blues on Tour

In early June last, Dublin played their first senior football championship match outside Croke Park for a decade ... and, guess what, we revelled in the whole experience, beating Laois by 11 points, against a raucous Nowlan Park backdrop.

The notion that Jackeens fall prey to travel sickness once they cross the M50 is, of course, a fallacy. It's true that, once upon a time, our League record on the road was a source of concern, but not any more. We haven't won four Division One titles on the bounce purely by dint of our record in Fortress Croke.

Under Jim Gavin, and previously Pat Gilroy, the footballers have always embraced their days outside the capital. These spring road trips have enhanced the camaraderie in an already united group.

Moreover, they have strengthened the bond between players and fans ... for those who care to have noticed, our ever-loyal January-to-September supporters travel in sizeable numbers for all of our away dates in the league and, lest we forget, the O'Byrne Cup too.

Quite a few of you were in Enniscorthy and Longford last January. Many more were in Castlebar last February and Carrick-on-Shannon (via the flood plains of Roscommon!) last April. You were never going to miss out on Nowlan Park either.

The only trouble, upon reaching Kilkenny, was the preponderance of 'No Room At The Inn' signs all over the Marble City. The fact that Dublin/Laois clashed with the Cat Laughs comedy festival may have been a welcome bonus for those fans who love a bit of stand-up on the side, but it obviously left many supporters stranded in their search for a hotel bed. And we all know that Dublin's away days are more than just that - they are weekend adventures. No wonder all the local hoteliers and publicans and restaurateurs love it when the Dubs come to town.

'World Domination' ? Think Again!

It's official: world domination beckons for the Dublin footballers. So it has been claimed in certain quarters after we became the first county to win back-to-back All-Irelands since Kerry in 2007, with Jim Gavin feted as the first manager to retain Sam Maguire since Billy Morgan in 1990.

Do our historic trailblazers and their manager deserve the high praise heaped on their shoulders since 1st October? Without question - they are a credit to our county and themselves.

But I have an issue with the more extravagant hyperbole that tends to greet most All-Ireland champions, and more especially, a team that has garnered four of the last six SFC titles.

And it's this: all this talk of Dublin domination could strengthen the argument (a nebulous one, I believe) that something radical must be done to "stop them". We're not even talking about splitting the capital in two – thankfully that canard has been buried in the dustbin of daft ideas.

There is much talk of funding equalisation in the GAA, how the finances at our disposal must be curbed to "level the playing field". But this presupposes that Dublin GAA is awash with cash (we aren't) or that you could slash our funding from central coffers without any negative

effect. At the most basic level, this is about jobs - that funding is diverted to coaches operating at the juvenile and club coalface throughout the county.

Let me stress, I fully support efforts to bolster the central funding available to so-called weaker counties – they aren't blessed with some of the advantages that Dublin possess and they need help.

However, it behoves Croke Park to find ways and means of generating more resources, instead of settling for a division of the same cake. Put bluntly, extra funding for other counties should not come at the direct expense of Dublin's games development initiatives. Bleed that well dry and it won't be long before soccer and rugby make inroads back into terrain that Dublin GAA has fought, tooth and nail, to colonise in the first place.

I'll finish with a few statistics that might modify your viewpoint about Dublin's alleged supremacy. There has been much talk of how we've monopolised the Leinster SFC since 2005, winning 11 of the last 12 provincial titles, and I cannot argue with the stats.

But our record at under-21 and, especially minor level, is far less emphatic. In that same period (2005-16) Dublin have won just four Leinster minor championships ('09, '11, '12 and '14), failing to reach the last two provincial finals, and harvesting just one All-Ireland (2012).

Our record at under-21 level is more impressive – seven of the last 12 Leinster titles, and three All-Ireland successes in 2010, '12 and '14 – but we have failed to reach the last two All-Ireland finals.

Suffice to say, there are plenty of ambitious players and managers in other counties who have tasted underage success against us. They will be desperate to emulate that feat in the senior grade.

Moreover, if you consider Dublin's victory margins in this year's All-Ireland series (five points against Donegal, two against Kerry and just one against Mayo, after a replay) you could hardly say we are streets ahead of the chasing pack. No All-Ireland is easily won. Next year's certainly won't be.

Card Confusion

Is it possible to have a civilised conversation on the black card rule without emotions running high?

Reflecting on the most recent clamour for removal of the black card, I can't resist trawling back to my 2014 annual report. "Hopefully, as the rule beds in, we'll see more consistency of application," I ventured, "although the bottom line, with the black card as with every other rule, is that ultimately it boils down to interpretation and no two humans referee in the same way."

More consistency of application? If only!

Of all the rules, this one is probably the most controversial, dividing opinion right down the middle and almost always generating more heat than light. Those who favour it, in its present blunt form, argue that players who don't commit deliberate cynical fouls have nothing to worry about, while those opposed to it claim it's an over-the-top punishment, made all the more unfair by the inconsistency of its application.

Whatever side you're on, the fact is that after three full seasons in the rulebook, the black card hasn't bedded in as originally envisaged. The basic problem lies in interpretation of what is a deliberately cynical foul. In theory, it should be easy but, in reality, it is not. If it were simple to differentiate between deliberate and accidental, we would have nothing like the number of controversies over whether a player deserved to be dismissed or not.

In that situation, it's very frustrating for a player to be sent off by a referee who is, in effect, telling him what he was thinking when he committed the foul. Only the player knows that, but obviously his opinion doesn't count.

This year's two All-Ireland SFC finals – draw and replay – contained enough card controversy to fill an actual book, let alone a referee's black one. Moreover, in truth, these contests could hardly be classified as chaotic exceptions to the ultra-consistent rule.

By now, there is little to be gained from dissecting the DVDs of either Dublin/Mayo clash. Suffice to say, in all-or-nothing games that are so ferociously contested, you will always end

up with big or mistimed hits, contentious calls and accusations of match-altering referee errors.

You can certainly argue, though, that certain players from both sides were lucky to escape black cards. Replays suggested that their offences were more obviously deliberate and/or cynical than the fouls which resulted in premature exits for James McCarthy (in the drawn game) and Jonny Cooper and Lee Keegan (in the replay).

But players aren't innocents abroad either. We can all recount high-profile examples of them feigning injury or harassing the embattled referee with one overriding objective: to get an opponent black carded or, better still, red carded.

Managers have a key role to play here. So, too, do the players themselves who can't abdicate responsibility for their own actions. But referees must also up their game - there were too many cases last summer where their judgement could be called into question.

Is dismissal on borderline cases - and we saw quite a lot of them this year - fair on players? No it is not. Is there a better way of dealing with the matter? That's the big question but just because there's no easy answer doesn't mean the pursuit of a workable solution should not be undertaken.

Was the 'sin bin' option discarded without getting proper consideration? It came in for criticism when trialled some years ago but that's no reason not to reconsider it now. It works perfectly well in rugby where players are sent off for ten minutes. I have no doubt that if our footballers were asked to choose between a ten-minute 'sin bin' and a permanent black card dismissal, they would choose the former.

Obviously, players cannot be allowed to decide the rules but, on an issue like this, their input would be helpful. Being a man down for ten minutes would punish a team and would also be real deterrent against cynical fouling. In fact, it would probably be harder on a team than losing a player on a black card and having him replaced.

However, it would - and this is a key point - be fairer on players. Seeing a player sent off on a borderline black card offence is disappointing. And if the last three seasons taught us

anything it is this - the rule is causing huge frustration among players and public alike. The motivations behind its introduction were sound but the punishment is questionable, especially when there may be a better alternative in the form of a 'sin bin'. Of course, there may be some other ideas too so, at the very least, let's have a discussion about them. We owe it to the players and to Gaelic football in general.

Democracy Not At Work

Donald Trump would be proud of us. He won the US Presidential election despite getting less than 50 per cent of the vote but that's still a massive surplus compared with what passes for a majority in the GAA.

Yet again, several motions that won comfortable majorities were deemed lost at Congress last February because they did not get two-third majorities. The idea that 34 beats 66 when it comes to voting on rule changes is impossible to justify. Such a heavily-weighted majority was brought in originally to stop too many changes being made on a narrow vote, possibly every year.

Still, was it necessary to have a two-thirds majority? World leaders can be elected on a simple majority but we can't change even a minor rule without two of every three Congress delegates supporting it. It's an affront to democracy in every shape and form. Even if the requirement was changed to 55-45, it would make a significant difference.

Of course the problem is that if a proposal for change on the majority came up for discussion at Congress, it too would need two-thirds support to be passed. It still needs to be taken on in the interests of the democracy that we all hold so dear in our Association.

Strategic planning

The Dublin County Board have never been afraid of challenges. When we launched our strategic plan in 2011 it was met with a certain degree of hostility and even scorn. It is interesting now to look back at some of the newspaper articles from that time. That road map set out our vision for the future of gaelic games in Dublin. It was ambitious, bold and challenging.

It is important to plan. It is important to have ambition and vision. It is most important to map out a viable plan of action, a strategy that offers the best chance of attaining those goals, those ambitions. It is equally important then to put the structures in place to deliver that plan.

And there are real challenges for gaelic games in Dublin. We have had to meet the challenge of a growing professional international sport in rugby, the ongoing battle with young people who are attracted by the big names and money of soccer and a plethora of other sports and distractions that are likely to be unique to big cities. It is a constant battle for the hearts and minds of our young people.

The coaching network we have established through our clubs is immense and absolutely critical in matching and, hopefully, winning the battle with our competitors. We have always sought to channel investment into our grassroots as we believe this maximises the effect of the investment and optimises the value for money. It also brings about the best and most favourable long-term impact for the Association overall.

Crucial to the success of our strategy are the most valuable asset of all – people. Without the thousands of volunteers in our clubs, giving up their time every night of the week and every weekend, no strategy would be possible.

Every week thousands of games are catered for in every code, at every age group, in every parish in Dublin. This does not just happen. It is a logistical challenge that no other county has to face. But it works. Week after week – because we have unbelievable buy-in from every club in this county.

Our strategic plan was published. It is not the third secret of Fatima. We have people in the county who overcome huge logistical challenges every week – who now have streamlined structures in place that can cope with most of the obstacles that come their way.

I note again the mumblings about funding and finance and the often ill-informed comment that accompanies this subject where Dublin is concerned. I am happy that we maximise value for money and that every cent goes where it is supposed to go – nothing is hidden or secret. We believe we have a template that other counties could benefit from.

I would welcome sharing what we do with any other county in the country. Our door is always open. I believe that structures and people are ultimately the two key ingredients needed. After that it is about vision and ambition – and there are no limits to what people can aspire to. A thriving national Association is something we all want.

Dublin expansion / county's contribution to civic life

Dublin GAA finds itself in a strong position but, quite often, decisions and planning undertaken at times like this helps strengthen the future direction of the county. The further growth of our native games in the county will come about by two ways; the emergence of new clubs or the expansion of the existing network of clubs that dot the county.

Either way, more playing facilities will be needed if, as we hope, our numbers continue to rise and there is no doubting the positive impact our inter-county teams in both codes continue to have on this process.

Our elected representatives - at every level - have a role to play in helping us with our ongoing growth given the very obvious benefits the GAA brings to communities everywhere, far beyond the staging of games. To state the obvious, we can't grow the games and the GAA more generally if we don't have pitches to play games on and this lies at the core of our *raison d'être*.

I often wonder about the contribution - financial or otherwise - that the Association makes to the civic well-being of the city and county. The numbers that flock to our games are indisputable but the energy and vibrancy that accompanies the games also adds a layer to life in a city that would be considerably duller without them.

This statement of fact deserves not only acknowledgement but tacit assistance when plans to cater for the needs of growing and existing communities are being developed by those charged with representing all of the tax-payers/citizens of the city and county.

The Dublin County Board's interest in the Spawell Complex is well documented. This outlines our ambition to provide for the county into the future. We are well aware that a substantial capital investment for gaelic games in Dublin is required.

When the next right opportunity presents, we will make that investment. It is our intention to be in a position to fund any such capital project ourselves to the fullest extent possible. We will seek to achieve this through various sources including capitalising on our commercial potential.

However, I sometimes think that we in the GAA are victims of our own success - or at least victims of our own efficiency. I look a little enviously at other sports and cultural activities and see them involved in projects with local authorities, securing facilities and amenities for their own pursuits.

I am very proud of our clubs in Dublin – many of whom have splendid facilities. But in the vast majority of cases, the facilities have been provided through the organisation's own resources as well as the fantastic volunteer efforts of the clubs themselves.

I would like to see Dublin GAA clubs, often the very fabric of the community, getting a chance to access local authority funding in providing facilities in the city and county. I think this type of project would be doubly beneficial – firstly, in providing badly needed facilities and secondly, in underlining the importance and role of local government.

We would welcome the chance to partner with a local authority in providing infrastructure or amenities in our county, as others have done. There is no doubt that our complementary funding in such a venture would ensure a very healthy and worthwhile return for any local authority expenditure.

Social Capital

On the subject of infrastructure, the need to provide people, especially young people, with facilities and amenities for their health and development has never been more acute. This is especially true in large urban areas where space is at a premium. Because of this any available space usually comes with a prohibitive price tag that is out of the reach of many, especially the many voluntary organisations who work tirelessly in our communities.

Following on from the catastrophic economic events of recent times, I feel we should carefully consider the type of investment we want to see in our communities. Now that economic choices are thankfully becoming a reality again, more than ever we need to ensure

the best value for this expenditure. We need to realise that not everything can be measured in hard currency – in euros and cents. We need to give a real value to social capital. We need to give it real weight in our decision-making.

The true worth of local amenity infrastructure projects cannot be measured on balance sheets alone. This needs to be recognised by those making decisions. You cannot easily measure the benefits such amenities bring. You cannot measure the real and add-on value they give to communities – particularly the benefits to mental and physical health.

So in instances, such as the aforementioned Spawell Complex where the State is selling off assets, I firmly believe the social impact should be considered. If the asking price is being met, surely a potential project for the benefit of the local community should be given some weight. Surely this is of greater value to the taxpayer - because our communities are full of taxpayers. And there is nothing better for a taxpayer than to see a tangible benefit from their taxes.

So it is my absolute belief that **social capital** must be given a value – it must be recognised. It must be taken into consideration when making decisions on matters such as the disposal of State assets. I believe there are still many properties in State ownership where this could be applied in the near future. Could a person such as a retired judge be appointed to consider such sales and apply a fair weighting as he or she sees fit? I think this merits serious consideration. Or will we always sell off the family jewels.

Infrastructure Community Gain Schemes

The continuing growth in our membership is creating unprecedented pressure on our clubs in the provision of playing facilities. Accordingly, we have to be more and more innovative in stretching our resources to cater for as many as possible. For example, the development of synthetic all weather pitches with associated flood lighting is seen by many clubs as an essential part of their facilities mix. However, these do not come cheap from a capital or operating cost perspective.

I am aware of the growing trend of public infrastructure promoters providing for, or being required by An Bord Pleanála to provide for community gain funds as part of the statutory planning process. These schemes are seen as a way of achieving greater local acceptance of

challenging infrastructure and are administered as Community Gain Grant Schemes in support of community organisations in the vicinity of installations. In this regard, such schemes are being successfully implemented for Wind Farms (Wind Farms Association), High Voltage Power Lines (EirGrid) and Waste to Energy Plants (Indaver/Covanta). Accordingly, it is to be expected that such schemes will also arise in relation to Transport (Transport Infrastructure Ireland), Waste Management (Local Authorities) and Water/Wastewater (Irish Water) projects currently being advanced in Dublin. Our activities are perfectly suited to benefit from such schemes and we should position ourselves to avail of any available funding on behalf of our clubs.

Sticking with this theme, I have noted that large infrastructure promoters often acquire more land than they actually need for their scheme footprints. This may be because of severance of individual land holdings, provision for scheme future proofing or the need to provide buffering for unpopular installations. Accordingly, they often have surplus land banks lying idle in areas of sporting infrastructure deficits. There is an opportunity for clubs to avail of short-term lease arrangements of these lands while awaiting future development and pending demand growth, statutory planning processes or funding availability. Furthermore buffer lands can be perfectly suitable for playing facilities given our occasional use patterns.

In concluding on this issue, it appears to me that public infrastructure promoters, like us, are in the community service space and that some synergies are possible by partnering. While our natural reaction to big public infrastructure schemes might often be to join a NIMBY (Not in my Back Yard) campaign, members should examine project proposals carefully for what opportunities might accrue to our clubs and the Association. I consider that the support of our members flowing from this partnership approach could benefit our clubs while affording assistance to infrastructure developers in the vital work of delivering new infrastructure for the benefit of the entire community. Accordingly, members should be alert to such opportunities and the Board is available to lend assistance, as required.

National Strategic Plan

It will be 15 years in January years since a wide-ranging Strategic Review, undertaken during Sean McCague's Presidency, produced its findings. It would be an understatement to say its findings didn't please everybody but, at least, it promoted debate and made people think. Has

the time come for another major analysis of where the GAA stands and what direction it should take?

Unlike sports like rugby and soccer which can call on international experience to share and pool ideas, the GAA is dealing from its own resources. It's doing well too but that doesn't mean we couldn't do even better.

The danger with changing bits and pieces as we go is that we'll miss the bigger picture. It's a bit like painting a room at a time....when you complete one, you know you have to do the next one. A full, well-planned renovation makes more sense. The same goes for our organisation, which could now benefit from a root-and-branch analysis across every area of activity.

Times change quickly and we need to need to change with them. A comprehensive review of everything we stand for, everything we do and everything we hope to do would be helpful.

Sky

Despite the oft-mentioned 'thin edge of the wedge' the 'Sky' did not fall in after - or any stage - during three years of having our inter-county games broadcast on their platforms. The new relationship brought a different slant to the coverage and threw up some new faces and voices in the analysis and presentation of football and hurling. It also injected a badly needed dose of competition to a narrow and limited market.

Some of the loose commentary that accompanied the announcement of the relationship first time around needs addressing. That some of it was generated from commentators with vested interest was disingenuous to say the least. A large number of games have always taken place away from the TV cameras and this is the case year-in, year-out. It is strange that no furore accompanies, or has ever accompanied, this situation. The idea that some county councils would table motions on this topic after Congress speaking definitively on it in Carlow last year is odd to say the least.

There is no denying the increased profile our games now enjoy in Britain as a result of their availability. A half a million people saw the 2014 drawn All-Ireland hurling final, involving Kilkenny and Tipperary.

Where the GAA now goes with the possible internationalisation of our games is a debate worth having but the idea that new viewers will flock to GAAGO without knowing in advance that the games exist, is a folly.

As with so many other new developments in the GAA in recent decades, including the live broadcast of games at the outset, sponsorship and of course the opening of Croke Park, much scaremongering needlessly accompanies change. Without exploring new ground we would remain stagnant and staid as an organisation and miss many opportunities. This was another area worth trying and it remains so.

Social media

The huge growth of social media has been largely positive for the organisation. There are major benefits in terms of better communications facilities, increased avenues of communication, commercial opportunities and the opportunity for a more widespread profile of, and promotion of, GAA activities. Certain elements of social media, however, have their downsides too.

The growth of social media messaging and online commentary has brought its own problems. I dislike the term ‘keyboard warrior’ as it is a contradiction in terms. Anyone who abuses another person anonymously online is anything but a warrior. Keyboard cowards would be more apt.

Dublin fans are famed for their humour, wit and good nature. This is also reflected online in many of the forums where the genuine Dublin fans frequent. I would like to see this continue to be the case and for any unacceptable online behaviour to be called out and challenged.

The GAA was built on foundations of mutual respect and decency. Sadly, on many exchanges online there is a distinct lack of respect or decency. I am sure the numbers involved are quite small, and certainly not representative of our organisation or membership – of which I’m sure many are not. Often though, they are given exposure and even a credence – which they scarcely deserve. There has always been a healthy rivalry in the GAA, a healthy and good humoured banter. I would not like to see that change in any way. We all know that when we visit another club in another county that the welcome is warm and that the hospitality is unrivalled. That is the real GAA.

Players too are amateur. They may star in Croke Park or Parnell Park or O'Toole Park one day but they may be in work or college or at home the next. They have partners, mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, other family and friends. They have feelings like the rest of us. If something has not gone right for a player in a game, you can be sure he or she is the first to know it themselves. Sometimes players are treated very badly online. Abuse, vilification, insults, cheap shots. It is not nice for them or their families and friends. Our players set themselves very high standards – be it at county or club level. Sometimes you would wonder what kind of standards the people who post these things set for themselves.

Would they say the things they post to the individual's face? Highly unlikely. Maybe that is the test they should set themselves before they press the send button.

'Targeting'

During the season the word 'targeting' was very much in the headlines after some games. It would seem that 'targeting' means different things to different people. Euphemisms such as 'man-marking' and 'close, continuous marking' were used to suggest they were the same as 'targeting'. They are not.

I'll give one example of 'targeting' and how the victim can ultimately be deemed to be the guilty perpetrator if action is not taken by officials when the 'targeting' is not cut out at source and the instigator for the most part goes unpunished. In one of our championship games this summer one of our players – (no prizes for guessing who!) - Diarmuid Connolly, was struck about six times before the ball was even thrown in to commence the game. Okay, they were not Mike Tyson haymakers he was hit with but, never-the-less, each blow was an infraction of the rules and worse still, happened right under the gaze of one of the referee's linesmen. At most breaks in play, this action continued with the perpetrator turning his back to the play and repeatedly striking Diarmuid, with one intention only, i.e. provoking a reaction that may get him in card trouble. The linesman's attention was brought to it but again no action taken.

In conclusion, to clean up this aspect of our games which often culminates in messy pushing and shoving contests and, ultimately the odd ripped jersey or two, it is important for the welfare of the game that action is taken to cut it out at source i.e. the original instigator.

All Stars

The annual All Stars perennially generates great debate. This year it could be argued was a case of the ‘Known knowns, known unknowns and unknown unknowns’ (© Donal Rumsfeld). That is the definites, the probables and the possibles resulting in a few contentious selections.

Congratulations to all those who were honoured by the awards scheme, particularly our own players, but I think it would be remiss not to suggest that Dublin were a bit harshly judged in receiving just six awards after a season which saw Jim Gavin’s men go unbeaten through the League, Leinster Championship and All-Ireland Series, to secure back-to-back All-Irelands.

It was somewhat mystifying that some players who were not always present be it through being subbed in games, black-carded, or more general card trouble or simply not being picked in the first place, were attributed the same rating as if they had been always present, while players who played consistently were down-graded by dint of not delivering a flawless performance on some occasions.

Cumann na mBunscol / Second Level Schools

I wish to again thank the contribution made by first and second-level teachers to the promotion of Gaelic Games in Dublin and to remind all clubs that co-operation between clubs and their local schools is one of the most important ways of developing our players. Clubs and schools should complement each other as we seek to both promote our games and make our young players into life-long members of the GAA in Dublin.

We continue to enjoy an extraordinary amount of goodwill from teachers. At a very difficult time for the profession, they continue to promote our games unstintingly. Despite many calls in the past, at both county and national level, the Government of the day still refuses to recognise in any meaningful way the contributions made by schoolteachers to our games. The games organised by Cumann na mBunscol and Coiste Iarbhunscoileanna Átha Cliath continue to be a very important part of both the promotion of Gaelic Games in Dublin and the development of players, in particular, at the highest level in the Second Level sector.

Once again, I would call for at least a cursory acknowledgement of the efforts our teachers make on behalf of the Association and the children in their care. The extra hours that teachers

work for free are known as the “Croke Park” hours after the national agreement that introduced them. How ironic that not even one of these hours can be claimed and used by teachers to promote our games or, indeed, any extra-curricular activities. In light of teachers’ commitment to the Association, it is only right that the Association ask that this situation be rectified in the next agreement.

GIS Information System

Our Strategic Plan “The Blue Wave” detailed the importance of Dublin to the future development of the Association. The County is home to 20% of the population of our island which places a significant responsibility on Dublin GAA to ensure the promotion and development of Gaelic Games in the Country’s largest population centre. This responsibility continues to grow as in excess of 22% of all the births in the 32 counties are to mothers resident in Dublin. These challenges are considerable in a county operating under the control of four different local authorities with such a diverse population and developing communities. The Strategic Committee further divided the county into ten Local Area Developments Regions (LADRs) to assist in the promotion and development of Gaelic Games in the county.

Following the publication of the initial summaries for Census 2016 the Strategic Implementation Committee recognised the need to bring together and utilise all available data in the most efficient manner possible. The County Committee agreed to the procurement of a Geographic Information System (GIS) which will allow us to visualise, question, analyse, and interpret data in order to understand demographic relationships, patterns, and trends. This analysis can either be based on the county as a whole or on the individual LADRs. The information provided will consist of a detailed analysis of clubs, the population in their areas and their facilities to include: -

- Summary club facilities database - Location of each club and details on key facilities (pitch no’s, clubhouse, gym, parking etc);
- Detailed club facilities database - Location of pitches used by each club and their associated facilities (parking, changing rooms etc), pitch ownership;

- Club Teams and Membership Database - Number of teams at all age levels, broken down by code and gender;
- Provision of the GIS database files for use in future projects and in a format (ESRI geodatabase) capable of being viewed by Dublin County Board;
- A Google map, based and exported from the GIS data, of pitch locations for integration into the Dublin County Board website, and
- Provision of the databases in a format which can be managed and updated by Dublin County Board.

The current membership database presents significant challenges in integrating with CSO and other bodies' data. Currently the GAA database is not in a format which is consistent with other databases. We have been in contact with the membership and registrations office in Croke Park seeking the inclusion of the Eircode address on the individual registration forms. The updating of our membership database with the additional Eircode information is essential to give us a more detailed analysis of participation issues and the desired locations for the future development of facilities.

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% year 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.

Féile Competitions

Uachtarán Liam O'Neill outlined at Congress 2013 that a review of how the Féile tournaments were organised was necessary to ensure that they were player centred and fit for purpose. A questionnaire was issued to all clubs and written submissions were invited from all counties. The vast majority of respondents felt that there was a requirement for change.

The main findings in the report was that the concept of clubs coming together for a festival of Gaelic Games must continue but that it needed to be done on a more inclusive basis. It was agreed that every club in the country should have an opportunity to participate in a Féile tournament. Various tournaments were arranged on designated Féile weekends: National Féile tournament, Regional Féile tournaments and an all-inclusive Provincial Féile tournaments. Three years later it has to be acknowledged and welcomed that the revised competition format has resulted in much greater participation by clubs all over the country.

Garda Vetting

The National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012, as amended by the Criminal Justice (Spent Convictions and Certain Disclosures Act) 2016, commenced on 29th April 2016 thus introducing the legal requirement that all GAA personnel who work with children and vulnerable adults shall be required to be vetted. The Vetting Act established the National Vetting Bureau replacing the Garda Central Vetting Unit.

Statutory vetting will, in addition to a check for criminal records, include a check for any relevant "soft information". "Soft information" referred to as "specified information" in the

Vetting Act, is information other than criminal convictions held by An Garda Síochána that leads to a bona-fide belief that a person poses a threat to children or vulnerable persons.

Since 29th April, it is a criminal offence for a Club to permit a person to mentor / coach children or vulnerable persons, without first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of that person. (See section 6.4 of the circular). As and from that date, the GAA has only engaged in e-vetting or on-line vetting procedures thus eliminating the paper vetting that was in existence since 2009.

Any person currently vetted by the GAA is covered under the Act as their vetting acceptance, in essence, transfers over under the new Act. For the purpose of clarification, the National Vetting Bureau Act in GAA terms applies to any person who carries out a role of responsibility with an underage player i.e. a person who is under 18 yrs. of age. This also applies to any coach, manager, referee, selector of a senior squad if that squad includes a person under 18 yrs. of age. As a policy of best practice, it is strongly recommended that Officers of Committees that oversee underage and juvenile activities at Club level should also be vetted.

The Act also covers those who work with vulnerable adults. The introduction of compulsory vetting, on an All-Ireland scale through legislation, merely formalises the GAA's previous policy and practice.

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.

I would like to welcome our new partners Life Style Sports who, along with Britvic 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.

All Ticket Matches

This year we were involved in a total of 19 all-ticket games commencing with the Spring Series and concluding on 1st October with the replay of the All-Ireland Senior Football Final. The demand for tickets during the summer months places 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.

Competitions Control Committee (CCC)

The CCC publishes their annual fixtures plan so that players can organise their other pursuits in tandem with their GAA commitments. This is becoming increasingly challenging for the Committee due to the timing of certain inter-county competitions, combined with the length of the inter-county season. Discontent is growing amongst the average club player because of this. In previous years, players found it difficult to motivate themselves to go back training early in the New Year when their fixtures have just concluded immediately prior to Christmas.

The CCC has successfully dealt with the culture that existed in some clubs to get games postponed for frivolous reasons. This eliminated the backlog of fixtures that existed in previous years. All adult competitions are practically completed and the concluding stages of the U21 competitions will be played in January 2017.

As outlined in our Strategic Review Report, the greatest drop-out of people playing our games is in the 16 - 21 age gap and the key challenge is to ensure that there is sufficient competition at all levels for these players. The decision of Congress 2016 to reduce the age limit for inter-county minor football and hurling from u18 to u17, effective from 1st January

2018, poses a number of challenges for our county. Should Minor remain at u18 at club level or be reduced to u17 also? Should we replace the u18 competitions in Dublin with both u17 and u19 grades? What effect will the inter-county minor championship have on our u16 competitions? Is it possible that we will have a greater drop-out of players now that minor inter-county is u17?

A Competition Structure Working Group, under the chairmanship of Ken O'Sullivan, has been appointed to review our competition structures from U16 to U20 as a result of this decision of Congress and a report will be presented to County Committee in early 2017.

I know all members will join with me in wishing wish a speedy return to full health to John McNicholas, Secretary of the CCC, who was hospitalised recently. John hopes to return to work on a phased basis after Christmas. John has served in a role that can be difficult most of the time but is necessary for the efficient running of our games programme. I commend him for his tireless dedication to the CCC.

I wish to thank Michael Seavers and Donie Kerin for the marvellous voluntary service to the GAA in Dublin. They devoted an enormous amount of time to their roles of Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively of the CCC. I consider that these two posts are among the most onerous positions in the county. At all times, the CCC acted impartially and had the best interests of the GAA in the county at heart.

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. It is either accepted or rejected. If an individual or unit does not accept the purposed 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 Appeals Committee.

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 Colm Crowley, Tom O'Shea and their committee members for their commitment to this process.

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. Regrettably 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.

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 utilised 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 164 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, as well as media outlets like local newspapers and radio stations.

A special word of thanks to Patsy Kiernan for his attention to Parnell Park. His willingness to cater for the games programme, training sessions and all committee meetings is very much appreciated. Patsy also arranges a Coffee Morning, an annual Mass for Deceased Members and, along with members from O'Tooles, co-ordinates the distribution of team sheets in Parnell Park for championship games. A sum of €21,000 was collected and donated to St. Francis Hospice from these activities this year, bringing the total amount raised to date, since these initiatives commenced to a staggering €150,000.

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.

Players Injury Scheme

The GAA has operated an injury scheme in one way or another since 1929. Through a process of constant review and frequent improvement, the Association continues to exercise concern for the welfare of members involved in our national games in various capacities.

The mandatory scheme provides benefits to members playing hurling and football whose clubs are registered with the scheme and also to accredited club personnel performing designated duties, in connection with the activities of clubs registered in the Scheme. The Injury Scheme is funded entirely from Club and GAA funds with no outside (e.g. insurance) involvement. There is no legal obligation on the GAA to provide such a Scheme.

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. The Injury Scheme does not seek to compensate fully for injury but to supplement other schemes such as Personal Accident or Health Insurance. The Scheme only provides cover for unrecoverable losses up to the limit specified under the scheme. Ultimately, the responsibility to ensure that adequate cover is in place lies with the individual member, commensurate with his/her specific needs.

Notification of an injury must be communicated to Willis within 60 days of the injury. The completed accident form must be submitted to the County Secretary for authentication and association with the relevant referee's report. It is vital that each claim is assessed by the Club Secretary to eliminate fraudulent applications. The majority of claims are processed within a period of four weeks and, generally, delays only occur when insufficient details are provided with the application.

Comóradh an Chéid 1916 - 2016

Congratulations to the GAA for arranging the Association's National 1916 Commemorative Event on the 100th anniversary of the Rising in Croke Park. A significant number of clubs also arranged a series of events that highlighted their club's connection to the history of the Easter Rising and to commemorate what is recognised as the pivotal event which led to the foundation of our State.

Club Championships

Cuala not only retained the Dublin Senior Hurling Championship with a narrow victory over their neighbours, Kilmacud Crokes but continued on their winning ways with victories over Borris-Kilcotton, St. Mullins and O'Loughlin Gaels to win their first Leinster Club Championship title - Crumlin were the last Dublin winners in 1979. Cuala play Slaughtneil in the All-Ireland semi-final on 4th February. St. Vincent's regained their football title by defeating the surprise, but deserving, finalists Castleknock by six points. St. Vincent's have

progressed to the Leinster Club Final against Rhode on 11th December in Portlaoise. Congratulations to Ballyboden St. Enda's, captained by Darragh Nelson, on winning the All-Ireland Club Football Championship title on St. Patrick's Day in Croke Park. The highlight of the final against Castlebar Mitchels was the superb individual display by corner back Bob Dwan who scored 0 – 3 and collected the Man of the Match award.

Naomh Fionnbarra and St. Oliver Plunkett's Eoghan Ruadh won the Senior 'B' Hurling and Football Championships respectively. Congratulations also to Fingallians who won the Intermediate Football Championship and regained their senior status.

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 over 14,000 fixtures covering the age groups U8 to Under 16 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, the Officers of CCC1 and CCC2 and Coiste na nÓg Chairman, Ken O'Sullivan, for their outstanding commitment to juvenile games in the county. Ken has completed his five year term as Chairman of Coiste na nÓg and I wish to thank him for his selfless service during that period.

Health and Wellbeing

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.

The County Health & Wellbeing Committee is chaired by Clare O'Sullivan (Naomh Olaf) and her committee have been very active this year. A report on their activities is included in the convention documentation. The purpose of their committee is to:-

- Promote positive health and wellbeing amongst all club members;
- Ensure that supports, programmes, partnerships, training & resources are available;
- Support, implement and monitor GAA policies, and
- Be a signposting tool for members and local communities

The committee is not expected to be social workers or counsellors or to have all the answers. This is a service for all the clubs and these volunteers are selfless and their immense contribution is done quietly and confidentially.

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. Along with County Chairman, Sean Shanley, the main guest was the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Brendan Carr, and he presented the Lar Foley Hall of Fame Award to Damien Byrne of Cuala.

Eamon Dillon won the ‘Senior Hurler of the Year Award’ and Eoghan O’Donnell 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 (Clontarf) and Juvenile (Commercials) and also the School of the Year Second Level (Terenure College) and Primary (Gaelscoil Bhaile Bhrigín).

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 co-operation during the year.

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.

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.

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. Following a training course for 25 new recruits, the total number of referees officiating at adult level is now 250.

In-service training continued during the year and a development group of young Referees has now been formed. The aim of the exercise is to mentor these referees to ensure progression to the Leinster and National Panels. It is important that there are progression routes and opportunities available for our young referees to avoid disillusionment that may subsequently result in them hanging up their whistle at an early age.

Coiste na Réiteoirí are also responsible for the assessment and classification of referees and during the year the committee completed the grading of both the Football and Hurling Referees. I wish to sincerely thank Aidan Shiells, Frank Brady, Tom Quigley and their committee 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 - Tony 'Scout' Hempenstall (Scoil Uí Chonaill), Mick Higgins, John Drumgoole (St. Vincent's), Aidan Carthy, Eddie Toman, Des Butler (Erins Isle), Michael Walsh (Naomh Mearnóg), Paul Casey, Paul Brownen (Clontarf), Joe Costigan (St. Mark's), Vincent Murphy (Trinity Gaels) and John Ring (Naomh Barróg). To all our members who suffered bereavements, I want to convey my sincere sympathy.

Paddy Delaney was synonymous with Round Towers, Clondalkin and was the club delegate to the County Committee. Paddy was extremely proud of his club and their facilities and the community of Clondalkin. He encouraged involvement in our games. A former minor, junior and senior footballer with Dublin who won All-Ireland honours in 1959 (minor) and 1960 (junior), he also served Dublin GAA in a variety of capacities including that of selector and county board vice-chairman.

Noel McLoughlin, affectionately known as ‘Little Sport’, was a former chairman of Rosmini Gaels but was best known for arranging the annual North Dublin GAA trip to London for over 30 years.

A native of Emly, Co. Tipperary, John Hennessy was actively involved with his club, was an enthusiastic volunteer, a loyal mentor and was Cuala’s delegate to the County Committee. John served on various county sub-committees including Management and Competitions Control and regularly represented Dublin at the GAA Annual Congress and at Leinster Conventions. He was also available for stewarding in Parnell Park and epitomised the values of our sport.

Owen McKenna (Kilmore) gave outstanding service as a regular, committed steward in Parnell Park since the redevelopment of our grounds and was always willingly available to advise on Health & Safety matters.

I also wish to remember former GAA President’s Jack Boothman and Joe McDonagh who died during the year. Both were extremely supportive of Dublin during their respective presidencies.

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 2015

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 - for their continued support and loyalty. The work of Strategic Programme Manager, Kevin O’Shaughnessy, Gerard O’Connor, Games Manager, and the

Coaching & Games Development Staff and the G.P.O'S 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 Gerry Harrington and John McNicholas 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 Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, Michael Hand, David Kennedy and Brendan Waters. Their encouragement and advice have been invaluable.

I wish to acknowledge the support that I received during the year from the Árd Stiúrthóir, Páraic Duffy 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 Michael Seavers (again!), 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 Colm Crowley 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.

Bairbre Uí Néil and her loyal band of co-workers deserve a special mention for their promotion of the Scór competitions and the Irish Language. Bairbre has completed her five year term of office and I wish to thank her for her commitment to the role of Oifigeach na Gaeilge.

I wish to acknowledge the efficiency of Ken O'Sullivan, Damian Murphy and Kathleen McPoland 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 am indebted to the Parnell Park staff - Aileen, Fiona, Gabrielle, Kathleen and Sharon - for their support during the year and they work diligently to ensure the efficient running of our organisation.

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

CCC Annual Report 2016.

As Competitions Control Committee Secretary it is my annual duty to present a report on the Activities of the CCC to County Convention. Due to a health issue I have been on leave since the beginning of September and have missed out, since then, on the day to day involvement in adult games activities. Because of that this report will present a more general view of adult games activities than would normally be the case.

I must open by congratulating Cuala on their “double double” having won both the County Senior Hurling Championship and AHL 1 titles for the second year in a row. Well done to all concerned. Congratulations are also due to St Vincent’s on regaining the County Senior Football Championship title after a break of a year, their 3rd title in 4 years.

Heartiest congratulations also to all the other championship winners, especially to Naomh Fionnbarra (hurling) and Fingallians (football) who have won their way to Senior (A) status.

It would be fair to say that it has been a difficult year for many Clubs’. This has been evident in games conceded which were in far greater number than recent years. The loss of many players, either through following the Irish Soccer team in the European Championships in France last June, or through the flight of many students to the USA, or Australia, for the summer months had an adverse effect on many teams forcing them to concede games to their opponents. In addition to the concession of games, the large number of requests received by the CCC Office for agreed fixture changes within “the seven day rule” in June and July suggests that there was also an element of doubling up by some Clubs in an effort to keep their various teams active in competition. With regard to the practice of doubling up the question needs to be asked; is it fair to the player involved, who feels obliged to play extra games, or to his direct opponents who may have to face a player from a higher grade.

In many cases the problems that surfaced during the summer months stemmed from poor planning by Club Officers. Teams were entered into competition based on those that were fielded by the Club during the previous year, or, based on the number of players who were available and training in January. No thought was put into what plans that players might have had for the remainder of the year. For example; if a team has a high proportion of College Students there is a strong possibility that many of these Students will go away on a Student or J1 Visa. Also, is consideration given to the impact that the absence of players on inter-county duty, and their replacement by players from the next lower team and so on down the line, will have on the number of teams that the club can field. These are issues which should be taken into consideration when making entries.

Football Championships. In recent years the members of the CCC have become increasingly concerned about the state of our football championships. At senior football level the early rounds of fixtures have seen a growing number of very one-sided games with 20, or more, point victories becoming more common. These one sided hammerings do nothing to promote the Dublin Football Championship and certainly do nothing for either team. The CCC has examined senior championship football results since 2010 and has found that several teams’ have had no (“A”) championship match victory in that time. Since we, as a County, adopted the “pot A / pot B” format in 2012 eight teams’ (25%) have not yet won a first round game. It is clear that for some their principal ambition is only to win the 1st round of the Senior Football B championship to avoid participation in the SFC relegation competition. This is just not good enough; championships should be competitions that all teams strive to win. Expectation of defeat not just weakens the team involved; it also weakens the standard of the championship itself. In seeking a way to improve the senior and Intermediate Football championships the members of CCC are actively considering if both the SFC and IFC should

be split into two 16 team (i.e. 4 x 4 group competitions) championships, a format that has worked well for us in Hurling.

Our other (junior) football championships are more haphazard in their organisation with varying numbers of teams in the different championships and no consistent means of promotion and relegation from one to another. The constant complaint that CCC receive is about the problems that Junior clubs (i.e. a Club where the first team is a junior team) have when facing a team (i.e. a 2nd or 3rd team in their club) from a Senior or Intermediate Club, and the difficulties facing those Junior clubs in trying to win promotion or the right to represent Dublin in the Leinster Junior Championship. Another complaint often brought to CCC is that it is no longer acceptable to expect players to train for months to play possibly only one championship game before being knocked out of the competition. Are group championships the way forward at junior football level as well? If they are, I must caution that we will need to seriously consider reducing the number of league play-off games in order to have all competitions finish within a calendar year.

Taking all of the above and some suggestions made by Clubs, into account the members of CCC are now at the final stages of preparing a detailed proposal for new Football Championship structures, which will hopefully be introduced in 2018. We aim to present these proposals to County Committee early in the New Year. I would appeal to all football clubs to give the proposals your full consideration and support.

Hurling Championships. Our Hurling Championships, all of which are organised on a group basis, ran very well this year. The fact that all teams and players are guaranteed at least 5 championships games each year gives club hurlers a great advantage over our footballers. The only draw-back is that I believe that we make qualification for the play-off stages too easy by allowing the top 4 from 6 to qualify for the various quarter-finals. Having so many qualifiers from the group stages reduces, at that stage, the competitiveness which should be a feature of a championship competition.

Leagues. I mentioned earlier the number of games conceded and the no shows which were a feature of almost all our leagues this year. Usually this problem affects only the lower divisions but it is a matter of regret that both division 1s and other higher divisions were affected this year as well. Despite the best efforts of CCC several of our leagues dragged on into November and December. The delays were the fault of nobody and were usually a by-product of one team's good championship run where that successful team held everyone else up in the league. As one means of reducing the delays in finishing leagues I would suggest again that we look at the play-off structures for league competitions. An outright winner with the next two teams playing off for promotion should suffice. I am happy that we leave the relegation play-off structure as it is.

Effect of Inter-County Games on Club Fixtures. The recent of our Senior Football team, in particular, has attracted a lot of media comment in recent times regarding the lack of senior hurling and football championship fixtures in this County during the summer months. Much of the comment has, in my opinion, been a result of lazy journalism or commentary where the facts were not checked out. It ignores that Dublin is a dual County at both club and county level. The suggestion is usually that the Manager of the Dublin Football team will not allow "his players" to play with their clubs' during the Dublin Football team's championship run. I want state categorically that the opposite is the case! Both of our current senior county team managers have expressed a desire that club championship games should be played in the summer months to sharpen up players etc. However, our difficulty, as a CCC, arises due to fixture scheduling by the Provincial Council, and to a lesser extent by Croke Park, where Dublin football and hurling teams seldom play championship games on the same weekend. We almost always have a situation that when footballers are available to their clubs, hurlers are not, and vice versa. Success for the Dublin under 21 hurling team – who reached

the All Ireland semi-final in 2016 - also affects availability of players in both codes at club level. As a result our Clubs, and rightly so in my opinion, object to being asked to play Championship games without their players when they are on inter-county duty, even if it is in the opposite code.

The CCC has discussed the problem of scheduling with the Leinster Council and while I believe that they want to help us, their fixture planning is influenced by other factors such as availability of grounds, the demands of T.V. companies for live showing of matches, requests from other Counties etc.

I fully accept that the delay between the opening senior championship rounds in May and its resumption in September, or in October (when there is a replay) is too long and totally unacceptable to the club only player. It is, unfortunately, a real case of the tail (inter-county) wagging the dog (club level) which needs to be brought under control, although, I have to admit, I'm not sure how best to do this as I cannot see the powers that be doing away with the National Leagues or the Provincial or All Ireland Championships.

To put into context the inter-county v. Club fixtures problem in Dublin, in 2016 there were 40 weekends from January 1st to October 1st (All Ireland Football Final replay date). Our Clubs only had access to all of their Dublin inter-county players (i.e. both hurlers and footballers) on 4 of those 40 weekends! The other weekends saw O'Byrne Cup, Walsh Cup, Kehoe Cup, 3rd level College Competitions, National Football and Hurling leagues, Under 21 Football and Hurling Championships and Senior Football and Hurling Championship (including N. Rackard Cup) fixtures, or the 6 or 13 day run-in to those fixtures, take priority over Club fixtures. In addition we were also instructed by Central Council not to make fixtures for two Sunday's due to a 1916 GAA commemoration and Lá na gClub. A Croke Park Concert, announced after the CCC fixture plan was adopted and circulated by Central Council, , resulted in the re-scheduling of Dublin's opening Leinster Senior Hurling Championship fixture, with a knock-on effect – the postponement - on our Senior Football Championship opening round. So much for the advertisement that "Club comes first". While I am critical of the late notification of the Concert I must, on behalf of the CCC Chairman and myself, record our thanks to the Chairman and Secretary of the Leinster Council for their instant response when we expressed our concerns, for meeting us at short notice and for their help in extending the time for entry of our senior club champions, and intermediate football champions, to the Leinster Club championships.

Rule 6.22 of the current Official Guide states as follows; ***Inter-County Players availability to Clubs*** *The period of time during which Senior Inter-County players shall not be expected to fulfil Inter-Club championship fixtures prior to Inter- County Championship games, in the same code, shall be as follows: **Senior Inter-County Championships** (i) All Ireland finals – Max' of 20 days. (ii) All other games – Max' of 13 days. **All other grades of Championship, including All Ireland Minor and Under 21 Finals** – Max' of 7 days.*

While different people have different interpretations of this rule I wonder are we in Dublin prepared to adopt it in its entirety and play our championship games even when certain players are unavailable due to their inter-county commitments? It would be one way of allowing championship fixtures during the summer months.

While I have complemented the senior team managements on their attitude to releasing players back to their clubs it would be remiss of me not to mention the difficulties that arose from the decision of certain underage managements in recent years to instruct players not to play with their clubs weeks, and even months, before inter-county championship fixtures. This attitude is absolute nonsense and is not acceptable in any circumstance. As a result of lobbying by CCC, and others,

Coiste Báinistí put the following motion to County Committee this year and it was adopted by a massive majority;

Players included on an Inter-County Minor and U21 football and hurling match day panel of 26 should not be requested to play with their clubs in adult football or hurling leagues (U21) or minor football or hurling leagues (Minor) seven days prior to an inter-county championship fixture. Outside of this period all players shall be available to participate in their respective club league games. Inter-County team managements must supply their match day panel of twenty-six players to the County Secretary 48 hours prior to a scheduled programme of club league fixtures. Inter-County challenge games in a particular code will not be approved if there is a scheduled round of club fixtures in that code on the same weekend. The travelling party to games is 26 players only.

You can rest assured that CCC will be insisting that all underage managers comply with this ruling in the future.

One of my personal bugbears is that the Association fixtures policy adopted nationally – and democratically! - is often more suited to a county that is small, unsuccessful at inter-County level and playing only one code rather than the likes of ourselves, Cork, Wexford or Tipperary etc who give equal footing to both codes at all levels. As I write I note that a new Club Players Association is to be formally launched in the coming weeks. While I am in agreement with much of the sentiment expressed on behalf of that Association to date, I would caution that there is no quick fix “one size fits all” solution to the Club fixtures crisis. No two Counties, or indeed two Provinces, are the same. Bigger counties cannot be compared to smaller counties, dual counties cannot be compared to one code counties and successful counties cannot be compared to unsuccessful counties etc.

Discipline. On the discipline front the year has been reasonably good. We have to remember that when dealing with games where there is a lot of bodily contact it is understandable that there will be flare ups every so often. These flare-ups are usually of the instinctive hit out first, and regret immediately, type. They are dealt with by CCC quickly, fairly, and on the basis of the Referee’s report, and I’m glad to report that in 99.99% of cases the proposed penalties as laid down in rule are accepted without complaint.

I do acknowledge that players etc. are entitled to seek a hearing where they feel that the charge against them, or the proposed penalty, is unfair but it should be noted that the majority of the CCC’s proposed penalties have been upheld, and sometimes increased, by the Hearings Committee. The only way, under rule, of overturning a red-card is through the use of unedited video evidence which proves that a Referee made an error. Bringing in a long line of “witnesses” to an incident is of no use. It is a matter of concern that there has been a noticeable increase over the past few years in clubs claiming to be unable to identify a member or supporter who had been reported for being involved in an incident which caused serious disruption, or injury, either during or after a game, and, who refused to give his name when requested to do so. The usual reason given for being unable to identify such a person is that “we don’t want to get involved in case there is legal action taken”. This, to be frank, is often a delaying tactic used in the hope that CCC will give up their interest in the case and not follow through on disciplinary action. I must point out that regardless of legal or Garda action being taken the CCC has an obligation to investigate breaches of rule or good behaviour at our games. I’m glad to report that the various Committees’ that I have worked with have never backed down when a club pulled this stunt and have followed through on their obligation to the full.

Under Rule 3.1(b) of the Official Guide – *A Club shall be held responsible for the conduct of its members and known partisans.* I wish to warn those who may find it difficult to identify their own people that in similar situations in the recent past the CCC has withdrawn all fixtures, with games

not played on schedule awarded to their opponents, so as to help them with the identification process. Clubs shielding “unknown” persons who were responsible for disruptive conduct have had large fines (one recent fine amounted to €3,000.00) imposed on them. Don’t say that you haven’t been warned!

Minor The good news is that Minor entries, in both codes, rose again in 2016. The flip side of that is that the extra teams made it difficult to complete competitions within the limited time available for minor competitions. Minor competitions are impacted upon by school excursions, pre-exam study, the exams themselves, family holidays, post-leaving cert’ results holidays and school GAA fixtures. These limit the time available for our fixtures. In 2017 we need to take steps to reduce the number of teams in each of the minor leagues and championships in order to fit the competitions into the time available to play them.

Under 21 The nightmare level! Trying to fit the Under 21 championships into our fixture calendar is impossible. We can’t schedule them in January or February because of the involvement of players on College teams in the O’Byrne Cup, Walsh Cup or the various 3rd Level competitions. March and April are taken up with Leinster and All Ireland under 21 football championships, May to September with J1 or Student visas and the under 21 Leinster and All Ireland hurling championships while our own adult championships reach their concluding stages in October. This leaves November and December, which should be the close season, but is often a time when there are fixture clashes between under 21 fixtures and league play-off games. If clubs wish to continue with the under 21 championships they will have to accept that they must be played alongside outstanding adult and minor league games. There is just no other space available in our calendar in which to play under 21 championships.

Referees I wish, on behalf of us all, to thank our Referees for their commitment to our games in Dublin. Without them we would not get our fixtures programme played. Those who choose to abuse Referees at games should remember that!

Trophies Due to the good work of Mick Seavers, Denis Carr and Eamonn Potts there has been a huge improvement in the return of trophies in the past couple of years. One issue which still needs to be addressed is the poor condition – in a small number of cases – that trophies come back in. Those who “borrow” a trophy for a year have a responsibility to return that trophy in a clean and presentable condition. Trophies that have been damaged should be either repaired or replaced before return and trophies that have been filled with any sort of drink should, at the very least, be washed!

Requests for Postponements Everyone should be aware by now of our 7 day rule for league fixtures. This rule allows for fixtures to be moved to a new – agreeable- date within a 15 day spread. This should ensure enough time to suit the needs of all concerned. While most Clubs are happy to work within the 7 day rule there are, unfortunately, some who tend to see a request for a move as a sign of weakness which should be jumped upon in order to win a handy two league points. I would remind such clubs of the old saying “what goes around comes around” if you get the name of not co-operating with requests for fixture moves others might reject your request when it’s your turn to seek a change of date.

The CCC puts a considerable effort into preparing the fixture calendar on an annual basis. The calendar is then issued to all clubs so that you can arrange, in good time, your own activities around our schedule. It also allows for the early use of the 7 day rule is seeking agreement months ahead of an event to re-schedule a fixture around that event. Yet, I am always amazed at the high volume of last minute postponement requests that we in CCC receive because of a wedding or a tournament

down the country etc. The message I am trying to get through is – the other events are planned well in advance, re-scheduling of fixtures should be as well. The CCC does not do postponements!

I was saddened recently that one Club saw fit to appeal to Leinster Council for the postponement of a play-off fixture. This was where CCC had set a date for a game before the teams to play in that fixture had been confirmed. It was done so that the particular competition could be finished before the onset of winter and the winter break. The Club concerned used the technicality that the full details of the fixture were not issued 5 days before the fixture date (even though they had advance notice of that date and time of the fixture) in order to get the game called off. They did so, I believe, because some of their players were away at a stag event and unavailable to play in the play-off game. The result is that one of our more important competitions is now held up until 2017 on pathetic and unsporting grounds. In my opinion those responsible for making the appeal should be ashamed of themselves. They have let their direct opponents, the other teams in that competition and our County down.

Conclusion I mentioned at the start of this report that I am currently out of the office recovering from a recent illness. I would like to put on record my sincere thanks and appreciation to all my colleagues in Parnell Park, especially John Costello and Seán Shanley, and to the many Club representatives who made contact with me, or members of my Family, to pass on their good wishes while I was in hospital.

I would particularly like to thank my office colleague, Carol Monahan, CCC Chairman Mick Seavers and Noel Murphy. The three of them had to take up, without any advance warning, from where I left off and between them ensured that the daily business of the CCC carried on as normal.

We have been very lucky in the membership of the CCC (all volunteers) over the past few years. As a Committee we argue long and hard but it is always without rancour and always for the betterment of Dublin GAA. To Mick Seavers (Erin's Isle) our Chairman, Donie Kerin (Ballyboden St Enda's) our Vice-Chairman, Brendan Mullally (St Margaret's), Cathal O'Donnell (St Sylvester's), Noel Murphy (Trinity Gaels), Denis Carr (St Oliver Plunkett's Eoghan Ruadh), Ollie Ryan (Parnells), Eamonn Potts (Good Counsel / Counsel Gaels) and Aidan Shiells (Referees Committee / Clontarf) grateful thanks for all your hard work and dedication to the cause of adult Gaelic games in Dublin.

Thanks also to Frank Brady (St Anne's) for his time and effort in the appointment and replacement of Referees.

Finally, thanks as usual to our County Groundsman, Noel Brady who ensures that Parnell and O'Toole Parks are always in prime condition for our fixtures, and to our Tuesday night host in Parnell Park, Patsy Kiernan, who looks after us so well when we hold our CCC meetings.

I wish you and your Club members a very happy and prosperous 2017 both on and off the field.

Looking forward to being back in harness in January,

Is Mise,

Seán MacNiocláis.
Rúnaí CCC Áth Cliath.

30.11.2016.

Hurling				28.11.2016
2016	Winners	Runners up		Completion Date
SHC A	Cuala	Kilmacud Crokes		
SHC B	Naomh Fionnbarra	Naomh Barrog		
IHC	St Judes	Raheny		
Junior A	Clontarf	Kilmacud Crokes		
Junior B	St Vincents	Faughs		
Junior C	Kilmacud Crokes	Skerries Harps		
Junior D	St Judes	Cuala		
Junior E	Clontarf	Wild Geese		
Junior F	St Josephs OCB	Realt Dearg		
Minor A	Na Fianna	St Vincents		
Minor B	Faughs	Ballinteer St Johns		
Minor C	Erins Isle	Isles of the Sea		
Minor D	Ballyboden St Endas	St Sylvesters		
Under 21 A				Ongoing
Under 21 B				Ongoing
Under 21 C				Ongoing
AHL1	Cuala	O'Tooles		
AHL 2	Naomh Fionnbarra	Plunketts v. Parnells		Tbc
AHL 3	Naomh Barrog	St Peregrines / Naomh Olaf		03.12.16
AHL 4	Kilmacud Crokes	St Brigids		
AHL 5	St Maurs	Cuala		
AHL 6	Faughs	Realt Dearg		
AHL 7	Cuala	St Brigids		
AHL 8	Naomh Barrog	Round Towers (C)		
AHL 9	St Peregrines	St Finians(S) v. R Towers (L)		04.12.16
MHL 1	Ballyboden St Endas	Na Fianna or St Vincents		Tbc
MHL 2	Whitehall Colmcille	Fingallians		
MHL 3	Naomh Olaf	Castleknock		
MHL 4	Cuala	Naomh Maur		
MHL 5	Wild Geese	St Sylvesters		
BOLAND CUP	St Brigids	Lucan Sarsfields		
MILLAR SHIELD	St Brigids	Na Fianna		

Football	Winners	Runners Up		
SFC	St Vincents	Castleknock		
SFC B	St Oliver Plunketts ER	Cuala		
IFC	Fingallians	Ballymun Kickhams		
IFC B	Scoil Uí Chonaill	Garda		
Junior A	Kilmacud Crokes	St O. Plunketts ER		
Junior B	Ballymun Kickhams	Wanderers		
Junior C	St Vincents	Lucan Sarsfields		
Junior D	Naomh Olaf	St O. Plunketts ER		
Junior E	Starlights	Beann Eadair		
Minor A	Clontarf	Na Fianna		
Minor B	Round Towers (L) or St O. Plunketts ER			Tbc
Minor C	St Marys (S)	Erins Isle		
Minor D	St Annes	O'Dwyers		
Minor E	Clontarf	St Catherines		
Under 21 A				Ongoing
Under 21 B				Ongoing
Under 21 C				Ongoing
AFL 1	St Judes v. Ballyboden St Endas or Kilmacud Crokes			11.12.16
AFL 2	Skerries Harps	Clontarf		
AFL 3	Na Fianna	Naomh Olaf v. Fingallians		02.12.16
AFL 4	Round Towers (L)	St Marks v. St Finians (S)		03.12.16
AFL 5	Cuala	Thomas Davis		
AFL 6	Clontarf	Skerries Harps		
AFL 7	Wanderers	Ballymun Kickhams		
AFL 8	Cuala	Na Gaeil Oga		
AFL 9	Naomh Olaf	Ballyboden St Endas		
AFL 10	Skerries Harps	Clann Mhuire		
AFL 11 N County	Erins Isle	St Brigids		
AFL 11 S County	St Marks	St Francis Gaels / Cabinteely		
AFL 11 league Final	St Brigids	Erins Isle		
MFL 1	Clontarf	Kilmacud Crokes		
MFL 2 A	Lucan Sarsfields	Castleknock		
MFL 2 B	St Vincents	St Sylvesters		
MFL 2	St Vincents / Castleknock v. Lucan Sarsfields / St Sylvesters			04.12.16

MFL 3	Erins Isle, O'Tooles, St Patricks (D), Round Towers (C) or Fingallians			Tbc
MFL 4	Trinity Gaels, St Marys, St Maurs or St Patricks (P)			Tbc
MFL 5 A	St Catherines	Thomas Davis		
MFL 5 B	O'Dwyers or St Sylvesters			04.12.16
St VdeP	Ballymun Kickhams	Kilmacud Crokes		
AIB	Naomh Olaf	Ballinteer St Johns		
Loving Cup	Na Fianna	Ballyboughal		
Joy Cup	Round Towers (L)	Kilmacud Crokes		
Conlon Cup	Templeogue Synge St	Thomas Davis		
Stacy Cup	Skerries Harps	St Brigids		
Parson	St Annes	St Margarets		
Murphy Cup	St Kevins Killians	St Sylvesters		
Sheridan Cup	Starlights	Naomh Olaf		
Duffy Cup	Liffey Gaels	Beann Eadair		
Mooney Cup	Skerries Harps	Tyrellstown		
O' Broin Cup	St James Gaels An Caislean	Lucan Sarsfields		

Coiste Éisteachta 2016

During the course of the year, Coiste Éisteachta met on 19 occasions. Three of the meetings dealt with 18 transfer appeals, of which 1 appeal was upheld and the other 17 cases were lost by the respective Appellants. The other 16 meetings dealt with 39 cases. Of these 39 cases:-

2 cases dealt with appeals related to internal Club decisions of which one was lost and the second was returned to the Club for reprocessing;

1 case had more than the minimum suspension imposed, while 27 cases had the minimum suspension imposed

5 cases were withdrawn

In one case the Appellant didn't appear for His Hearing and 3 had their red cards rescinded (with the aid of video evidence).

The decision making may, on some occasions, involve difficult circumstances and situations but Coiste Éisteachta strives at all times to be fair and honest. Each case is different and needs to be treated by all with the respect and privacy it deserves. When any member / unit feels our decision was incorrect, they then have the right of appeal to the Leinster Hearings Committee. We fully respect this, irrespective of the outcome of any appeal.

This year one decision taken by the our Committee was the subject of an appeal to the Leinster Council Hearings Committee. The appeal was unsuccessful.

As stated in previous County Convention Reports the role of the County Hearings Committee (CHC) isn't understood by all. The CHC is not an Appeals Committee, that is the function of the Leinster Council. The CHC does not seek to be seen as a defender of referees, committees or players. The role of the CHC is to assess the evidence put before it, in an impartial manner and to adjudicate on the disputed facts or interpretations in dispute.

Working within a time frame brings pressure on all involved, from the claimant, defendant, referee to the CHC members. As match suspensions are now in place, where appropriate, this puts a time constraint on a hearing request in that it may have to be dealt within a very short period. In order for a hearing to take place all parties have to understand that nothing can be done without a referees report. We acknowledge all those who co-operated for those urgent hearings to take place.

It is worth bearing in mind with regard to an individual or club seeking a hearing that if the request is received outside the three days allowed, the committee has zero discretion in this regard and cannot accommodate any such hearings outside the time frame allowed.

Coiste Éisteachta would once again recommend that All Club Secretaries should obtain a copy of the current Treoraí Oifigiúil and acquaint themselves with the rules of the Association, and in particular those pertaining to the procedures of Coiste Éisteachta.

The Hearings Committee is obliged to act on rules in the Official Guide and will apply those rules accordingly.

It is always the policy of the committee that if any individual member of the committee has any conflict of interest whatsoever that he steps down for that particular hearing. All parties who seek a hearing also are given the right to object to any sitting member of the committee before a hearing commences

It is regrettable that once again we must note some individuals who have been sent off and reported for some of the most serious offences are still reluctant to accept that they have done wrong and they are not prepared to take responsibility and accept the penalty that is imposed. Even worse is that in some such instances team managers, and indeed Club Officers are fully prepared to attempt to defend the indefensible.

In this my final report as Cathaoirleach I would like to thank all the members of Coiste Eisteachta during the last five years for their dedicated service to the Association in Dublin. Their time and patience in ensuring that Appellants get a fair hearing and their willingness to attend meetings at short notice has to be commended.

It was with great sadness in October that we heard of the death of one of our committee members Seán Ó hAonasa. Seán was a valuable member of the committee and had served Dublin GAA well in previous roles on CCC and Management Committees as well as being a loyal and dedicated Cuala club member.

We wish to express special thanks to Colm Ó Crualaoich who has also completed his five-year period as Cathaoirleach and we acknowledge the massive contribution of his time which he devoted to Coiste Éisteachta.

We are grateful to Patsy Kiernan for looking after us on our meeting nights, Aileen Connolly for her assistance with the video equipment and we would like to acknowledge the advice and help given to us by the County Secretary (John Costello).

Coiste Éisteachta Átha Cliath 2016 members:

Colm Ó Crualaoich (Cathaoirleach)	Fine Ghallainn
Tomás MacManius (Leas Cathaoirleach)	Naomh Oilibhéir Pluincéid Eoghan Ruadh
Tomás Ó Sé (Rúnaí)	Naomh Marcais

Coiste:

Donncha Mac an Bhaird	Naomh Eoin Baile An tSaoire
Micheál Mac un Fhleastair	Baile Buadáin Naomh Éanna
Seán Ó hAonasa	Cuala
Micheál Ó Casthasaigh	Baile Bachaill
Dáithí Ó Griffin	Tomás Dáibhís
Dónhnall Ó hIcéadha	Na Fianna

Is Mise,

Colm Ó Crualaoich Cathaoirleach	Tomás Ó Sé Rúnaí
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Coaching and Games Development

The committee met on 4 occasions since last year's convention listed, below are the members of the Coaching and Games Development Committee:-

Ger Lyons (Cathaoirleach)	O Dwyer's
Cormac O'Brien	Ballinteer St Johns
Tom O'Donnell	Secondary Schools
Martin Rabbitte	Primary Schools
Danny Harrington	Juvenile Referee Rep
Kevin O'Shaughnessy	DCB
Gerard O'Connor	DCB

The main areas of focus during the past year were:-

- Primary schools coaching programme
- Supporting the new clubs recently established
- Recruitment and redeployment of GPO's
- Further roll out of the Child Protection in Sports Awareness workshops
- Promotion and delivery of Cúl camp
- Coach and referee education programmes.
- Review of CCC2 games programme

Active schools active clubs has been a key focus for games development over the past year. Research has revealed that more than 50% of children are not getting the recommended amount of daily physical activity. Furthermore, only 35% of primary and 10% of post primary pupils are receiving the recommended one to two hours a week of PE at school.

While our primary function as an organisation is to promote Gaelic Games within the county this research highlights a worrying and very real problem for society. Our games development staff provide all year round physical activity to over 400 primary schools which equates to 75.9% of all the schools within Dublin.

We need to be more proactive in our efforts to influence and support physical activity in all our schools.

The support to establishing or emerging clubs is still labour intensive work but one that is very rewarding when the small shoots show signs of life eventually appearing. This past year has seen progress on both fronts with the establishment of a new juvenile club in Dublin 15 and the reenergising of a number of clubs that have struggled in the past.

The last year has been marked by significant organisational changes in the deployment of the Games Promotion Officers (GPO). A considerable number of Games Promotions Officers (GPO) have changed careers and as a result of this additional staff have had to be recruited to replace those who have left. In addition a number of GPO's have been reassigned to new clubs. This reorganization of staff can be a difficult time for clubs, schools and the organisation but necessary to maintain high standards.

The work of our GPO's is critical to increasing playing numbers, improving coaching standards and providing support to our club coaches.

One of the major pieces of work that GPO's have been engaged this past year has been the delivery of coach education programmes and facilitation of club development plans. These club development workshops help build on current and past achievements and provides a roadmap for success into the future. The plan is more than a document; it should be a rallying call to action and include goals, milestones and timeframes.

In recent years, we have experienced significant increases in the numbers of participants at Go Games level. The major factor in this phenomenal increase in the number of children playing Gaelic Games has been an extensive programme of activity that clubs have on offer. In 2016 the number has increased from 40711 to 41731 a total increase of 2.5 %. Since 2011 there has been a cumulative growth rate of 25.4% in the numbers playing Go Games in the capital.

The significant increase in participation at Go Games, highlights the importance of retaining as many players as possible as they transition into Youth and subsequently into Adult level. Juvenile games under the auspices of CCC2 (13-16), continues to make increases in participation levels 1.2% this year even though high drop-off rates from sport during teenage years is considered the norm. We continue to keep them playing and staying with the GAA up to 16. In fact, it is estimated that, on an annual basis worldwide, over 66% of participants aged 7 to 18 years of age withdraw from sport – with the highest attrition rates occurring during adolescence.

Volunteers are the foundation of the GAA, however we face a major challenge recruiting and retaining volunteers for teams and positions within clubs. While mandatory training is essential to good practice, this places additional time pressures on volunteers too. Child Protection Awareness training is one of those mandatory programmes that has to be undertaken by all those involved in youth sport. A total of 49 Child Protection in Sport Awareness workshops were held, which amounted to 748 participants, many of these were new volunteers getting involved in coaching for their first time. Again we will continue to identify clubs that need help with delivering these programmes in 2017

Camps continue to go from strength to strength with each passing year. Last year saw the highest figures on record for camp activity this success can be attributed to a number of factors. One of those factors is the excellent organisation and promotion of the camps by clubs and juvenile committees. Dublin's unprecedented success at inter county level is a major factor why young people want to now play our games during the summer. The final factor is the value for money that many parents express compared to other camps on offer.

This past summer was another record year for camp activity. A total of 160 camps took place in Dublin over the seven weeks of the summer. This saw a total attendance of 20,728 children. This was an increase of 11.3% on last year's figure. The Cúl camps in particular increased to unprecedented levels. The number of camps remained relatively static but the participation increased from 8265 children to 10,322 children. This is an increase of 25%. With this comes the challenge of maintaining coaching standards, facilities, as well as logistical considerations of ensuring each participant received their gear. Well done to all the GPO's and camp coordinators involved in this huge success. Camps have now become an all year round activity not just arranged during the summer period but at other times of the year including Halloween and Easter and some midterm breaks. Camps traditionally cater for boys and girls between the ages of 4 and 12 years. During the Easter period, this year 8221

children attended camps over the two week period, a slight increase on last year's figures on 8080 children.

The area of training and games development is constantly evolving and so too is our coach education programmes. Never before have more people been attracted to training courses and workshops. The thirst for knowledge and continuous improvement in coaching is never ending.

This past year upwards of 1580 coaches attended Foundation and Award 1 coaching programmes. This equates to 99 courses and some 1500 hours training time. Clubs have shown a lot of interest in providing opportunities for their coaches to attend higher courses.

This year the Dublin County Board held an Award 2 Football course for 25 Youth/Adult coaches and an Award 2 Football and Hurling course for child coaches (coaches of U12 and younger) with 18 coaches attending. The Award 2 is a course which requires a huge time commitment from coaches and each course is run over the period of 12-20 weeks.

In addition to the official Coach Education programmes, we continue to plan and deliver a wide range of practical workshops and seminars. Over 600 coaches and mentors have attended these workshops which have been delivered by some of the best coaches and tutors in the world of Gaelic Games.

The training and recruitment of young referees is key to the delivery of our games, this past year over 315 Referees have been trained. Ensuring that the best possible training is delivered to our young referees continuous improvements have been made the content and delivery of all three programmes. The tutors who delivered these programmes ensure that the participants are fully engaged at the training and that the programme equips them for the task of officiating our games in a confident and knowledge manner.

Again it has been a very busy but rewarding year in area of Coaching and Games Development.

Gerard O'Connor
Games Manager

Coaching Academy/Development Squads

The purpose of our Coaching Academy in both Hurling and Football is to provide an opportunity for players from all clubs to achieve their potential. While these squads participate in various inter county competitions during the year the main focus at these age groups is on development rather than results. It is important to note that all Squads at all age groups are fluid and are capable of integrating a late developer or a player who for whatever reason has not been nominated by his club at an earlier stage.

The below table's illustrates the large number of clubs currently represented in the Coaching Academy and this is now following through to minor level where this year there were 15 clubs represented on the Dublin Minor Hurling Panel while there were 18 clubs represented on the Dublin Minor Football Panel.

We would like to sincerely thank all the Clubs involved for their co-operation throughout the year and we would also like to thank CCC2 for their help and co-operation with Fixture Planning. Finally we would like to acknowledge the efforts of all our Coaching Academy mentors who in addition to coaching and often playing in their own clubs find the time to lend their expertise to the Coaching Academies.

Colm Burtchaell
Hurling Development Officer

Stephen O Shaughnessy
Football Development Officer

Hurling

Squad	Number of Players involved in 2016	Number of Clubs represented	Mentors
U13 North	123	24	Dean O Reilly (Naomh Barrog), Dave Geary (Raheny), Barry Mullane (Fingallians) Ciaran O Connor (Whitehall Colmcille)
U13 South	56	15	Jim Ryan (Kilmacud Crokes), John Dillon (Kilmacud Crokes), Donal Ó Dúlaing (Commercials), Brendan Ryan (Ballyboden St Enda's)
U14 North	60	18	Paraic Tierney (Naomh Barrog), Dermot Moran (Na Fianna), Martin Tuite (Naomh Barrog), Paul Lyons (St Peregrine's)
U14 South	47	11	Cian Waldron (Cuala), Paddy Linehan (Kilmacud Crokes), Kieran Lunn (Faughs) Don O Neill (Ballyboden St Enda's)
U15 North	49	17	Conor Gray (Whitehall Colmcille), Cillian O Driscoll (Naomh Mearnog) Shane Noonan (Whitehall Colmcille) Joe O Grady (Whitehall Colmcille) Stephen Chester (Craobh Chiaráin)

U15 South	42	11	Shane Martin (Crumlin). Donal Murphy (Cuala). Sean Power (Commercials) Aodhan De Paor (Kilmacud Crokes)
U16 A and B	73	19	Martin Rabbitte (Na Fianna)., Mike O Dwyer (Eire Og) Coleman McMahon (St Judes) Eamon McGrath (St Brigids) Traolach Martin (Faughs) JJ Brennan (St Monica's)
U17 Central	64	18	Fintan Clandillon (Lucan Sarsfields) David Curtin (Ballyboden St Enda's) Conor McCormack (Ballyboden St Enda;s) Gar O Driscoll (Naomh Mearnóg) Cronan Dooley (Lucan Sarsfields)

Football

Squads	Number of Players involved in 2016	Number of Clubs represented	Mentors
U13 North & South	485 Players took part in blitzes and trials	50	Ger Lyons (O'Dwyers) Derek Byrne (Ballymun Kickhams) Ray Cosgrove (Kilmacud Crokes) Fiach Andrews (Ballymun Kickhams) Fergal Duffy (Ballinteer St John's) Alan Hubbard (Ballymun Kickhams)
U14 North & South	90	31	Jason Sherlock (St Oliver Plunketts ER) Paul Casey (Lucan Sarsfields) Declan Lally (St Oliver Plunketts ER) Jim Lehane (Kilmacud Crokes) Walter Durcan (Ballyboden St Endas)
U15 North & South	62	27	Jason Sherlock (St Oliver Plunketts ER) David Henry (Raheny) Paul Griffin (Kilmacud Crokes) Ger Gleeson (Lucan Sarsfields) Brendan O'Brien (Trinity Gaels)
U16 Central	49	24	Frank McNamee (Ballyboden St Enda's). Martin Grehan (O'Tooles). Pat Davis (Clontarf) Mike Fitzpatrick (Ballyboden St Enda's) Tom Behan (Trinity Gaels).Jack Sheedy (Lucan Sarsfields)
U17 Central	40	19	Tom Gray (Na Fianna). Karl Behan (Fingallians) James Mangan (Na Fianna) Ciaran Farrelly (Thomas Davis) Pat Farrelly (Na Fianna)

Health and Wellbeing Committee

During 2016, six meetings of the Committee were held. The main focus of the Committee was the training of Health and Wellbeing Trainers and the roll out of training to Clubs. Eleven Health and Wellbeing Trainers received training during the year. Four training sessions were held for clubs, in Fingallians, Parnell Park (2), Naomh Olaf and St Anne's. Approximately 50 people in Dublin GAA are now trained in Health and Wellbeing. Further training is planned for early 2017.

The committee continued to provide signposting to club members and their families requesting advice and assistance across a range of services. 2016 was a particularly busy year in this regard with a number of people contacting the Committee because they were experiencing some difficulty accessing mental health services. The Committee also provided advice and assistance to clubs that unfortunately experienced critical incidents.

Committee members attended conferences and events and provided advice and assistance to clubs holding their own health and wellbeing events. These events highlight the important role that Dublin GAA are playing in leading the way in the promotion of health and wellbeing.

Five Dublin Clubs were selected by the National Committee to take part in the Healthy Clubs Initiative. These are Kilmacud Crokes, Craobh Chiaran, Raheny, Thomas Davis and Good Counsel. These clubs are leading the way in terms of the Healthy Club programme and they all organised a number of important initiatives during 2016. A number of other clubs have also been to the forefront of the promotion of Health and Wellbeing Initiatives in their communities. Initiatives include, club videos, Cuala and Oliver Plunkett's, Safe Talks, suicide awareness, listening skills, drug and alcohol awareness and positive mental health.

Under the guidance of the Dublin Health and Wellbeing Committee over 30 young Dublin teenagers between 15 and 18 are also involved in the Dermot Earley Youth Leadership programme. Twenty one Dublin club members, eleven from Dublin North and ten from Dublin South graduated from NUIG in October 2016 with FETAC level 6 Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership and Community Action. This is a partnership programme with GAA, Foróige and NUI Galway. GAA tutors Stephen Maguire, Fingal Ravens, Kevin Spain, Cuala and Feargal Mairtin, Naomh Olaf played a significant part in the success of this innovative programme. This year's Dermot Earley Leadership programme is being run in Croí Ró Naofa.

The focus for the year ahead is on increasing the number of health and wellbeing officers in clubs, supporting the healthy club initiatives and continuing to work with other approved organisations to provide advice and assistance to club members alongside promoting the importance of health and wellbeing in our communities.

The Dublin GAA Health and Wellbeing Committee was established in 2014 as part of a GAA national initiative. The Committee are as follows: Chairperson, Clare O’Sullivan, Naomh Olaf, Secretary, Stephen Maguire, Fingal Ravens; PRO Michael O’Toole, Craobh Ciarain. Geraldine McTavish, Round Towers Clondalkin, Aileen Connolly, Parnell Park. The Committee work closely with the Dublin GAA Chief Executive John Costello and the National Health and Wellbeing Committee in Croke Park.

The Dublin GAA Health and Wellbeing website can be accessed at <http://www.dublingaa.ie/health-wellness>

Clare O’Sullivan
Chairperson Dublin Health and Wellbeing Committee.

2016 Coiste na nÓg Secretary's Report

Partial Extract of Report issued to Clubs.

The full report available at <http://www.dublingaa.ie/juvenile/other-downloads>

The following people served on committees in 2016

Bord na nÓg (County Youth Management Committee)

- Cathaoirleach - Cionnaith Ó Suilleabháin (Ken O'Sullivan) Cuala
- Leas Cathaoirleach - Bean Uí Lochlainn (Bernie MacLaughlin) Na Cloighí C. /Round Towers Clondalkin
- Leas Rúnaí - Déaglán Ó Laoire (Declan O'Leary) Na Sáirséalaigh Leamhcáin / Lucan Sarsfields
- Ball / Member – Tomás Ó Riain (Tom Ryan) Na Fianna
- Ball / Member – Caoimhín Ó Seachnasaigh (Kevin O'Shaughnessy)
- Ball / Member - Eibhlín Ní Conghaile (Aileen Connolly)
- Ball / Member - Áine Ó Deá (Anne O'Dea) Na Fianna
- Ball / Member - Seán Ó Lorcáin (John Larkin) Naomh Peregrine / St Peregrines

CCC1 (County Youth Competitions Control Committee One)

- Cathaoirleach - Áine Ó Deá (Anne O'Dea) Na Fianna
- Leas Cathaoirleach - Riobard Ó Ceannubháin (Robert Canavan) Naomh Barróg
- Ball / Member – Conchúr Ó Maolmhuaidh (Conor Molloy) Cuala
- Ball / Member – Pól Ó Gammha (Paul Gaffney) Beann Éadair
- Ball / Member – Éamann Gráinseach (Eddie Grange) Caisleán Cnuacha / Castleknock

CCC2 (County Youth Competitions Control Committee Two)

- Cathaoirleach - Seán Ó Lorcáin (John Larkin) Naomh Peregrine / St Peregrines
- Leas Cathaoirleach - Mícheál Ó hÁinle (Mike Hanley) Na Sáirséalaigh Leamhcáin / Lucan Sarsfields
- Ball / Member - Daibhéid de Hearfort (Dave Harford) Baile Buadain Naomh Éanna / Ballyboden St Enda's
- Ball / Member - Déaglán Ó Coltair (Declan Coulter) Naomh Barróg
- Ball / Member - Aodhán Ó Scolaí (Aidan Scully) Fine Ghallainn / Fingallians

Coiste Eisteachta na nÓg (County Youth Hearings Committee)

- Cathaoirleach - Ailin Conchur (Alan O Connor) Naomh Uinsiann / St Vincents
- Rúnaí – Eibhlín Ó Dúláin (Elaine Dolan) Baile an tSaoir Naomh Eoin / Balinteer St John's
- Ball / Member - Liam Mac Mathúna (Liam McMahon) Croimlinn / Crumlin
- Ball / Member - Tomás Ó Flannabhra (Tommy Flannery) Na Sáirséalaigh Leamhcáin / Lucan Sarsfields
- Ball / Member - Gearard Ó Rothláin (Gerry Rowley) Scoil UI Chonaill

Tuarascáil An Rúnaí

INTRODUCTION

Our short term goal continues to be to maximise participation levels in the playing of hurling and football. Our long term goal is to retain as many players staying and playing with their GAA Club as they move to Minor and Adult level. We hope to achieve this through participation for our young players which is enjoyable and fulfilling for them. The principle of competition according to ability is built in-to our games programme from the initial Go Games format to our older age grade divisional leagues. A look at the 2016 Juvenile Roll of Honour later in this report demonstrates another core aim of sport, for players and teams to strive to fulfil their potential and be the best they can.

The bedrock of our juvenile games programme is the regular, meaningful games programme reflected in our Juvenile Master Fixtures Calendar. I'm also happy to say we as a County don't prioritise one code over the other.

"If you worked it out per head of population, there's not a massive difference between what Dublin get and what other counties get. The critical thing that's missed in terms of Dublin is that there's a huge input from the clubs into the coaching schemes in Dublin. They cover 50 per cent of the costs." The words of Leinster GAA chairman John Horan , a member of Na Fianna , who is running for the GAA presidency early next year and hoping to be the first Dublin representative in over 60 years on Dublin's allocation of development funds from Croke Park.

Dublin GAA has worked hard to create a competitive culture for our clubs in the promotion of Gaelic Games in a very competitive environment with so much choice of other outdoor activities available to our young children within the County.

"The intelligent thing that Dublin GAA did is invest in people. And that's what they are doing. There is very little capital investment going on in Dublin clubs at the moment. The county board, with that funding, matches it on parity – there's a 50:50 split. The bedrock of the association is volunteerism. I was out with my young fella, the under-eights and the games promotion officer was there." Jim Gavin giving an interview earlier this year. "He was co-ordinating five coaches with the 20 kids that were there. Myself and the other guys were all volunteering our time – you need someone to co-ordinate it"

There is strong sense of togetherness, of everyone being in it for the right reasons.

CCC1 Go Games Programme (U8 to U12)

Our Under 8 to Under 12 activity is a good measure of activity levels over a period of time as all games are played on a Saturday morning. While Football has seen a very favourable increase of +3.9% versus last year, Hurling has seen a +8.1% growth in 2016. So for every 100 children who play Football , 86 played Hurling in 2016 (equivalent past ratios 82% in 2013, 67% in 2010 , 64.5% in 2008).

The U11 & U12 Football age groups commenced on Saturday February 6th with the U8, U9 & U10s starting on Saturday February 13th. The Hurling season began for all age groups on

Saturday February 20th. CCC1 has issued over 10,000 Go Games fixtures this year. Cathaoirleach CCC1, Anne O Dea, has more information on the CCC1 season later in this report.

CCC2 Programme (U13 to U16)

In 2016 the season commenced weekending January 31st for U15 & U16 Football and one week later for U13 & U14 Football. The full program of Hurling started on Saturday February 27th. CCC2 has run 114 competitions and issued over 3,600 fixtures this year.

All our competitions have been completed. Once again this year we lost no weekend to the weather. We even managed with scheduling assistance from CCC1 to play our games on the Saturday of the All Ireland Senior Football Replay.

Congratulations to Castleknock on continuing the recent Dublin trend of not only winning our Féile Peil Division One title but subsequently going on to win the All Ireland Final in Kerry.

I would like to thank John Larkin, the Chairperson of CCC2, for the huge amount of work he does on a daily basis for this committee. Also you can't underestimate the time put in by Derek Doran replacing Referees for weekend games from Thursday afternoon onwards. With so many competitions and fixtures I have to say it is very satisfying to have had such positive feedback to how CCC2 is run and organized based on the feedback in the recent CCC2 survey.

Please make sure you read, Cathaoirleach CCC2, John Larkin's, very detailed review of the season later in this report.

What makes a Good Coach

More importantly for our juvenile coaches, what concepts / approaches can help you as you start out on the road and which you can build on over the years.

- Be prepared
- Be flexible
- Try and get there early to set up
- It helps if you have a backup person / parent, you can call on for those emergencies
- Remember it's their game not yours - your principle job is to make it enjoyable for them
- As they get older and move into more competitive fixtures, try and find out what their motivation is to continue playing
- Embrace the fact that they love playing hurling & football, and fuel their passion, don't squash it.
- At times it can be hard but be inclusive in all aspects of your coaching.
- Overtly praise effort, and avoid telling someone they are talented - Praising effort leads players to having a mind-set that practice and hard work will improve performance. Whereas saying someone is talented leads to a closed mindset, of "sure I'm already good and why practise". Also avoid using false praise when it's not deserved, and use clear feedback that promotes an attitude toward self-improvement.

- Young players in particular remember how coaches made them feel far longer than they remember what you did.
- It will happen (responsible Adults and well-behaved children will behave in a manner towards you that makes you question whether it's all worth it !!) remain the rational one and take a deep breath and exhale.
- Treat success and defeat in equal measure. When you lose, if you feel disappointment so will your players. It's your job to keep a sense of perspective, help them put defeats into context and use them as development opportunities. In times of success, make sure they enjoy the success but avoid gloating.
- Have respect for your opponent.
- For young players remember you as the Coach can be an extremely important role model.
- Be a sponge. Take and use every opportunity to learn about coaching .

Please make sure you check out the Dublin Coaching and Games Development website at www.dublingaagamesdevelopment.ie which is full of training drills and other resources. Also the GAA Learning & Development Community Portal has been developed to provide better access to development resources to those actively promoting Gaelic Games. @GAAlearning learning.gaa.ie . Check out @andygrantfc for the above excellent tips.

CCC2 Survey Feedback

We are lucky in Dublin to have Juvenile Committees who take the view “ **If it ain't broke , fix it and make it better** “. We are constantly looking for the need for change, have we the right structures in place and are always willing to organise things differently.

In October 2015, Bord na nÓg / CCC2 indicated they would initiate a full review of the CCC2 games programme in 2016. This full review has been put on hold due to the Minor Games Review committee set up by County Management to review the implications of moving the Inter-County Minor grade to U17 from the 2018 season. Notwithstanding this, CCC2 felt there was a need on a more selective basis for feedback from Clubs on the CCC2 games programme and a survey was issued.

While there has been a significant increase in participation over the last seven years at Go Games the challenge is maintaining these figures into CCC2. I would like to thank County Games Manager, Ger O'Connor, who collated the data and produced a final report.

Below are the **Recommendations** some of which have been factored in the recent circulated Draft Master Fixture Schedule Calendar for the 2017 Season.

- **Greater Flexibility around Summer Fixtures**

Amend CCC2 League Regulations covering the playing of scheduled games in the months of June / July / August to read “All fixtures must be played on or in advance of the scheduled date. However, scheduled games for the months of June, July and August, with agreement of BOTH teams, may be played on any date in advance or within TEN DAYS AFTER the scheduled fixture date. Eg (i) Fixture *scheduled for Tuesday June 27th may be played any time prior to June 27th but must be played by Friday July 7th..* (ii) Game *scheduled for Saturday August 26th may be played any time prior to this date but must be played by Tuesday September 5th at the latest*

- **Player Eligibility**

A list of Players must be submitted to the Referee for each CCC2 Fixture. The list must contain the GAA Registration Number for each player. Failure to supply the Referee with this information will at the discretion of CCC2 result in the forfeiture of the league points by the club failing to supply this information.

- **Removal of League Finals**

A League title will be awarded to highest placed team and therefore League Finals will be removed from the Calendar. CCC2 will retain to right to have League Finals in certain Leagues in order to maximise the number of games provided for by the Master Fixture Calendar. The removal of Finals will ease the need to schedule summer fixtures and will prolong the playing of league games for all teams. n.b. "Head to Head" results and "Score Difference" under Rule can't apply to under 16 or younger age grade competitions.

- **Under 15 Championship – commencement date**

All U15 Championships will commence post the Junior Certificate examinations. The feedback from Clubs was that the initiative this year (to commence Championships prior to exams in order to lengthen the U15 leagues season) was not supported by 67% of Clubs and will be removed.

- **Féile Changes**

In order to prolong the "Féile experience" the rest period between Saturday morning group games to be increased. All Féile semi-finals to be completed on the Saturday afternoon.

"Oh, I don't do that". A Message for (some) of our Parents

We all want parents involved but in the right capacity.

Please read the below from a child's perspective:

- It can be confusing when you coach me from the sideline. It is impossible to listen to you and play the game at the same time.
- It is confusing when you and the coach shout instructions at the same time. I can't listen to both of you. Many times the things you say contradict what the coach teaches me at training.
- It's confusing to me when you yell at the referees, especially since you teach me to respect teachers, coaches and my elders.
- It's confusing when you are still upset hours after we lose a game. . why not just tell me [how proud you are of me for playing and doing my best , for showing good sportsmanship](#). I will try to improve at the next training session.
- It's confusing when you talk badly about my coach in front of me.
- It's confusing when you talk badly about my teammates in front of me.
- It's confusing when you yell and scream at mistakes and act like playing hurling & football is an easy thing to do

The best advice is simply to say to your child "I Love Watching You Play "

Referee Training

Through the years we have developed our “Referee Pathway” and each year we seek to improve and develop it.

This year Entrance Exams have been carried out online giving the tutors more time to concentrate on giving the participants as much time and knowledge as possible. We have also introduced payment on line via Paypal which is proving to be extremely efficient.

Another new development is that the practical session is now carried out on a Saturday to give the newly qualified referees experience of official fixtures.

Another important aspect we have introduced is that anyone taking part in the courses who is aged 16 or over should apply for EVerifying when registering for the course. Those who have not yet reached 16 should do so on or immediately after their 16th Birthday.

The “Referee Pathway” is proving to be very fruitful and it is great to see one of our Referees come through from starting off with the U8s in his club to being on the current Leinster Council referee panel.

During 2016 the numbers of referees qualified at each level are:

- Level 1 (U8-U10) = 211
- Level 2 (U11-U12) = 81 with another 19 registered on the last course to be held in 2017
- Level 3 (starting at U13) = 24

Level 1 courses will start again in January with 276 participants registered. Level 2 and 3 will recommence in September 2017.

Thanks go to Ger O’Connor for developing the “Referee Pathway” and to all our tutors, Danny Harrington, Derek Doran, Philip Carr and Kevin Donohoe. This whole programme continues to develop and be run under the guidance and administration of Kathleen McPoland from start to finish.

A huge thank you also to all the clubs Referee Co-Ordinators who give so freely of their time, whilst probably mentoring club teams also. It is a time consuming job but well worth it to see the positive results we get.

To the clubs who act as hosts every year – thank you – without your venues we would not be able to hold so many courses.

Discipline

This year almost 14,000 fixtures have been set by CCC1 & CCC2. All U12 to U16 games are competitive and over 175 such competitions existed this year. However, it’s disappointing to report disciplinary issues around our U8 to U11 non-competitive fixtures.

As I write this report 5 Referee Reports still not fully processed. Nearly 250 disciplinary notices issued this year. Another 16 warnings issued to clubs including requests for club officers to try and "sort out" underlining tensions. While rivalry can be / is good, Clubs have

to realise some of their mentors / supporters groups are likely to meet the opposition on a regular basis in the coming years.

The game statistics at the start of this section of my report gives you some context. Yes, our Juvenile players do get sent off, 85% receive the automatic one match suspension, only a small number commit more serious infractions. Most of my work in this area revolves around working with CCC1 & CCC2 and the relevant Clubs in dealing with Adult misbehaviour (Mentors & Supporters).

Everybody is entitled to due process. CCC1 & CCC2 follow the established disciplinary procedures in a fair manner. When proposing disciplinary actions both CCCs when called upon at any hearing are not interested in " winning " or " losing" but at all times trying to get the right answer to what happened at the original incident.

This year we had one appeal which went to the Leinster Council and one DRA case. In both cases the initial position taken by CCC2 was upheld by the County Hearings Committee and by the subsequent appeal bodies.

To conclude and in order to avoid any confusion I ask you to make sure your mentors know that if a player receives a Straight Red Card in a match for a playing infraction , he is , as a minimum, automatically suspended for the next game in that competition. If in doubt always contact me for clarification. I do believe we have some mentors who think " ah sure the Referee mightn't report it". This year we had two players who played while under suspension. While CCC2 fully accept in both instances the mentors simply thought they would be notified, awaited word of the suspension and played the players. CCC2 had no choice but to suspend the players.

A total of 158 Red Cards issued (+42 v's C'15) of which 4 are for CCC1 Football , 2 CCC1 Hurling, 88 CCC2 Football and 64 CCC2 Hurling.

While the Black Card only applies to Football, it was again decided the Black Card would not be used for Go Games fixtures, so the 112 Black Cards issued (+41 v's C'15) relate to CCC2 Football. In addition a total of 65 (+14 v C'15) Double Yellow carded players leading to a Red Card were issued.

45 Disciplinary Notices (-38 v's C'15 & -4 v C'14) have been issued to Clubs, Mentors and Supporters concerning inappropriate conduct by Team Officials and Partisans' (4 of the 44 relate to CCC1). A further 16 warnings have been issued to clubs drawing attention to inappropriate behaviour as CCC1 & CCC2 felt going down the disciplinary route was not the best way to deal with the matters brought to its attention.

Out of the 228 Disciplinary Notices issued, Clubs requested 11 Hearings. Fines of €1,750 have been issued with a further € 2,950 placed in Bond of which €250 called in. Clubs who have not paid will be contacted and all outstanding monies must be paid before the start of the 2017 season

Conclusion

I continue to be amazed by the time and effort put in by so many individual club members throughout the County on juvenile affairs.

It continues to be a pleasure to deal with the officers of Bord na nÓg, CCC1, CCC2, Juvenile Hearings committee and the County Hearings committee. We are very fortunate to have both Anne O’Dea and John Larkin as the respective Cathaoirligh of both CCC1 and CCC2.

I wish to thank Mike Hanley (Lucan Sarsfields) outgoing Leas Cathaoirleach CCC2 who will not be going forward next year as a CCC2 Officer. Mike’s behind the scenes contribution in recent years to CCC2 affairs has been immense. I also wish to thank Ken O’Sullivan (Cuala) who this year will complete his five years as Cathaoirleach Coiste na nÓg. Ken has given many years service to juvenile affairs for both Club and County. For my part Ken has always been available when needed to give wise and practical advice. I’m sure and hope both Mike and Ken’s break from Dublin GAA matters is very short indeed.

I would like to thank all my work colleagues in Parnell Park, in particular County Secretary, John Costello. To Patsy Kiernan, Noel Brady and all the ground stewards who assist with our juvenile days in Parnell Park. To our County Chairman, Sean Shanley, for his support of juvenile games. A special thanks to Kathleen McPoland for her continued help, guidance and assistance throughout the year.

Finally thanks to all club official, delegates, mentors, referees and parents for their support in 2016 and I look forward to all of us collectively making sure all our young players, regardless of their level of ability, are provided with the opportunity to play Hurling and Football.

Damian Ó Murchú
Rúnaí
Coiste na nÓg