

C.L.G. Laoise



# Comhdháil Bhliantúil

The Heritage Hotel  
Port Laoise

Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2015  
7 p.m.

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# C.L.G. Laoise



## Standing Orders

In order that the proceedings of the convention be carried out without delay the following Standing Orders will be observed: -

- 1. The Proposer of a Resolution, or Amendment thereto, may speak for 5 minutes but no longer.*
- 2. A Delegate speaking to a Resolution or Amendment shall not exceed 3 minutes.*
- 3. 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.*
- 4. 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.*
- 5. A Delegate may, with the consent of the Chairman, move "that the question be now put" after which, when the Proposer has spoken, a vote must be taken.*

## An Clár

1. Adoption of Standing Orders.
2. Minutes of 2014 Convention.
3. Secretary's Report.
4. Treasurer's Report and Financial Statement.
5. Appointment of Tellers.
6. Election of Officers.
7. Motions.
8. Aon Ghnó Eile.
9. Votes of Sympathy.

## The Annual Convention of Laois GAA was held in The Heritage Hotel on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Cathaoirleach Gearóid O'Caomhanaigh presided at County Convention in The Heritage Hotel on 08/12/14. The following Executive Members were also in attendance Peadar O Néil, Mairtín O'Broin, Micheál O'Cearbhúill, Ciarán O Consléibhe, Antóin O Dubhsláinne, Briain O hAlúinn, Tomas Mac Seoin, Pascal Mac Aodh Bhuí, Pdraig O Suilleabháin, Seosamh O'Conbhuí, Aindriú O Bruadau agus Niall Mac Laitimh (Runaí).

The following Clubs were represented as follows:

R. O'Cinnéide, E. Ní Dhuinn & B. Ní Chearbhuíill, Mainistir Laoise; L. O'Colmáin & R. O'Muilleoir, Anach; S. O'Conbhuí & P. Mac Lochlainn, Ard Lios Cilchrúis; D. O'Braonáin, S. O'Broin & B. Mac Dónaill, Ard Lios Cilín; A. Mac Giolla Phadraig, L. O'Seachnasaigh & M. Ní Ghiolla Phadraig, Baile na Coille; B. O'Conghaile, O. O'Faoláin & N. O'Cianáin, Baile Fionn; S. Hovendon & U. Hovendon, Baile Laigheanáin; M. Mac Aodh Bhuí, M. Ní Fhaoláin & R. O'Daltúin, Baile Píocas; P. O'Faoláin, M. O'Scolaí & E. Peacóg, Mainistir Baile Atha Róine; S. Dáibhis, M. O'Murchú & A. O'Braonáin, Teach an Bhearra; A. Ní Mhórdha, C. O'Dónaill & S. O'Caollaí, Buiríos Mór Osraí; T. Ní Fhaoláin, D. O'Beirgin & D. O'Beirgin, Buiríos Mór Osraí Coill Choitín; F. O'Leathlobhair, A. O'Dubhsláinne & S. O'Muireartaigh, Camros; S. O'hUbáin & S. O'Maoileanaigh, Baile an Chaisleáin Sliabh Bladhma; S. O'Conraoi, Cluain Fhada; S. O'Gormáin & S. O'Floinn, Cluain na Slí Naomh Manmáin; D. O'hAnluain, C. O'hAoláin & T. de Cléir,

Cloch Baile Cholla; P. Sionóid, P. O'Duinn & L. De Stacphúil, Coillte; B. O'Nualláin, M. O'hOgáin & M. O'Beacháin, Coill na Cúirte; D. O'Ceallaigh, S. O'Sé & S. De Búrca, Crochta Ard; P. O'Broithe, D. Ní Bhuaidh & M. O'Riain, Ioma; P. O'Deá, Eiréil; S. O'Duagáin, M. O'Leathlobhair & M. Boltún, Graig Chuillinn; T. O'Fiach, S. Mac Aodh Bhuí & R. O'Conaill, Cill Chabháin; E. Mac Cois, P. Mac Giolla Mhartáin & L. Mac Giolla Phadráig, Coill Choitín; M. O'Moráin & P. O'Braonáin, Cill Eisín; S.P. Mac Cnaimhín, M. O'Dubhslainn & P. O'hEilí, Coill; D. de Siún, S. O'Conghaile & M. O'Garmaile, Móinteach Mílic; E. O'Beacháin, B. O'Fionnalaigh & L. O'Fionnalaigh, Na Diomasaigh; S. O'Miurín, T. O'Conaill & C. O'Fionnghallain, Páirc Raithín Uisce; S. O'Fiaich, S. O'hArrachtáin & A. Mhic Chartaigh, Cúil an tSudaire; U. O'Dullaing, S. O'hAinfaidh & O. O'Broin, Portlaoise; M. Mac Mathuna & S. O'Reachtair, Rath Domhnaigh; P. O'Cearbhúill & M. Mac Giolla Phadraig, Rath Domhnaigh Eiréil; M. O'Leannáin, S. O'Dúlaoich & P. O'Meachair, Ross Fhionnghlaise; T. O'Laocha, P. O'Buaigh & N. Mac Giolla Phóil, Seanchua; S.P. Caimpion, R. O'Nualláin & C. Mac Thomáis, Sliabh Bladhma Baile an Chaisleáin; R. O'Muilleoir & D. O'Duibhir, Spinc; S. Leathlobhair Mac Ghiolla Phadraig, M. Ní Mhideltáin & S. O'Cearbhúill, Maighean Rátha; M. O'Conaráin, A. Mhic Gabhann & M. O'Móra, Naomh Seosamh; L. O'Dubhsláinne, E. O'Dubhsláinne & M. O'Ceallaigh, Sráidbhaile; D. O'Duiginn, T. Breatnach & D. O'Fionnagáin, Na Clairsigh; S. O'Dullaing, L. O'hAonasa &

M. O'Dubhsláinne, An Fraoch; S. O'Floinn, S. O'Murchú & P. O'Murchú, An Charraig; S.S. O'Rannachain, L. O'Rannacháin & M. O'Muilleoir, Tigh Mochua; S. Ní Dhubhuí, G. Ní Chiarubháin agus S. Mac Peaircín, Tromaire.

Antóin O'Meachair-Referee Administrator, Eamann Mac Fhiobhuí – Cumann na mBunscoil, Seamus Laibheartaigh – Childrens Officer, P. O'Donnabháin - Handball.

Leithscéil – Sean O Rannacháin Uachtaráin; Moncha Ní Dhubhsláinne, Baile an Chaisleáin Sliabh Bladhma; Mairec Attridge, Cill Eisín.

**Standing Orders** were adopted on the proposition of Seamas Leathlobhair Mac Ghiolla Phadraig, seconded by Daithi O'Beirgin.

**Minutes of 2013 Convention** was adopted on the proposition of Liam de Stacaphúil, seconded by Sean O'Muireartaigh.

**Secretary's Report** was adopted on the proposition of Micheal Mac Ghiolla Phadraig, seconded by Micheal O'Riain.

- Health and Wellbeing Committee – An Cathaoirleach thanked John Paul Campion for his Chairmanship of this Committee for the past year and wished him well in his new practice;
- Michael Carroll – A. O'Dubhsláinne endorsed Secretary's comments on Michael's retirement from Laois GAA Committees after almost 40 years' service to the Association in the County and wished him and his wife Ann well on their retirement. R. O'Cinnéide and members of Convention echoed these sentiments.

**Treasurer's Report** showing a surplus of €60,623 in County Committee A/c and a deficit of €116,418 in O'Moore Park A/c was adopted on the proposition of Sean O Gormáin, seconded by Roibeard O'Muilleoir.

- Seán Conghaile queried difference in expense between Minor and Under 21 Football travel expenses and that in Minor and Under 21 Hurling travel expenses. An Cisteoir answered query to delegates satisfaction.
- An Cisteoir informed Convention that it was necessary to return a surplus of this amount in order that we meet our annual loan repayments of €58,000. He thanked his Assistant Paschal Mac Fhiobhui and the Executive Committee, all the Clubs for their commitment and support to the County Board Draw, various Fundraising Committees, Ulster Bank and their staff, Gate and Office staff, Central and Leinster Council staff, voluntary Stewards who worked in O'Moore Park during the year and most importantly all our sponsors – MW Hire, Magni Group, Laois Shopping Centre and GALA. He appealed for Clubs continued support of our €130 Draw, and other fundraising initiatives. He also outlined details of GAA National Draw.

**Tellers** – the following were appointed and approved by Convention – Sean de Brúin, Deagláin O'Broin, Antóin O'Dubhsláinne, Tadhg Deorain, Tomás O'Móra agus Micheal Mac Ranáil (Returning Officer).

# Election of Officers

*The following officers were elected:*

**Cathaoirleach** (*Chairman*): Gearóid O Caomhanaigh was elected unopposed.

**Leas Chathaoirleach** (*Vice Chairman*): Peadar O'Neil was elected unopposed.

**Cisteoir** (*Treasurer*): Mairtín O'Broin was elected unopposed.

**Leas Cisteoir** (*Asst. Treasurer*): Paschal Mac Aodh Bhuí was elected unopposed.

**Ard Comhairle** (*Central Council*) Delegate: Briain O'hAlluinn was elected after defeating Gearóid O Caomhanaigh, Oilibhear O'Faolain and Eibhlin Ní Dhuinn in a vote.

**Comhairle Laighean** (*Leinster Council*) Delegates (2): Tomas Mac Seoin agus Paschal Mac Aodh Bhuí were elected after defeating Eibhlin Ni Dhuinn and Seán Mac Pearcín in a vote.

**Oifigeach Forbartha** (*Development*): P.S. O'Ceallaigh was elected unopposed.

**Oifigeach Oiliuma** (*Coaching*): Padraig O'Suilleabháin was elected unopposed.

**Oifigeach Cultir agus Gaeilge** (*Cultural and Irish*): Seosamh O'Conbhuí was elected unopposed.

**Oifigeach Caidrimh Poibli** (*P.R.O.*): Position remained vacant as all nominated candidates withdrew and An Cathaoirleach informed Convention that it would be filled at January County Committee Meeting.

**Congress Delegates** (5): Gearóid O Caomhanigh, Niall Mac Laitimh (both automatically elected); Mairtín O'Broin, Tomas Mac Seoin agus Briain O'hAlluinn were elected after vote.

**Leinster Convention Delegates** (5): Gearóid O 'Caomhanaigh, Mairtín O'Broin, Briain O'hAlúinn, Pascal Mac Aodh Bhuí agus Tomas Mac Seoin were elected after vote.

*All elected candidates returned thanks.*

**John Fennelly Chairperson Laois 1915 Commemoration Committee** addressed Convention outlining that 2015 was the 100th anniversary of our Counties sole All Ireland Senior success briefed delegates on a number of proposed commemoration ceremonies planned for 2015 whereby it was hoped to relive the glory years of Laois Hurling.



# NA RÚIN

1. To amend Laois GAA Bye-law No.5 (a) to read as follows (*amendments in bold italic*):

5. Transfers / Attachment to First Club

a) A Club or Independent Teams Catchment Area shall be defined as within the Parish and within the County boundary. (List of 24 parishes based on the boundary of the Roman Catholic Parish - Clonaslee, Rosenallis, Mountmellick, Emo, Portarlinton, Stradbally, Portlaoise, Ballyfin, Camross, Castletown, Mountrath, Raheen, Abbeyleix, Ballinakill, Ballyadams, Barrowhouse / Athy, Arles, Doonane, Graiguecullen / Killeshin, Durrow, Aghaboe, Rathdowney, Borris in Ossory, Kyle / Roscrea). ***Exception: The Club Catchment Area for Ballypickas GAA shall include the Club's traditional hinterland / catchment area within the Ballinakill parish boundary.*** (Ballypickas GAA). **Motion lost on show of hands, 13 in favour and 14 against, after being proposed by B. O'Nualláin and seconded by M. Ní Fhaoláin.**

2. Section 6.3 of the Official Guide 2014 should be amended as follows (*amendments in bold italic*):

**Other Relevant Connection:** A member shall be considered to have an Other Relevant Connection with a particular County, or Club (as the case may be) if:

- (i) The member's parents were, at the time of the member's birth, permanently resident in that County ***with the exception of Dublin*** or the present Catchment Area of that Club, or
- (ii) That County is the County of the First Club of either of his parents, or
- (iii) In the case of a player whose parents were permanently resident in Co. Dublin at the time of his Birth, that Club was the First Club of either of his parents, or
- (iv) County Bye-Laws define either generally or for specific cases that particular factors give rise to such a connection. (Mountmellick GAA);

**Motion passed on show of hands, 106 in favour and 0 against, after being proposed by S. Conghaile and seconded by M. O'Garmaile.**

**An Cathaoirleach Gearoid O Caomhanaigh** addressed Convention, thanking both players and mentors involved in our Inter County panels, outlining proposed O'Moore Park development, partnership with Heywood Community School in developing Hurling Centre of Excellence, expressing his concerns on disciplinary matters relating particularly to Referees, thanking our Sponsors, our Clubs for their co-operation in completing our Club Championships and supporting our various Fundraising activities. He commented on Michael Delaney's retirement as CEO of Comhairle Laighean CLG and also Michael Carroll's retirement from Laois GAA County Committee, thanking both for their outstanding service to the Association and their commitment to the County. He thanked Fiona Kenna who resigned during the year for her loyal dedicated service and informed delegates that she had been replaced as Office Administrator by Tomas Moore. He concluded by thanking all for their co-operation during the year and wished everyone a peaceful Christmas and a successful 2015.

**Under 21 Players of the Year Awards:** An Runaí announced that James Moore Sarsfields and Patrick Whelan Borris in Ossory Kilkotton had been selected as the recipients of the respective Under 21 Football and Hurling Awards for 2014 and that presentations would be made at Club Presentation evenings.





## Votes of Sympathy

*Votes of Sympathy were extended to the following families:*

- Annanough . . . . . Miller Family;
- Arles Kilcruise . . . . . Kealy, Keegan, Graham and Wall Families;
- Arles Killeen . . . . . Brennan, Julian and O'Loughlin Families;
- Barrowhouse . . . . . Bowden and Giltrap Families;
- Ballylinan . . . . . Kaye and McHugh Families;
- Ballyfin . . . . . Dunne, Moore and Hogan Families;
- Ballypickas . . . . . Cahill, Gorman, Scully and Wallace Families;
- Ballyroan Abbey . . . . . Scully and Rourke Families;
- Borris in Ossory . . . . . Murphy and Fahy Families;
- Camross . . . . . Dooley, Delaney and Kilmartin Families;
- Castletown . . . . . Wall, Cuddy and Hegarty Families;
- Clonad . . . . . Walsh, Norton and Ahearne Families;
- Clough Ballacolla . . . . . Cummins, Henneberry and McCartney Families;
- Colt . . . . . Palmer, Phelan, Talbot, Brennan, Moffitt, Ryan, McDermott, Hearn, Mulhall, Lalor Fitzpatrick, Kavanagh Families;
- Graiguecullen . . . . . Farrell Family;
- Kilcotton . . . . . Delaney and Bergin Families;
- Kyle . . . . . Walshe, Fitzpatrick and Breen Families;
- Mountmellick . . . . . Carroll Family;
- O'Dempseys . . . . . Tynan Family;
- Park Ratheniska . . . . . Comerford Family;
- Portarlington . . . . . Bourke, Dunne and Bennett Families;
- Portlaoise . . . . . Lewis, Deegan, Carroll and Blanc Families;
- Rathdowney Errill . . . . . Finnan, Hickey, Burke, Rafter, Dowling, Phelan, Byrne, Fitzgerald and Delaney Families;
- Rosenallis . . . . . Farrell, Grehan, Dunne Families;
- Shanahoe . . . . . Clooney, Kirwan, Delaney, Palmer and Bergin Families;
- Slieve Bloom . . . . . Heffernan Family;

Spink . . . . . O'Brien and Gorman Families;

St. Fintans Mountrath . . . . . Joyce, Moore, Breslin, Ryan, Kelly, Brophy and Wall Families;

St. Josephs. . . . . Brennan, McDonald, Brophy, Fitzpatrick, Kinsella, Dillon and Dagg Families;

Stradbally . . . . . McEvoy, Byrne, Mahon, Dillon, Holohan, Quinn and Delaney Families;

The Harps. . . . . McEvoy, Phelan, Monnelly, Jacob and Hennessy Families;

The Heath. . . . . Norton, Booth, and Walsh Families;

Timahoe. . . . . Lowry, Ramsbottom and Lalor Families;

Trumera . . . . . Allen and Phelan Families;

# Tuairisc an Runaí 2015

*I welcome all delegates to County Convention and sincerely hope we have a healthy discussion on the affairs of Laois GAA and our Clubs.*

*My reflections on the year are as follows:*

## County Teams

### Senior Football

Our season as usual commenced with the O'Byrne Cup and was used by management to give all panelists some game time, in an effort to finalise their League panel. However defeats to Offaly, Maynooth University and Dublin, seen us exit this competition disappointingly.

Our Allianz Football League Division 2 campaign opened with a defeat to Westmeath in Mullingar, followed a week later by another loss to Cavan at home. At this stage we looked probable relegation candidates, but in fairness to management and players, they regrouped and battled out three important results on the bounce, with victories over Roscommon and Galway and a draw away to Meath in Navan. Our league campaign concluded with losses to Kildare and Down and with results elsewhere in the final round being favourable, meant we retained our Divisional status. The resignation of three of our regular panelists for various different personal reasons during the league was disappointing. In the knowledge of the pool of players available to us, management made numerous efforts to change minds, but they were to no avail and one must respect their decision and reasons. Senior Inter County football panelist is no longer a place to be, unless

you are fully committed and enthused. On reflection of our League campaign, whilst relieved to avoid relegation, one would have to say we were competitive in all but one of our games and looked forward to our championship season with some degree of confidence.

In our Leinster Championship opener, we crossed the River Barrow to play our neighbours Carlow and playing an entertaining brand of football, Laois easily outplayed the home side, running out convincing winners, the prize being a renewal with old rivals Kildare in Tullamore. In this game, we seemed to be well in control of a fancied Kildare side, but failed to close out the game when required and had to settle for a draw. In the replay a week later, we seemed to be in more control, but our failure to capitalise on a number of goal opportunities prior to half time, left our opponents with a glimmer of hope. In the opening minutes of the second half Kildare raised the tempo and blitzed us with two opportunist goals, from here we failed to respond, game over and no way back. It was a bitterly disappointing exit to our Leinster championship aspirations for 2015.

The Qualifier series has been good to Laois football teams since its inception and a home draw against Antrim appeared to be "as good as you could get" to get back on track. However a week on from the



*Laois Senior Football panel 2015*



*Laois Senior Hurling panel 2015*

disappointing manner which we exited to Kildare, heads were clearly not right or anyway focused for this championship game and a lack of composure and discipline towards the end, saw us lose out to a more determined Antrim side. It is with no disrespect to Antrim, that I say this is a game Laois should not have lost. Our management suffered the consequences of this result, but our players must also ask questions of themselves. I wish to compliment the entire panel for their efforts and diligent manner in which they prepared for this year's Championship and League, I can assure you they did make that commitment.

For 2016, Allianz League Division 2 again looks competitive with a host of Ulster teams and our path to a Leinster Final continues to be daunting. Whilst we open our championship campaign with a home game to Wicklow, which in itself will be a formidable task, and in the event of achieving success here, our opponents would be All Ireland champions Dublin. As someone, who has for years advocated that Dublin should play some of their Leinster games outside Croke Park, it was refreshing to see Comhairle Laighean CLG indicate that this was at last going to be the case, however I am aghast at the conditions attached. In the event of beating Wicklow, I was sure we would be in the enviable position of welcoming the All Ireland champions to our newly developed stadium in O'Moore Park. After all, only in 2014, did the same Council arrange that in the event of a replay between Laois and Dublin, the game would be scheduled for O'Moore Park, when our stadium capacity was only 18,000, now after an expenditure of 1.2million, which was grant aided by the same Comhairle Laighean CLG, on a stadium

development project increasing capacity to almost 25,000, it is not fit for purpose and the game is to be played in Nowlan Park. I wish to put on record that my frustration is no disrespect to Nowlan Park stadium, it is one of the finest stadiums in the country, this is about principle and respect for our county, clubs and supporters. I wonder will this Council proposal set precedent, if counties like Meath, Offaly or Wexford with similar stadiums to ours are to play Dublin, will Nowlan Park again be the venue! This precedent can now also apply to all other Leinster counties, as if they are deemed not to have enough seats, it will be moved to a bigger stadium. I have seen and heard the appropriately placed national press and tv articles before and after the draw, whereby it all comes down to money and "bums on seats" and if clubs and counties wish to avail of development grants in the future, this is the only way it can be! That did not quite fit the image, so they rolled out "patron comfort" and stated the 3,000 Dublin Season Ticket holders must be accommodated with seats. It will be interesting how the 12,000 plus Dublin supporters who regularly congregate on Hill 16, where we all are aware there is no actual seating, will welcome their new comforts at the extra cost of €10 per seat! Laois GAA is very appreciative of grants we have received in the past from both Central and Provincial level, however we are a proud county and have a principle as well and if money was so important we even offered to forfeit our ground rent of 15% of gross gate, in lieu of the fixture being played in O'Moore Park. Unfortunately very few other Leinster delegates seen it this way, with only one other fully supporting our stance, perhaps many with potential infrastructural development looking ahead at prospective grant funding,

I only hope that they don't regret the precedence they have now set in years to come. I will refrain from putting into words my real feelings on the matter, but the manner in which our county has been treated does not fit easy with me. The decision is now made and we must accept it and move on, with our primary focus being on Wicklow in our opening game.

I would like to extend our congratulations to Donie Kingston on his All Star nomination, a huge commendation considering our early championship demise and Colm Begley and John O'Loughlin on their selection on the Irish panel for the Compromise Rules series.

Our Management and backroom team are also deserving of our thanks and I must put on record that although the Laois GAA support never fully embraced Tomás's appointment, I would say it was a privilege to work with both him and his backroom team and that without question they were the most organised and professional management team I have ever worked alongside – Tomás O Flatharta (Manager); Darren Rooney, Gerry McGill (Selectors); Jerome Stack (Coach and Selector); Leo Tiernan and Alan Malone (Strength and Conditioning Coach); Daniel Nelligan (Goalkeeping Coach); Niall Creery and company (Statistics); David Tobin (Nutrition); Dr Sean Montague; Barry Ryan (Physiotherapist) and of course Servicing Secretary Ollie Byrne, who was ably assisted by Pat O'Sullivan.

Tomas O'Flatharta did not seek a third term at the helm of Laois Football and he will be replaced for 2016 by local man Mick Lillis, who will be assisted by John Strong and Kieran Kelly (Selectors), with the re-

mainder of his backroom team being finalised as I write this report. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Michael Dempsey for his assistance and the professional approach he brought in the selection process of the new management team.

**BORD NA MONA O'BYRNE CUP  
SENIOR FOOTBALL 2015**

Round 1: 4th January – Tullamore  
Offaly 2-12 . . . . . Laois 0-09

Round 2: 7th January – Portarlington  
Maynooth University 0-18 . . . . Laois 1-07

Round 3: 11th January – Portarlington  
Dublin 1-12 . . . . . Laois 1-11

**ALLIANZ FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
ROINN 2 2015**

Round 1: 1st February -  
Cusack Park, Mullingar  
Westmeath 1-12 . . . . . Laois 0-10

Round 2: 7th February - O'Moore Park  
Laois 2-6 . . . . . Cavan 0-17

Round 3: 22nd March - Tuam Stadium  
Galway 0-10 . . . . . Laois 2-10

Round 4: 8th March - O'Moore Park  
Laois 2-17 . . . . . Roscommon 0-16

Round 5: 14th March - Navan  
Meath 0-13 . . . . . Laois 0-13

Round 6: 28th March - O'Moore Park  
Laois 1-9 . . . . . Kildare 1-12

Round 7: 5th April - Newry  
Down 3-12 . . . . . Laois 1-15



## **LEINSTER GAA SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Round 1: 16th May - Netwatch Cullen Park  
Carlow 0-8 . . . . . Laois 3-16

Quarter-Final: 6th June - Tullamore  
Laois 0-16 . . . . . Kildare 0-16

Quarter-Final Replay: 13th June - Tullamore  
Laois 1-11 . . . . . Kildare 3-18

## **ALL IRELAND SENIOR FOOTBALL QUALIFIER**

Round 1A: 20th June - O'Moore Park  
Laois 1-16 . . . . . Antrim 2-15

### **Under 21 Football**

As already stated in previous reports to Convention, results at this grade in recent years have proved disappointing and concerns have been expressed by previous management at the availability of players of inter county standard available to them at this grade.

The ongoing logistical difficulties of panelists in third level colleges throughout the country and further panelist involvement with our Senior panel are some of the problems encountered in the preparation of teams at this grade. However our present management must be complimented for the manner in which they went about their business, they complained of none of these difficulties and assembled a Laois panel, who were committed to the cause and prepared really well. Although one concern of management was of the huge variance in fitness levels from players on entering the panel, which was a little disappointing as you would be of the opinion all potential

inter county panelists would maintain a certain level of fitness annually. Our participation in the Under 21 Hastings Cup competition, hosted by Longford, was certainly of great assistance in our championship preparation. Unfortunately this is no longer permitted as a sixteen team tournament by National Coiste Bainisti's and rather than be void of these competitive games in preparation for Under 21 championship, Laois have agreed to host and organise a similar Under 21 tournament in its place, which has received approval.

Our opening game in the Leinster Championship was against Wexford in Enniscorthy, whereby after a slow start Laois emerged convincing winners. This resulted in a home draw against Under 21 kingpins Dublin. In this game, our side played an attractive and effective style of football and were equal to our opponents in almost every sphere for 50 minutes of the game, only in the last 10 minutes did Dublin really assert themselves running out facile winners, although the final score line was hardly a true reflection on the game itself.

I would like to convey a special thanks to Derek Conroy (Manager), Francis Finn and Padraig Dunne (Selectors), Darren Burke (Physio) and Jason Conroy and Jimmy Hilliard (Kit and Servicing Secretary) for their endeavours with this panel. Management will remain in place for 2016, with the exception of Padraig, who has opted out due to work commitments and for whom we are presently sourcing a replacement.



*Portlaoise Senior Football Champions 2015*



*Clough Ballacolla Senior Hurling Champions 2015*

## **CADBURY'S LEINSTER GAA UNDER-21 FC**

Round 1: 25th February - Enniscorthy  
Wexford 1-11 . . . . . Laois 4-12

Quarter-Final: 4th March - O'Moore Park  
Dublin 2-21 . . . . . Laois 2-10

### **Minor Football**

Following an encouraging autumn Leinster Under 17 and spring Minor Football League campaign, there were expectations that this panel would be competitive in championship. In our opening championship game, we travelled to Navan, where we were physically outmuscled and outplayed, never playing near our potential, with the home side emerging comprehensive winners. The panel regrouped for the Qualifier series and defeated a defiant Wicklow side to qualify for a home quarter final game against Kildare. Hopes were high that we could avenge the previous year's resounding semi-final defeat and we couldn't have got much nearer, with a late Kildare goal shattering our championship dreams and advancing to become Leinster champions. Our displays at this grade were encouraging, particularly as we were short a couple of key players due to injury and I am confident with the ambition and the correct tutelage, quite a number of these players will progress to be senior players of the future. It is important we ensure this pathway is in place for this to happen.

I wish to thank Mick Lillis (Manager), John Strong and Kieran Kelly (Selectors), Nicola Larkin (Strength and Conditioning Coach) and Maria Murphy (Physio) for all their efforts and work over the past year. As our outgoing management progress to

senior ranks, our Minor Football management team for next year is as follows – Mark Rooney (Manager), Billy Delaney, Tomas Brett and Brian McDonald (Selectors) and Alan Malone (Strength and Conditioning).

## **ELECTRIC IRELAND LEINSTER MINOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP**

Round 1: 18th April - Navan  
Meath 1-17 . . . . . Laois 2-8

Round 2 Qualifier: 6th May - O'Moore Park  
Laois 5-13 . . . . . Wicklow 1-13

Quarter-Final: 15th May - O'Moore Park  
Kildare 1-10 . . . . . Laois 1-9

### **Senior Hurling**

As usual our season commenced in the Walsh Cup with wins over UCD and Wexford, qualifying us for a semi-final meeting with Dublin. In fairness we were no match for Dublin on home turf, but all in all, management were happy with our Walsh Cup experience in preparation for our upcoming League campaign, a League which I may add that is structured to allow no mistakes and where a win or loss could determine promotion or relegation.

Whilst panel and management ambition was to qualify for the semi-finals and promotion, one of our goals for the year was to retain our Allianz Hurling League Division 1B status. Unfortunately in spite of competitive and spirited displays at times against Offaly at home, Waterford in Fraher Field, Wexford at home and Limerick in Kilmallock, we achieved no victory, our only success against Antrim in Armoy. Our



*Clonaslee / St. Manmans Intermediate Football Champions*



*Killeshin Junior Football B Champions 2015*

league campaign concluded with a relegation “dog fight” with Antrim. In O’Moore Park, this time around and responding to the pressure to retain our Division 1B status, they played out a deserved victory, a very important win in the development of this panel going forward.

Our Leinster Round Robin series this year, just consisted of the four teams, ourselves, Antrim, Carlow and Westmeath and expectation was high that we should progress to a Leinster Quarter final, with the ultimate goal being to top the group for a home venue meeting with neighbours Offaly. In the opening game, we again travelled north to Ballycastle for our third meeting of the year with Antrim, and in front of a partisan crowd and on the wrong end of a couple controversial match official decisions, we lost out by the minimal margin. The pressure was on now and onto Netwatch Cullen Park, where it took a workmanlike performance to eventually beat a determined home side. Fortnight later, Westmeath at home, with a win at least required to advance to a Leinster Quarter final, whereby other results would then determine the final permutations. For most of this game we played second fiddle to a more opportunistic and skilful Westmeath side, with a goal in the closing 15 minutes stopping Westmeath’s growing momentum and turning a six point deficit into a three point win. Results elsewhere along with this success meant we topped the group to qualify for a quarter final meeting with Offaly in O’Moore Park.

In context, this was the game all Laois supporters had wished for from the outset of the year, this was going to be the barometer, the opportunity to measure our progress, and at last see if we could match

it with one of the big teams in championship hurling. As carefully and meticulous planned preparations commenced in earnest for this game, nobody could legislate for what was to happen next. One of our senior clubs played an unauthorised challenge game and used both senior and under 21 panelists in this game without the knowledge or consent of our senior hurling manager Cheddar Plunkett. From my own perspective, it was extremely disappointing, unbelievable really that a club would knowingly put players in such a position days and weeks before possibly the most important inter county championship match in their career. For Cheddar, it was unacceptable and feeling totally betrayed by their actions, he resigned. Full credit to Ger Cunningham, he agreed to replace him on an interim basis, which avoided complete disruption at least, for our senior panel anyway. During all this, dialogue was eventually engaged with Cheddar, with all appealing for his prompt return and following talks with the players involved, club officials, management, our Chairman and some outside intervention, thankfully on reflection Cheddar returned to the helm a week prior to the game.

It was a remarkable week in Laois GAA circles, with Cheddars return galvanising our supporters with a huge crowd turning up creating a marvellous atmosphere in O’Moore Park, for this local rivalry with close neighbours Offaly. Our lads gave a fabulous performance of complete hurling, displaying passion and pride in the Laois jersey, outplaying our close neighbours with ease after a tentative opening quarter. The victory eroding 43 years of championship disappointment against Offaly, the result also meaning that we avoid the round robin series for 2016. The success qualified us for



*Castletown Slieve Bloom Minor Hurling Champions 2015*



*Clough Ballacolla Junior Hurling Champions 2015*



a Leinster Senior Hurling Championship semi-final against Galway in Tullamore. Whilst expectations were high entering this game, we never reached the performance of the Offaly game and were outclassed by a more accurate Galway side, who would advance and go onto contest this years All Ireland final. In the Qualifier, we were no match for a far stronger Dublin side and so ended our championship aspirations for 2015.

In the coming year Division 1B is again competitive and it will again be a challenge to retain our status in this Division. Our exemption from the Round Robin series will now leave a void, we have become used to in our championship preparations. But this should certainly be a help in enhancing our Under 21 preparations, which hasn't been the case in recent years. Our Leinster Championship draw is favourable, whereby we meet the Round Robin runner up away from home, with the winner once again advancing to a championship semi-final. I would warn that from our experiences with Round Robin opposition in recent years that this will be no easy task, whoever it turns out to be.

I must praise our entire panel and management for their outstanding commitment and dedication to Laois hurling during the past year. At the time of writing this report, rumours of a number of retirements is worrying and indeed will place more pressure on young shoulders, and indeed make our task more daunting. However progress has been made, but there is so much more to go. The performance of our Minor teams in recent years continues to be encouraging and there is players coming through the system who are well capable of performing at this level and advancing the fortunes of

Laois hurling. I would stress that patience must be a virtue and while convinced we are going in the right direction, further progress will only happen with an even greater commitment and effort. Our clubs must be prepared to buy into this commitment and dedication also and whilst I agree there must be accommodation with inter county players, this must be with the consent of the county manager, it is a requirement for any successful county team.

I wish to acknowledge Eoin Reilly, Zane Keenan and Matthew Whelan (Captain) on their selection for the Ireland Shinty team and Ben Conroy and Colm Stapleton on the Under 21 Ireland Shinty panel. Eoin must also be congratulated on his forward showing in second place in the All Ireland Poc Fada series on the Cooley peninsula, just one shot behind nine time winner Brendan Cummins. Whilst acknowledging hurling feats, Thepp Fitzpatrick from the Rathdowney Errill Club deserves recognition on his success in becoming the first ever Laois person to win the National Féile na nOg skills competition.

I would like to extend our gratitude to Seamas Plunkett (Manager), Seamas Dwyer (Selectors), Ger Cunningham (Selector and Coach); Brendan Cummins (Goalkeeping Coaching), Paraic Fanning (Coach), Pat Flanagan and Jimmy Payne (Strength and Conditioning Coaches), Dr John Paul Campion; Eimear Hoare and Enda Lyons (Physiotherapy), Liam Ahearne, Jack Harding and Brian O'Sullivan (Stats and Analysis), Aine McNamara (Performance Analysis), Pat Delaney (Kit) and John Kealy (Servicing Secretary). The management and backroom team is presently being finalised, with only changes at moment being where Ross Dunphy will replace Pat Flanagan and



*Portlaoise Senior Hurling A Champions 2015*



*Barrowhouse Junior Football Champions 2015*

Jimmy Payne as Strength and Conditioning Coaches and Dr. Sharon McDonald replacing Dr. John Paul Campion, who unfortunately cannot commit due to present work practices. This is the first year we were able to avail of the funding of €40,000 from the National Hurling Development Committee, which is designated for five developing hurling counties and I certainly wish to acknowledge its benefit in assembling such a professional backroom team, which I have no doubt has helped in the progress we have made to date.

**BORD NA MONA WALSH CUP SH**

- Round 1: 11th January - Abbeyleix  
Laois 2-22 . . . . .UCD 1-8
- Round 3: 25th January - Abbeyleix  
Laois 4-18 . . . . . Wexford 1-19
- Semi-Final: 1st February - O'Moore Park  
Dublin 2-18 . . . . . Laois 1-11

**ALLIANZ HURLING LEAGUE ROINN 1B**

- Round 1: 14th February - O'Moore Park  
Laois 0-23 . . . . . Offaly 1-24
- Round 2: 21st February - Fraher Field  
Waterford 3-21 . . . . . Laois 0-12
- Round 3: 8th March - Armoyn  
Antrim 1-14 . . . . . Laois 1-18
- Round 4: 15th March - O'Moore Park  
Laois 0-25 . . . . . Wexford 5-22
- Round 5: 22nd March - Kilmallock  
Limerick 1-25 . . . . . Laois 1-19

- Relegation Play-Off:  
28th March - O'Moore Park  
Laois 2-18 . . . . . Antrim 1-13

**LEINSTER GAA SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP**

- Round Robin Round 1:  
3rd May - Ballycastle  
Antrim 5-17 . . . . . Laois 3-22
- Round Robin Round 2:  
10th May - Netwatch Cullen Park  
Carlow 1-14 . . . . . Laois 1-17
- Round Robin Round 3:  
24th May - O'Moore Park  
Laois 1-20 . . . . . Westmeath 1-17
- Quarter-Final: 7th June - O'Moore Park  
Laois 0-29 . . . . . Offaly 0-21
- Semi-Final: 20th June - Tullamore  
Galway 3-28 . . . . . Laois 1-14

**ALL IRELAND SENIOR HURLING QUALIFIER**

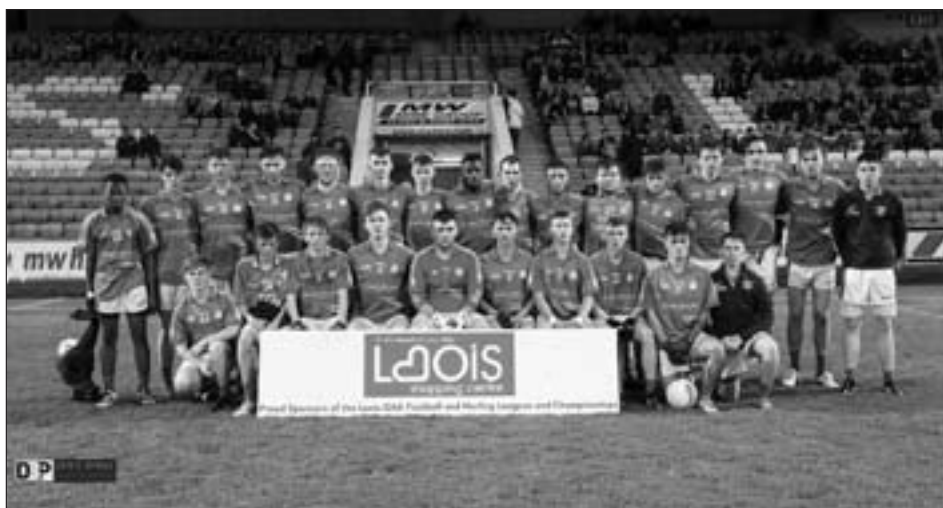
- Round 1: 4th July - O'Moore Park  
Laois 0-19 . . . . . Dublin 4-17

**Under 21 Hurling**

For the past two years, it was agreed Senior management would integrate the preparation of this panel with the Senior panel, due basically to the large crossover of players involved in both panels. Basically it hasn't worked and whilst there are many problems encountered with managing this grade, one of the biggest obstacles in preparing this panel has been the Round Robin series and the lack of opportunity to play meaningful challenge games.



*Trumera Intermediate Hurling Champions 2015*



*Graiguecullen Minor Football Champions 2015*

Again with an abundance of young players who had experienced Allianz League and Leinster Round Robin championship hurling, expectations were high that we would account for Carlow at home and make a major impact on this competition. It was not to be and in fairness to Carlow they were by far the better team on the evening and deserving of their success.

Unfortunately, Cheddars resignation on the eve of this game was not ideal and whilst every effort was made for it not to interfere with their preparations, one sensed that focus was on events elsewhere, other than those on the field and the performance and result reflected the same.

I wish to thank Ciaran Comerford, Eoin Drennan (Kit) and all other members of the Senior backroom team whom assisted with the preparation of this panel. In fairness to Ciaran, I don't think he realised what he had signed up to and probably didn't get a fair crack of the whip.

This is a grade we will be competitive at in the coming years and it is imperative that we have a coherent approach to ensure all our panels reach their maximum potential. For the coming year, it has been decided to appoint an independent management team, with Shane Corby (Manager) and Tony Doran (Selector), with further Selectors to be also added. Our promotion from the Round Robin series will be of benefit to this panel's preparation, but it will only work on the condition that both our senior and under 21 managements work together in the interests of the greater good of Laois hurling.

## **BORD GAIS ENERGY LEINSTER UNDER-21 HC**

Round 1: 27th May - O'Moore Park  
Laois 4-7 . . . . . Carlow 2-15

### **Minor Hurling**

Our opening championship game was against Wexford in a windy Wexford Park, where we travelled full of hope, preparations having gone well and after a tremendous game of hurling, where we had our opportunities, we lost out narrowly to the home side. In the Qualifier series, we travelled to Trim to play Meath, who were well defeated in an effortless victory. One would have to question our opponent's participation at this level in the competition, as such results do nobody any good and it is certainly not in the interests of promoting hurling. This qualified us for a home quarter final game against our near rivals Offaly. In this game confidence was again high, and we again emerged successful setting up a semi-final meeting with Kilkenny in Nowlan Park. As well prepared as ever, but similar to previous meetings in recent years, we proved no match for the "kingpins" of Leinster hurling and suffered yet another very disappointing defeat.

I wish to compliment this entire panel of players for their efforts and also their parents and clubs for encouraging them to commit to the Laois Hurling cause. In particular I want to thank Pat Critchley (Manager), Seamas Dooley (Selector), David O'Brien (Selector, Statistics & Servicing Secretary); Connie Conroy (Strength and Conditioning Coach) who was ably assisted by Tim Fahey, Anna Campion (Physiotherapy and Medic), and Martin Cahill (Kitman) for their tremen-



*Rosenallis Junior C Football Champions 2015*



*Laois MHC Team 2015*



dous work with this panel during the year. Pat has decided to step down for the coming year, believing a fresh approach and new voice may pay greater rewards as we go forward. Whilst acknowledging the work of the entire management team over the past number of years, I think Pat deserves special recognition for the renaissance of Laois hurling in recent years through his “Setanta” initiative and it is credit to his dedication to Laois hurling that he has now returned to manage our Under 15 Hurling Development squad. I also wish him well in his recently appointed role as “Banisteoir” of the Leinster Railway Cup Hurling team for the next two years, an accolade richly deserved.

In the coming year, Paul O’Shea (Manager), Fran Dowling (Selector), James Carroll (Selector and Coach) and Michael Boyhan (Strength and Conditioning Coach) will take charge in the mentoring of our minor panel.

**ELECTRIC IRELAND LEINSTER  
MINOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP**

Round 1: 11th April - Wexford  
Wexford 2-13 . . . . . Laois 0-17

Round 2 Qualifier: 25th April - Trim  
Meath 0-5 . . . . . Laois 7-26

Quarter-Final: 9th May - O’Moore Park  
Laois 3-15 . . . . . Offaly 1-13

Semi-Final: 21st June - Nowlan Park  
Kilkenny 2-18 . . . . . Laois 0-11

**Local Championships / Age Grades /  
Burnout / Calendar Year**

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Clough Ballacolla on their

success in yet again an exciting and competitive Senior Hurling Championship, whilst our Senior Football Championship followed predictable lines with Portlaoise winning an unprecedented nine in a row after a replay, a truly remarkable achievement, although a resurgent Emo team pushed them all the way in the drawn game. While almost all our teams were competitive in their Leinster Championship exploits, at the time of writing, our only remaining representative in Leinster Club competitions are Portlaoise in Senior Football semi-final, Trumera in Junior Hurling semi-final and Ballypickas in “Special” Junior Hurling final and I wish them the very best in their quest for Provincial honours.

Likewise I wish to congratulate all our Championship and League winners at both Adult and Juvenile levels, all of whom are outlined in the Roll of Honour at the end of this report.

At the time of preparing this report all competitions have been completed other than our Under 21 Football and Hurling Championships and the well received innovative Under 15 Floodlit Football Development competition. I would like to this opportunity to thank all Clubs for their great co-operation in completing the programme.

When penning this report, I am not aware of our Fixture Planner’s Committee or indeed Football Review Committee’s recommendations in their annual review, but I would certainly be reluctant for radical change in our adult schedule. The fact that our Senior Football representatives had to play Leinster Club championship the following day was unfortunate, but I must point out that this was at the request of the

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clubs involved, as CCC had made provision prior to final for replay on following Thursday evening. This scenario arose from the fact that our final required a replay and we were also drawn to play in the preliminary round of the Leinster Club Football championship. It is not something which will happen simultaneously every year, but could be avoided in future if we so wish, by commencing our local Senior Football championship on the August Bank Holiday weekend. I think my views on our Senior Football championship are well known and would really advocate a change similar to our Hurling championship structures. I believe this would really revitalise our football clubs and football championships, but there seems to be a reluctance from our Senior football clubs for any change.

The change in Age Grade rule at Congress last February, whereby players in the Under 17 age grade in 2016 will be ineligible to play adult games with their clubs will have a detrimental consequence on rural clubs in the coming year. It effectively means for 2016, Clubs will have no additional players coming through from juvenile grades until 2017. Whilst I understand many of the reasons behind the introduction of this rule, I believe the decision to be radical, and it will have an adverse effect on some rural clubs survival. I think consideration should at least have been given to limiting players in this age grade, to nominating one grade only at which they play at adult level and which they would only be able to participate in for that year.

As a consequence of this rule change, our CCC made recommendations to County Committee to try and facilitate this Under 17 player with a more meaningful playing schedule in 2016, by proposing

some radical changes to our age grades. Whilst this age grade rule is now in, agree with it or not, and as mentioned in the Ard Stiurthóir's recent report, I think the opportunity is there to change the minor grade back to under 17. This will quite clearly define and allow both an adult and juvenile fixture calendar run in tandem without interference. It is going to be piloted in a number of counties for 2016 and if we are serious about introducing a meaningful fixture calendar, that will be fair to our underage players under the present rules, this is the only way forward. Unfortunately our clubs were reluctant to support such a move, with the recommendation to introduce another grade of competition for Under 17's, which is basically going to create just more games for the same players. Whilst the exclusive football or hurling club can handle this, it is the player in the dual club or playing both codes that will suffer.

I have had opportunity to read our Ard Stiurthóir's discussion paper on player overtraining, burnout and the GAA fixtures calendar prior to completing my report and readily welcome most of his recommendations. Indeed our local Fixture Review Committee in 2008 could be described as visionary, as their recommendations back then, were for a defined championship season, similar to what he endorses in his calendar year proposals (i.e a defined inter county season during summer and a defined club championship season during autumn). In bringing forward the All Ireland finals by a fortnight to facilitate his proposals, would mean if passed, Laois GAA making a similar movement in bringing forward our own County finals by a fortnight and pro rata with all rounds. So effectively any such proposal on the calendar year would have little or no effect on

our own schedule, only perhaps enhance it. It is difficult to figure out, the abolishment of Under 21 Football Championship in preference to Third Level competitions, while retaining Under 21 Hurling Championship! The scheduling of Under 21 football at present poses problems and divided loyalties for players with Sigerson and Fitzgibbon duties, which is even more exasperated by participation of Third Level colleges in O'Byrne and Walsh Cup competitions. Perhaps consideration should be given to changing Under 21 to Under 19, in the event of Minor being changed to Under 17 at both club and county levels, it would certainly act as a development.

I believe with his assertion, that there are issues of player overtraining and burn-out. While I believe our championship fixtures calendar is similar to what is being proposed, we can always work to improve and provide our club players with a fairer schedule of matches. Many of the GAA public and Clubs don't believe in player burnout, some clubs in fairness do and have probably rightly challenged me at times on it, particularly in relation games scheduling for dual players. All the medical and scientific evidence presented by various experts and committees cannot all be wrong, indeed there is a GPA commissioned report on third level students experiences, "Never Enough Time", which I circulated earlier in the year, which is worth a read and listen to your players views on this matter.

## **2015 LEINSTER CLUB RESULTS TO DATE:**

### **AIB Leinster Club Senior Football Championship**

25/10/15 Netwatch Cullen Park  
Portlaoise (Laois) 0-15 . . . Palatine (Carlow) 1-08

08/11/15 O'Moore Park  
Portlaoise (Laois) 2-05 . . . Sarsfields (Kildare) 0-10

22/11/15 O'Moore Park  
Portlaoise (Laois) . . . Emmett Og (Longford)

### **AIB Leinster Club Intermediate Football Championship**

24/10/15 Newbridge  
Clonalee St Manmans (Laois) 0-05  
Castledermot (Kildare) 0-08

### **AIB Leinster Club Junior Football Championship**

08/11/15 Netwatch Cullen Park  
Barrowhouse (Laois) 0-10 . . . Grange (Carlow) 1-11

### **AIB Leinster Club Senior Hurling Championship**

01/11/15 O'Moore Park  
Clough Ballacolla (Laois) 0-13  
Oulart the Ballagh (Wexford) 3-08

### **AIB Leinster Club Intermediate Hurling Championship**

14/11/15 Trim  
Portlaoise (Laois) 1-12. . . Kiltale (Meath) 2-11

### **AIB Leinster Club Junior Hurling Championship**

08/11/15 Archerstown  
Trumera (Laois) 0-17  
Brownstown (Westmeath) 0-14

22/11/15 Lusmagh  
Trumera (Laois) . . . . . Lusmagh (Offaly)

### **AIB Leinster Club Special Junior Hurling Championship**

15/11/15 Edgeworthstown  
Ballypickas (Laois) 4-05  
Wolfe Tones (Longford) 3-05

29/11/15 Final Kildare Venue  
Ballypickas (Laois) v Broadford (Kildare)

## Referees and Disciplinary Issues

May I take this opportunity to thank all our Referees and our Match Officials in the form of linesmen and umpires for their co-operation and dedication in the successful completion of our Fixture programme.

Our Referee Administrator Tony Maher and his Committee are also deserving of our thanks for their efforts to try and improve refereeing standards and bring consistency at all levels. All of our Adult Referees completed an Inservice training course and Fitness testing, prior to commencement of competitions.

Whilst there has been no real disciplinary issues of note, there continues to be an escalation and an increasing lack of respect displayed by some of our Club Officials / Mentors and Players towards Referees and their Officials and is something which must be more severely addressed in future. It was also brought to my attention of some unfounded allegations of “red cards” being downgraded to “second cautionable infractions”, which is also totally unacceptable and whilst unproven, it will be an area we will monitor more prudently in future.

Our Hearings Committee is to be commended for the independent and impartial manner in which they dealt with all applications for hearings and appeals. There was a distinct increase in applications directly after the All Ireland Senior Football semi-final, which presumably was as a result of the controversial decision by the DRA, clearing Dermot Connolly to allow him play in the replay game. Our GAA disciplinary process allows the player an opportunity to a hearing, an appeal and if still not happy he can go to the DRA. In truth it is designed in a way that is fair

to players and is a disciplinary process that has served us well in recent years, particularly if you compare it to previous precedence of seeking High Court injunctions, to get players off or matches off. However I find the decision in this case bizarre and it would be worrying if it were to be used as a precedent by players and officials in future, which would throw our entire disciplinary process into disarray.

I don't think any Club Official understands the difficulties incurred and time spent in trying to ensure there is a Referee in attendance at every fixture we schedule, in excess of 1,600 fixtures in 2015 over a 9 month period works out at approximately 45 referees required per week. In working from a pool of less than 40 referees, it is not rocket science to understand the problems we have. So rather than continuously complain at meetings about appointments and the standard of refereeing in our Club games, I am requesting each Club in the coming year to provide at least one Referee, who they believe to be both competent and suitable for training next January.

Whilst now entering the third year of the “Black Card” for Infractions in Football that are considered cynical, it probably has eliminated a certain amount of deliberate fouling, but I remain sceptical towards the definition of a “deliberate pull down”. I believe at present this infraction is too difficult and vague to define and should be revisited out of fairness to both match officials and players. Another “Black Card” anomaly is the fact that at Inter County level a cumulative total of three ordering offs for this Infraction results in a One Match Suspension, whereas at Club level a “serial” offender with cumulative “Black Card” Infractions escapes free. I have no-

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ticed from our records an increasing trend of “serial” offenders at club level during the past year and is an issue that should be corrected.

## **Páirc Ui Mhórdha**

The Inter County scene in our stadium was quieter than normal during the year due to the ongoing development on the terrace side. As I have stated in previous reports to Convention the stadium is now our main source of revenue from rental income received from Leinster and Central Council games and also our local gate receipts.

I wish to acknowledge the support of our local Gardaí for their help on match days, our Event Controller Tom Jones, Safety Officer PJ Kelly, Chief Steward Sean Byrne and our numerous voluntary stewards. In order to satisfy present Health and Safety legislation, all our match day personnel have completed refresher and accredited training courses during the year. If it was not for their co-operation and help, it just would not be possible to host such games.

In early summer, major development works commenced at the back of the main terrace in O’Moore Park, which include the complete re-alignment of the back of all three terraces in line with safety legislation and building regulations, re-opening all closed exits and stairways off main terrace, demolishing and rebuilding ladies and gents toilets at Abbeyleix end terrace, refurbishment of stand toilets and town end terrace toilets and replacing commentary box on terrace.

The entire cost of the project is somewhere in excess of €1 million, with funding approved from Central Council €800,000

and Leinster Council €200,000 for this project. It is hoped works will be complete in coming weeks and that as a result of this development the capacity of stadium will increase to somewhere in the region of 25,000 capacity and will ensure venue can continue to host even more high profile games into the future, though in light of recent events you would wonder.

Finally on Pairc Ui Mhórdha, I must compliment our Groundsman Colm McEvoy for the pristine condition in which he continues to keep the pitch in the stadium. Our Caretaker Willie Stackpool for ensuring the grounds are opened when required and also our TUS workers and PCE Group Scheme team led by Liam McEvoy for their continued upkeep of the stadium during the year.

## **Laois GAA Centre of Excellence Development**

Following on from the acquisition of the “old” Portlaoise GAA grounds on Fr. Browne Avenue last year by GAA Central Council, in January 2015 the decision was taken to embark on the development of this site as Laois GAA Centre of Excellence.

This is one of the most exciting projects undertaken by our county in many years and the entire family of Gaelic Games in Laois will benefit from this centralised centre. Laois GAA Football and Hurling Development Squads at Under 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 / Minor, Under 21 and Senior panels will all use the centre. I am sure our sister associations in Ladies Football and Camogie regarding will also be talking to us about their input and requirements. In addition, the centre will also be used for schools competitions and underage county

blitzes alleviating a variety of over used club grounds currently providing for all of the above activities.

The Centre of Excellence will consist of the following proposals in the various phases:

**Phase 1 - Completed**

- ✓ Development of 3 Pitches (145m x 90m)
  - Pitch 1 – Gravel Raft Pitch (145 x 90m) with pop up irrigation;
  - Pitch 2 – Pipe and Slit Drained Pitch (145m x 90m) with pop up irrigation;
  - Pitch 3 – Pipe and Slit Drained Pitch (145 x 90m);
- ✓ Install drainage infrastructure for entire site;
- ✓ Install ducting, draw chambers and floodlighting bases for 3 pitches;
- ✓ Demolish “old” Portlaoise Clubhouse and realign entry to grounds with temporary car parking adjacent to O’Moore Park boundary wall;
- ✓ Development of running hills and training areas;

**Phase 2 – Spring 2016**

- ✓ Erect Floodlighting on Pitches 1, 2 and 3 (to a minimum of 350lux) and install Generator;
- ✓ Erect Goalposts and Ballcatch Nets on Pitches 1, 2 and 3;
- ✓ Erect perimeter fence and build pathway on Pitch 1;
- ✓ Replace boundary walls on Fr. Browne Avenue and O’Moore Park, incorporating new entrance and additional turnstiles;
- ✓ Install Amenity lighting;
- ✓ Build “machinery” shed;
- ✓ Acquisition of mower for ongoing and extra maintenance;

**Phase 3 – Autumn 2016 / Spring 2017**

- ✓ Building of new Complex incorporating:
  - 6 modern dressing rooms with shower facilities and ice baths;
  - Physio / Medical Room;
  - Storage Rooms;
  - Referees Dressing Room (also accessible to O’Moore Park);
  - Public Toilets (Ladies, Gents and Disabled);
  - Gym / Training Room;
  - Kitchen and Catering Area;
  - Reception / Foyer Area / Ticket Sales;
  - Office Area and Meeting Rooms / County Committee Meeting Room;

**Phase 4 – Autumn 2017 / Spring 2018**

- ✓ Car Parking Areas – tarmacadam and mark;
- ✓ Ball Wall;
- ✓ Indoor Arena.



*Centre of Excellence Layout*

The total cost of the project will be somewhere in the region of approximately €2.6 million for the first three phases. This figure excludes the purchase of the site, which was borne by Central Council GAA and is presently being transferred into Laois GAA ownership. This of course means that all of the funding secured can be directed towards the development of the Centre and makes delivery of such an ambitious project realistic.

Before embarking on a project of this scale, Laois GAA, particularly through our Chairperson and Treasurer has worked hard to secure funding commitments from Central Council GAA €1 million and Leinster Council GAA €225,000. Laois GAA has committed its own funding of €650,000, derived from sale of lands in Ballyroan and the “FAI / IRFU” Croke Park funding, to this project. Laois GAA has also been allocated Sports Capital Regional funding of €45,000 and is hopeful of further allocations next year. This will leave approximately €700,000 to be raised by Laois GAA through fundraising and loan facilities.

Laois GAA is a very proud GAA county and is one of the few “dual” counties competing at the top tier. Whilst a county with our population and resources will sometimes struggle against the big boys or those who invest all resources in one game, there is a burning desire among our members to compete and beat the best. There is a massive programme of work being carried out at underage level in recent years, which will be supplemented in the coming months with the launch Coaching and Games Development plan, and while success has yet to come, there are encouraging signs particularly at minor grade that it

is yielding dividends and a corner has been turned.

It is hoped that the new training grounds will provide a practical and real assistance to the great work that is going on in Coaching and Games Development at county and club level.

Our county is crying out for football and hurling success and this new Centre of Excellence is an important part of that vision that is being put in place to help achieve this.

### **Finance**

Our finances can once again be described as satisfactory, particularly as we have achieved budget in most sectors. Our expenditure in excess of €600,000 on Inter County teams continues to be the major drain on our resources and is an area that is closely monitored. It would be prudent to achieve further savings here, but many of the expenses incurred here are obligatory under agreements in place between Central Council and GPA regarding player entitlements and there is also a responsibility on us to ensure all our county panels are prepared in the best possible manner. There was additional funding for training camps from external sources made available to our Senior Hurling panel during the year and I would stress that whilst grateful, we must ensure that all such precedence is sustainable into the future. Our Gate Receipts, thankfully, showed an increase, all be helped by a Senior Football final replay. Our fundraising was disappointingly down and is an area that will have to be examined in view of seeking an additional loan, to complete our Centre of Excellence. It is projected a loan requirement in the region

of €600,000 will be needed to complete this development and additional income will have to be raised with the assistance of the Clubs to repay this. We are presently examining stadium sponsorship, hosting concerts or if these proposals don't come to fruition, we may have to examine slightly increasing Clubs ticket levy, if other fundraising ventures are not supported!

Our Cisteoir Martin Byrne will outline in more detail our income and expenditure in our Financial Accounts in his presentation to Convention.

Briefly I wish to highlight a number of our major fundraising initiatives and thanks those involved for their contribution to these events –

- Club County Board Draw continues to be our primary fundraising activity and is essential to both our County and Clubs wellbeing, in 2015 Clubs benefited to the tune of €501,579, while the County profited to almost €100,000. This Draw continues for 2016 and I would again appeal for your co-operation in making this your Clubs primary fundraiser for the year;
- Our annual “Golf Classic” was arranged for Portarlington Golf Club on June Bank Holiday and was this year sponsored by Colgan Sports and I would like to thank Aidan for his generous sponsorship. The Classic had 28 teams participating and was a wonderful success again thanks to the efforts of Liam Delaney and our Cathaoirleach Gerry Kavanagh;
- Our “Race Day” at the Punchestown Racing Festival was our inaugural step into the corporate sector and was also

a great success in selling 22 tables. Our thanks to Glanbia for their generous sponsorship of this event and who have again kindly agreed to sponsor this for 2016. This was again a fabulous success through the efforts of Kieran Leavy, Martin Byrne and other members of our Executive Committee;

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to our Treasurer Martin Byrne for his continued expertise and professionalism in this area and also for his commitment and dedication to Laois GAA.

### **Coaching and Games Development**

Coaching and Games Development and the amount of activity involved within this sphere is immense. As part of a review process, we have begun looking at structures and roles therein to enhance games development and make it more “fit for purpose”. As part of this process a sub-committee was set up under the Chairmanship of Pat O’Sullivan and the guidance of Dr. Aine McNamara and consisting of our four GDA’s Ciaran Muldowney, Andrew Kavanagh, Donal Brennan and James Kelly, as well as Fergal Byron, Eamon Jackman, John Sugrue and Pat Critchley. This committee have met on multiple occasions during the year and the culmination of their plan will hopefully be ready to launch early in the new year, but basically it is about developing a strategic approach to developing and optimizing the development pathway (from Under 8 to Under 16) in Laois, at both county and club. The plan will outline the proposals for impacting the Laois Player Pathway at club and county level in both codes. The Laois Player Pathway will maximise some of the opportunities within the county – relatively small

spread of clubs, size of county, geographical location. Further exploitation of these opportunities should optimize the return on investment of funding and improve the competitiveness of the county moving forward by improving both the quality and quantity of the player pool. This report will outline a proposal that impacts both club and county levels with a focus on 3 key areas:

- Improving club coaching and structures especially at nursery and underage level;
- Providing an appropriate, well structured, and sustainable pathway for young players at county level;
- Improving the coaching standards at all levels of the pathway from nursery to inter-county level.

In association with this plan, it is intended to introduce a “Club Flag” initiative similar to what is in place in some other counties, which will be used to measure Club engagement with the plan. Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results, doesn’t work, so I appeal to our Clubs for their co-operation with this in the new year.

### **Local Media**

Our games in Laois got more than their fair share of coverage during the year and for this I thank our local press and radio correspondents Damien Moran, Rory Delaney, Greg Mulhall, Jack Nolan, Denis Croke, Pat Delaney, Conor Lennon, Alan Hartnett, Aishling Cullen, Steven Duff and the various reporters from Midlands 3.

I want to particularly thank both local papers, Laois Nationalist and Leinster

Express, for their inclusion of our “Coaching and Games Corner” in their weekly editions, which I believe greatly enhanced the work being put in and spread the word at what was going on at Coaching and Games level.

I wish to thank Denis Byrne and Alf Harvey who both do a magnificent job on photographs and enhance the work of the scribes.

Our website, [www.laoisgaa.ie](http://www.laoisgaa.ie), was upgraded during the year and our Laois GAA Iphone App is also in need of an upgrade. We had issues with both during the year with our service provider and it is an area we will be exploring further in the coming months. The popularity of both is highlighted by the fact that we had 254,154 Website Visits and 585,891 Website Pageviews in the past 12 months. We have also embraced social media with 15,500 Twitter Followers and 5,002 Facebook Fans. All our website and social media work is a tribute to the tremendous work of IT Chairperson Brian Ramsbottom, who is ably assisted by Tomas Moore and long may they continue with their great work in this department. Brian is stepping down from this position from County Convention and I would like to sincerely thank him for his great work in revolutionising Laois GAA with IT and social media during his term as IT Chairperson.

### **1915 All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship Final Commemoration**

The 1915 All-Ireland Final was the 28th All Ireland Final which at that time was an inter-county hurling tournament for the top teams in Ireland. Ballygeehan representing Laois defeated Redmonds from

Cork in the final on a scoreline of 6-02 to 4-01, to record Laois's first All-Ireland title. To date this is our only All Ireland success and being 100 years this year since this famous victory, it was decided that we should celebrate this glorious win, with two milestones, a commemorative game with Cork and a book recording and documenting some of the events in the 1914 and 1915 period that led to that success.

The commemorative game with Cork took place in Clough Ballacolla Club grounds on Easter Monday, with Laois players kitted out in a specially commissioned black and amber kit, similar to the colours worn by the side which represented Laois in 1915. Whilst the Cork boys disappointingly avenged the result of 1915, it was a fantastic occasion and proved a wonderful opportunity for everyone to reflect on the achievement of the team one hundred years ago. I would like to pay a special thanks to Clough Ballacolla Club who were wonderful hosts and indeed fitting that they this year would emulate the feat of their predecessors in winning the County title 100 years on. I would also like to thank Cork GAA, their Senior Hurling panel, Manager Jimmy Barry Murphy and County Chairperson Ger Lane for their attendance and co-operation in playing the game.

The book "Laois' All – Ireland 1915" was launched at a very entertaining night in the Manor Hotel Abbeyleix on Friday 23 October. It is a fabulous read and documents the rise and ultimate success of the Laois hurlers in 1915, with significant contributions from well recognised historians who help set the sporting, political and eco-

nomie background to what was a wonderful and unique event. On behalf of Laois GAA, I wish to congratulate Teddy Fennelly, Declan Byrne, Andy Dunne and in particular our sub-committee Chairperson John Finlay on their dedication to and the enthusiasm for the production of such a valuable resource.

## Sponsors

I wish to extend our sincere gratitude to Mattie Walsh and his company MW Hire Group for their generous sponsorship of all our County teams. MW Hire have been part and parcel of Laois GAA now since 2010 and will continue for at least another year and I sincerely hope they will get the exposure they deserve and desire from our association with them.

Our associate jersey sponsor The Magni Group, whose logo was emblazoned on the back of all our Inter County jerseys, just above the number. Our thanks to Ted Berry and his company for their continued sponsorship.

Our Championships and Leagues are kindly sponsored by Laois Shopping Centre and again we are entirely appreciative of Kevin Doyle and company for their generous sponsorship. In recent weeks Laois Shopping Centre have agreed to extend their sponsorship package for another 3 years.

GALA sponsor all our Juvenile Championship and Leagues and our thanks are extended to 4 Aces and all GALA stores in Laois for this sponsorship.



Our appreciation and thanks are also extended to –

- O’Neills, our official Gear sponsors and my thanks to Tony Towell and Carol Carr for their co-operation and courtesy throughout the year, even at short notice;
- Lucozade Sport, our official Drinks sponsor;
- Maxi Nutrition, our Sports Nutritional Supplement sponsor;
- Mochua Print and Design, our Awards Night sponsor;
- Colgan Sports, sponsor of our Golf Classic in Portarlington Golf Club, whilst also acknowledging Aidan’s promotion and support of “Club Laois” shop;
- Browne Jeweller’s, for their Scoreboard sponsorship;
- Glanbia, main sponsor of our Punchestown Race Day;
- Crown Paints, our Man of the Match Awards;

and finally to all companies and persons who contributed to Laois GAA in some type of sponsorship during the past year.

I would appeal to all our GAA patrons to support our various sponsors in whatever means they can and hopefully their faith in Laois GAA will be justifiably rewarded with the success their investment deserves.

## **Na Mairbh**

Every year sees the passing of some great GAA people and this year has been no exception. On behalf of Laois GAA I would like to extend sympathy of Laois GAA in particular to the following families that readily come to mind – Tom Bolton, Arles Kilcruise; Mick Dempsey, Rathdowney; Paul Finan, Borris in Ossory Kilcotton; Tom O’Loughlin, Rosenallis; Paddy Fitzpatrick and Catherine Miller, Timahoe; Lar Phelan, Kilcotton; Barry McEvoy, Kilcavan and Rosenallis; Joe Doheny, Kyle; Paddy Bracken and Brian and Ned Murphy, Portlaoise; Dinny Roe, Clonad and The Heath; Jimmy Fennell, Clonad; David Crosby, St. Joseph’s; Denis Dooley and Kieran Moore, Camross; Domo Byrne, Park Ratheniska and Mark Attridge and Michael Heffernan, Killeshin and also to the families of the wider GAA community whom have been bereaved during the year by the loss of those dear to them.

Go ndeanfaidh Dia trocaire ar a nanamacha.

## **Buíochas**

In an organisation that has as many voluntary workers as the GAA, the list of those to be thanked is endless.

I must pay special tribute to our Chairman Gerry Kavanagh for his commitment, dedication and leadership of Laois GAA in recent years. I wish to express my gratitude to my fellow Officers Peter O’Neill Vice Chairperson, Martin Byrne Treasurer and Executive Members and their respective Sub Committees for their co-operation throughout the year.

Each in their own right, as outlined in their Report to Convention in this booklet, through their efforts and work ethic greatly contributed to the smooth running of the Association within the County.

To Tomas Moore, our Office Administrator, I say special thanks for his work, often I must add above and beyond the call of duty. He has an excellent relationship with our Club Secretaries, Referees and his routinely work and handling of ticket sales greatly reduces the work of yours truly. If that is not enough he also helps out our Development squads with video and stats.

To our Games Development Administrators, Ciaran Muldowney, Donal Brennan and Andrew Kavanagh (Full Time) and James Kelly (Part Time), who work hard to realise our objectives and I thank for their endeavours during the year. Eamon Jackman and Fergal Byron are also deserving of our thanks for their input in this sphere. As you can see from Coaching and Games Chairperson Pat O'Sullivan's report to Convention the amount of work ongoing in this sector is huge and diverse. I also wish to acknowledge and thank Laois County Council for their generous contribution towards our coaching staff.

Thanks to our sister organisations in their promotion of our games, Ladies Football and Camogie. Our congratulations to Laois Camogie team on their tremendous success in the All Ireland Junior Camogie Final.

The schools of Laois both Primary and Secondary deserve our thanks for the work they do to promote our games within their jurisdictions. We have developed an excellent relationship with Cumann na mBunscol who do tremendous work in our primary schools and also now have an active presence in almost all our Secondary schools.

Our sincerest thanks go to Micheal Reynolds and his staff in Comhairle Laighean CLG for their constant courtesy, support and accessibility. Similarly Paraic Duffy and his staff in Croke Park headquarters are also deserving of our thanks.

I wish to thank all our Club Officers, Players and Voluntary workers for their excellent co-operation and help with the promotion and playing of our games and activities and special mention must go to Park Ratheniska Club person Har Ramsbottom who was honoured nationally with a President's Award earlier in the year.

In conclusion, I wish you all an enjoyable and successful 2016.

Le meas

**Niall Mac Laitimh**

Runaí CLG Laoise Nollaig 2015

## **2015 FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP AND LEAGUE RESULTS**

### **Laois Shopping Centre SFC Final**

**(18/10/15)**

Emo 2-09 . . . . . Portlaoise 0-15

### **Laois Shopping Centre SFC Final Replay**

**(24/10/15)**

Portlaoise 2-13 . . . . . Emo 0-07

### **Laois Shopping Centre IFC Final**

**(18/10/15)**

Clonaslee St Manmans 1-11

Annanough 1-04

### **Laois Shopping Centre JFC Final**

**(02/10/15)**

Barrowhouse 0-12 . . . . . The Heath 0-06

### **Laois Shopping Centre JFC “B” Final**

**(19/08/15)**

Killeshin 2-11 . . . . . St Fintan’s 0-09

### **Laois Shopping Centre JFC “C” Final**

**(19/08/15)**

Rosenallis 2-09 . . . Clonaslee St Manmans 1-07

### **Laois Shopping Centre MFC Final**

**(11/09/15)**

Graiguercullen 1-13 . . . Portarlinton 0-10

### **Laois Shopping Centre MFC “B” Final**

**(16/09/15)**

O’Dempsey’s 2-08 . . . Park Ratheniska 1-08

### **Laois Shopping Centre U21 FC Final**

Killeshin Crettyard / St Joseph’s

Barrowhouse or Courtwood Emo The

Rock / Rosenallis v

Portlaoise or Graiguercullen

### **Laois Shopping Centre U21 FC Qualifier Final**

**(30/10/15)**

Rosenallis 4-15 . . . . . O’Dempsey’s 5-08

### **Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Div 1 Final**

**(30/07/15)**

Arles Killeen 0-08 . . . . . The Heath 0-05

### **Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Div 2 Final**

**(29/07/15)**

Timahoe 2-09 . . . . . O’Dempsey’s 1-09

### **Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Div 3 Final**

**(11/07/15)**

Courtwood 1-09 . . . . . O’Dempsey’s 0-07

### **Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Div 4 Final**

**(03/07/15)**

Killeshin 5-12 . . . . . Graiguercullen 1-04

### **Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Div 5 Final**

**(10/07/15)**

Emo 2-08 . . . . . O’Dempsey’s 0-12

### **Laois Shopping Centre MFL Final**

**(18/07/15)**

Portarlinton 3-12 . . . Ballylinan Gleanmor 0-13

### **Laois Shopping Centre MFL “B” Final**

**(13/07/15)**

O’Dempsey’s 3-08 . . . Park Ratheniska 1-13

### **Kelly Cup Final (27/03/15)**

Arles Kilcruise 1-12 . . . O’Dempsey’s 2-08

## **HURLING**

### **Laois Shopping Centre SHC Final**

**(27/09/15)**

Clough Ballacolla 0-20 . . . . . Camross 1-14

**Laois Shopping Centre SHC “A” Final  
(27/09/15)**

Portlaoise 1-14 . . . Clonaslee St Manmans 1-11

**Laois Shopping Centre IHC Final  
(11/10/15)**

Trumera 1-16 . . . . . Clonad 0-17

**Laois Shopping Centre JHC Final  
(11/10/15)**

Castletown 3-12 . . . Clough Ballacolla 3-12

**Laois Shopping Centre JHC Final Replay  
(16/10/15)**

Clough Ballacolla 2-14 . . Castletown 3-10

**Laois Shopping Centre JHC “B” Final  
(04/08/15)**

St Lazerians Abbeyleix 3-11  
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 0-12

**Laois Shopping Centre JHC “C” Final  
(07/08/15)**

Castletown 1-21 . . . . . Shanahoe 1-10

**Laois Shopping Centre MHC Final  
(19/09/15)**

Castletown Slieve Bloom 1-14. . . Portlaoise 0-17

**Laois Shopping Centre MHC Final  
Replay (03/10/15)**

Castletown Slieve Bloom 1-16. . . Portlaoise 0-13

**Laois Shopping Centre MHC “B” Final  
(19/09/15)**

Camross 4-09. . . . . St Fintans Gaels 0-12

**Laois Shopping Centre U21 HC Final**

Abbeyleix Gaels v Portlaoise or Ballinakill Gaels

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 1  
Brady Cup Final (29/07/15)**

Clough Ballacolla 1-16 . . . . Camross 2-12

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 1A Final  
(11/07/15)**

Portlaoise 3-16 . . . St Lazerians Abbeyleix 1-10

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 2 Final  
(05/07/15)**

Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 0-22  
Shanahoe 0-20

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 3 Final  
(05/07/15)**

Clough Ballacolla 0-19 . . . Slieve Bloom 2-08

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 4 Final  
(10/07/15)**

St Fintans Mountrath 1-21 . . . Ballinakill 3-11

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Div 5 Final  
(05/07/15)**

Castletown 1-14 . . . Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 1-12

**Laois Shopping Centre MHL Final  
(20/07/15)**

Abbeyleix Gaels 3-23 . . Rathdowney Errill  
1-23

**Laois Shopping Centre MHL “B” Final  
(13/07/15)**

Camross 5-12 . . . . . St Fintan’s Gaels 3-16

**Palmer Cup**

Clough Ballacolla W/O . . . Castletown SCR

**JUVENILE FOOTBALL**

**Under 12 Football Div. 1 Cup Final  
(31/08/15)**

Ballyroan Abbey Gaels 3-09. . . Portlaoise 2-07

**Under 12 Football Div. 1 Shield Final  
(20/08/15)**

St Pauls 6-10. . . . . Graiguecullen 4-04

**Under 12 Football Div. 2 Cup Final**  
**(24/08/15)**  
Rosenallis 3-07 . . . . .Mountmellick 2-07

**Under 12 Football Div. 2 Shield Final**  
**(24/08/15)**  
The Heath 4-05 . . . . .O'Dempseys 4-04

**Under 12 Football Div. 3 Cup Final**  
**(19/08/15)**  
Ballylinan 4-06 . . . . . Kilcavan 2-09

**Under 12 Football Div. 3 Shield Final**  
**(25/08/15)**  
Barrowhouse 7-03 . . . . . Crettyard 1-06

**GALA U13 FC Division 1 Final**  
**(15/11/15)**  
Ballyroan Abbey 6-06. . . . .St Pauls 2-03

**GALA U13 FC Division 1 Shield Final**  
**(15/11/15)**  
Portlaoise 3-06 . . . . . Portarlington 1-03

**GALA U13 FC Division 2 Final**  
**(15/11/15)**  
Graiguecullen 4-05. . . . .Rosenallis 2-02

**GALA U13 FC Division 2 Shield Final**  
**(15/11/15)**  
Kilcavan 4-06. . . . . O'Dempsey's 2-06

**GALA U14 FL (A) Final (16/07/15)**  
Ballyroan Abbey 2-13 . . . Portarlington 0-05

**GALA U14 FL (B) Final (29/06/15)**  
The Harps 8-09 . . . St Joseph's Barrowhouse 5-07

**GALA U14 FL (C) Final (24/06/15)**  
Spink 5-09 . . . . . Ballyroan Abbey B 0-03

**GALA U14 FC Final (20/09/15)**  
Ballyroan Abbey 4-08. . . . .St Pauls 3-04

**GALA U14 FC "B" Final (12/09/15)**  
The Harps 5-05 . . . Clonaslee St Manmans 2-04

**GALA U14 FC "C" Final (05/09/15)**  
Spink 4-14 . . . . .St Fintans Camross 2-01

**GALA U14 FC Shield Final (27/09/15)**  
Portarlington 1-09 . . . Killeshin Crettyard 2-02

**GALA U14 FC "B" Shield Final**  
**(11/09/15)**  
Graiguecullen 2-06. . .Park Ratheniska 1-07

**GALA U16FL (A) Final (03/07/15)**  
Portarlington 3-11 . . . St Pauls The Rock 2-09

**GALA U16FL (B) Final (24/06/15)**  
Portlaoise B 3-07 . . . . .The Harps 3-02

**GALA U16 FC Final (03/10/15)**  
St Pauls The Rock 1-10 Portarlington 0-07

**GALA U16 FC "B" Final (03/10/15)**  
Castletown Slieve Bloom 2-08  
Graiguecullen 2-06

**GALA U16 FC Shield Final (03/10/15)**  
Ballyroan Abbey Gaels 3-13  
Stradbally Parish Gaels 5-05

**GALA U16 FC "B" Shield Final**  
**(03/10/15)**  
The Heath 2-19. . . . . Park Ratheniska 3-11

## JUVENILE HURLING

**Under 12 Hurling Final Division 1**  
**(26/09/15)**  
St Lazerians Abbeyleix 4-05  
Clough Ballacolla 2-07

**Under 12 Hurling Shield Final Div 1  
(26/09/15)**

The Harps 3-03

Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 1-04

**Under 12 Hurling Final Division 2  
(09/09/15)**

Clonaslee St Manmans 5-05

St Fintans Mountrath 2-02

**Under 12 Hurling Final Division 3  
(09/09/15)**

Ballypickas St Fintans Gaels 2-07

Na Fianna 3-03

**GALA U13HC Division 1 Final  
(07/11/15)**

St Lazerians Abbeyleix 3-14 . . . The Harps 1-04

**GALA U13HC Division 1 Shield Final  
(07/11/15)**

Ballinakill 0-10 . . . . . Camross 1-03

**GALA Under-13 Hurling Development  
Competition Division 2 Final  
(21/11/15)**

Ballypickas Gaels v Winner Na Fianna / Rosenallis

**GALA Under-13 Hurling Development  
Competition Division 2 Shield Final  
(21/11/15)**

Loser Na Fianna / Rosenallis v St Fintans Mountrath

**GALA U14HL (A) Final (12/06/15)**

St Lazerians Abbeyleix 3-06 . . . The Harps 2-05

**GALA U14HL (B) Final (25/06/15)**

Rosenallis 3-09 . . . Clonad Park Ratheniska 2-05

**GALA U14HL (C) Final (12/06/15)**

Ballinakill 6-08 . . . . . Slieve Margy 4-05

**GALA U14 HC Final (05/09/15)**

St Lazerians Abbeyleix 1-06 . . . The Harps 0-08

**GALA U 14 HC “B” Final (26/08/15)**

Rosenallis 7-06 . . . . . Ballinakill 1-08

**GALA U 14 HC “C” Final (26/08/15)**

Slieve Margy . . . . . 3-08

Ballypickas Gaels . . . . . 2-04

**GALA U16 HL (A) Final (26/06/15)**

Castletown Slieve Bloom 0-14

St Fintan’s Gaels 1-10

**GALA U16 HL (B) Final (20/05/15)**

Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 4-11

Rosenallis 3-10

**GALA U16 HC Final (10/10/15)**

Camross 2-10 . . . . . Portlaoise 1-10

**GALA U16 HC “B” Final (10/10/15)**

Clough Ballacolla 2-10 . . . Rosenallis 2-09

**GALA U16 HC Shield Final (17/10/15)**

St Fintans Gaels 3-16

Castletown Slieve Bloom 2-11

**GALA U16 HC “B” Shield Final  
(26/09/15)**

Graiguecullen 4-10 . . . . . Slieve Margy 0-08



# Laois Membership Registration Report 2015

Club	Registered For 2015	Unregistered For 2015	Full Members	Youth Members	Honorary Members	Social Members	Adult Player	U21 Player	Minor Player	Juvenile Player
Abbeyleix St Lazarians	287	0	107	150	9	21	72	23	13	132
Annanough	218	0	100	105	4	9	58	7	4	100
Arles/Kilcruise	114	32	66	48	0	0	43	5	3	44
Arles/Killeen	153	109	84	69	0	0	40	5	0	69
Ballinakill	211	0	90	121	0	0	56	9	3	117
Ballyfin	278	166	150	111	0	17	64	14	7	101
Ballylinan	206	260	74	112	0	20	32	5	6	104
Ballypickas	204	0	115	75	8	6	65	22	12	61
Ballyroan Abbey	134	138	131	3	0	0	70	16	0	3
Barrowhouse	180	25	84	87	6	3	39	3	6	59
Borris In Ossory	99	22	84	6	9	0	37	10	4	2
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton	142	327	11	131	0	0	2	0	7	123
Camross	344	45	209	114	18	3	85	14	7	107
Castletown	396	0	233	163	0	0	69	29	23	118
Clonad	222	0	80	105	0	37	42	19	5	97
Clonaslee St Manmans	320	0	149	165	4	2	72	14	4	161
Clough-Ballacolla	233	0	106	127	0	0	66	24	15	112
Colt/St Fintan's	173	0	84	34	7	48	36	9	4	30
Courtwood	215	0	104	109	2	0	53	10	3	106
Crettyard	145	218	82	55	0	8	36	8	1	52
Emo	252	0	216	36	0	0	35	15	8	28
Errill	91	0	87	2	0	2	43	12	2	0
Graiguecullen	367	515	167	153	37	10	70	15	17	135
Kilcavan	295	5	126	153	6	10	48	6	7	142
Kilcotton	96	8	86	5	5	0	36	11	5	0
Killeshin	534	0	250	244	0	40	70	17	23	212
Kyle	77	25	53	12	0	12	26	1	0	1
Mountmellick	409	0	236	157	14	2	67	20	7	134
O'Dempseys	296	178	132	141	0	23	59	8	5	129
Park Ratheniska	388	0	139	248	1	0	71	19	22	226
Portarlinton	395	107	161	193	41	0	52	17	15	172
Portlaoise	504	372	256	248	0	0	131	62	30	212
Rathdowney	149	0	149	0	0	0	50	11	0	0
Rathdowney Errill	154	0	13	141	0	0	0	0	13	127
Rosenallis	388	0	167	219	0	2	62	31	8	209
Shanahoe	108	11	81	27	0	0	42	10	6	21
Slieve Bloom	128	0	81	46	1	0	32	10	5	37
Slieve Margy	95	3	32	63	0	0	12	1	8	55
Spink	247	0	87	149	10	1	56	12	3	145
St Fintan's	62	2	52	10	0	0	2	48	10	0
St Fintan's Mountrath	263	21	82	132	6	43	36	13	14	113
St Joseph's	295	144	127	160	0	8	41	11	8	149
Stradbally	422	80	144	267	11	0	71	19	11	229
The Harps	372	156	126	127	2	117	62	20	11	98
The Heath	311	0	191	119	0	1	86	19	8	77
The Rock	249	0	117	129	0	3	64	8	8	120
Timahoe	286	0	122	144	0	20	73	14	12	132
Trumera	67	0	45	21	0	1	28	1	0	13
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>11574</b>	<b>3383</b>	<b>5668</b>	<b>5236</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>2462</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>4614</b>

# Sub - Committees Reports

## Coiste Na nÓg Laoise Annual Report 2015

2015 was again another successful year for Coiste Na nÓg Laoise. Over the course of 9 months, commencing on March 6th with the first round of the Under 14 Hurling League and we anticipate wrapping up in mid-November with the last of our U13 Football Finals. Supported as always by CLG Laois, this year we ran leagues and championships in both hurling and football for all grades from U12 to U17. On behalf of Coiste Na nÓg Laoise I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the people who helped us and made it possible to fulfil our fixtures throughout that time.

Firstly, I'd like to thank the Senior County Secretary Niall Handy, from day one he accommodated, advised and helped the Juvenile Board in whatever way possible and without his support, and the support of the Laois GAA Board it would be impossible to run our underage programmes. A special thanks to Tomas Moore in the County Board Office, once again this year he was a great asset to the Juvenile Board and very accommodating to our administrative needs.

At all levels of the GAA, we are indebted to the many voluntary workers who, week in, week out, work unselfishly for the benefit of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael. On behalf of Coiste Na nÓg, I would like to extend our gratitude to all these volunteers and in particular the Juvenile Club Secretaries in Laois, for their cooperation and communication throughout the year. To clubs who

made their facilities available to host games, it is always duly noted that your grounds and dressing rooms were always presented to the highest standard. It is a difficult task to run such a high volume of fixtures across so many grades, and for the most part, all clubs were accommodating of each other and made the process that bit easier.

GAA Officials, Referees, Linesmen and Umpires, were as ever committed to the cause this year as with every other year, and without their dedication and commitment it would not be possible to have the smooth running of our games. I think it is important to note, that this year more so than ever, from attendance at a variety of Juvenile games, there has been a major improvement from Juvenile Players and Management Teams in adhering to the GAA Campaign, "Give Respect Get Respect". It is always encouraging to see and I hope this trend continues in years to come.

Again this year we held our Juvenile Finals at O'Moore Park, a huge thanks needs to go to the grounds staff there and in particular Wille Stackpool and Joe Dooley. They volunteer their time to Laois GAA year in year out and are known and regarded highly by all GAA people within Laois. On behalf of Coiste Na nÓg Laoise I'd like to commend them for their loyalty to Laois, and look forward to working with them for 2016.

GALA sponsor all our Juvenile Championship and Leagues and our thanks are extended to 4 Aces and all GALA stores

in Laois for this sponsorship. Recognition must also go to all the Laois Development Squads, Setanta and O'Mórdha Og and their management teams, these programmes are very successful with our juvenile players, and we hope to see their continuation in 2016 as their success keeps our young players in the Gaelic Games Circle.

I'd like to congratulate all our young sporting athletes on an exceptional year and in particular to our winning finalists, and wish them all every success for the future.

Finally, I'd like to thank the committee of Coiste Na nÓg Laoise, specifically, our Chairperson Andrew Broderick and our Assistant Secretary Ciara Gorman. The time, effort, work load and dedication they have put in throughout the year doesn't go unnoticed and it is greatly appreciated.

Is Mise Le Meas

**Dónall Ó Gormáin**

Rúnaí  
Coiste Na nÓg Laoise

# Planning, Physical Development and Health & Safety Report 2015

As County Development Officer of C.L.G. Laoise, it gives me great pleasure to present my annual report to County Convention 2015.

It has been a busy year for The Planning, Physical Development and Health & Safety Committee as they continued the trend of previous years. The Committee's responsibilities for 2015 included; assisting and supporting Clubs with their Club Development Grant Applications, Strategic Club Planning Programmes, Club Officer Training and facilitating Safety Inspections & Stewards Training.

## Club Development Grant Applications

**2015** - The year under review has seen continuous growth in physical development both at Club and County Grounds. The present year, saw seven clubs receive Leinster Council grant aid, totalling €28,000.

In relation to the provision of additional playing areas a number of Clubs received circa €15,000 in Leinster Council land acquisition funding.

**2016** – 9 clubs have applied for Leinster Council grant aid in 2016. These applications have been processed and submitted with appropriate recommendations.

At this juncture I would like to acknowledge and thank the volunteers and staff of Comhairle Laighean in particular Michael Reynolds (CEO), Derek Kent (Chair), P.J. Murphy and Patricia Clear for their continued advice, help and support.

In the present economic climate I am acutely aware of the limited grant aid available to clubs. G.A.A. grant aid to all counties has been reduced for the current year.

However, the Sports Capital Funding announced in October, brought joy to some of our Clubs and disappointment for others. A number of clubs submitted, what I considered were worthy applications only to be disappointed and I can only empathise with their sense of disappointment and frustration.

A total of €322,000 was shared between nine Clubs.

## Club Strategic Development Plan

There are Clubs presently in the process of developing their Club Strategic Plans while others already have plans in place and are progressing same. This is a time to reflect on the structures and development of our Club units as they approach their Annual General Meetings. Every Club is suffering from the effects of emigration and some are in financial difficulties. The Club Development Planning process will help Clubs focus on where they are presently doing and what is required to move forward. I would strongly urge each and every club to put a 'Club Development Plan' in place over the coming months. There are still Club Development Packs available on request.

Comhairle Laighean has assured all County Development Officer's that they will not consider future grant applications

unless a Club Strategic Development Plan is in place.

Congratulations to the Harps GAA Club who officially launched their 5 year Club Strategic Development Plan in October.

### **Pairc Ui Mhordha/ Centre of Excellence**

It is heartening to see the upgrade works currently progressing in Pairc Ui Mhordha and the development of the centre of excellence co-located next to Pairc Ui Mhordha. The development of the centre of excellence will incorporate, in addition to the playing pitches for intercounty teams, state of the art changing areas, gymnasium, medical, meeting and catering facilities.

Personnel involved in these projects have shown great drive and vision in steps taken to develop and improve our facilities and hopefully this will bear fruit in the years ahead.

Once again we were to the forefront in hosting inter-county games. They all ran smoothly and without any major incident. This is a reflection on the organisation and management of the events and the availability of voluntary stewards. The hosting of such games is an onerous task and it is important that we maintain our high standards and continue providing comfort for spectators and all others involved in order to enhance their 'match day experience'.

I would sincerely like to thank all the voluntary stewards, who helped and made themselves available during the year. Without their support and dedication on a weekly basis, it would have been impossible to stage our games. Once again, thank you.

My sincere thanks also to Tom Jones, Event Controller and to our Chief Steward, Sean Byrne for all their help and dedication during the year. Thanks also to Joe Dooley, Andrew Broderick and the gate staff, Mick Kelly, Willie Stackpool and James Lawlor Fitzpatrick who stewarded in O'Moore Park at every match. It would be remiss of me not to give a special mention to Colm McEvoy and the personnel employed on both the P.C.E. Group Scheme and Tús Programme, who continue to keep and maintain our grounds to a very high standard.

I want to record and acknowledge the co-operation, help and goodwill I received from Gerry Kavanagh, Niall Handy and Thomas Moore and the other members of the executive, together with the representatives of An Garda Síochána, when organising and planning all major fixtures.

### **Health & Safety**

Members of the Safety Committee and the County Development Officer visited a number of clubs during the year. Advice on Health & Safety and other relevant issues was given.

Most clubs appointed a Club Safety Co-ordinator on receipt of the Willis Safety Statement and it is anticipated that the balance will do so during the coming year.

### **Training**

Club Officers Training – It is envisaged that the new Club Leadership Development Programme will be rolled out for all Principal Club Officers early in 2016. The Principal Officers in each club will have the opportunity to attend an induction module

to introduce them to their role as a Club Officer. The induction module includes; their Club mission, values and vision.

In addition, to the induction module, Chairpersons, Secretaries, Treasures and Public Relation Officers will have the opportunity to attend three further modules which have been tailored to meet their needs. These modules include leadership, communication and club administration. Clubs will be updated accordingly.

Steward Training – It is now mandatory that all stewards are competent and accredited by The Portobello Institute. A further twenty five stewards successfully received accreditation from Portobello College in 2015. Well done to all.

## **Conclusion**

I want to sincerely thank my committee of Tom Jones, Sean Byrne, Tommy Smith, Michael Lennon, Danny Hanlon and Rory O’Connell, club officers and fellow executive members for their courtesy, help and support during the year. To Niall, Tomas and all the staff in Parkside, it was a pleasure working and dealing with you.

Go raibh maith agaibh.

Le Meas,

**Pádraig Seosamh Ó Ceallaigh**

Development Officer  
C.L.G. Laoise



# County Hearings Committee (C.H.C.) Report 2015

It is that time of year when I reflect on the work done by the county hearings committee. The committee began its work on the first week of February 2015 with regard to a number of appeals in relation to transfers, and attachment to first clubs.

Some if not all the cases proved to be complex so complex, that we had to adjourn them to seek clarification from a higher authority in order that we as a committee endeavoured to reach a considered decision that reflected on the rules of the association, and where it was practicable we made known our decisions for the sake of clarity and a fair understanding.

We also felt that it was important to set out our deliberations in such a manner that would be of assistance and guidance to both the appellant and the respondent in all future appeals.

These were earnest and detailed transfers/attachment request and appeals duly presented by the individuals, parents and the clubs involved and we thank them for the courtesy and understanding shown as we endeavoured to reach and arrive at a fair and a proper decision, having due regard for the spirit of the rules and bye laws of the association.

In 2014 and again 2015 the hearings committee invited representatives from all clubs to attend an information night which was poorly attended, where we provided information on the workings of the hearings committee. We as a committee feel that it was a worthwhile exercise and to hold a similar presentation in early 2016 for the clubs would be a learning process for all,

because it was apparent at some of the hearings held during 2015 that there was a lack of understanding as to the function and the powers of the hearings committee.

Throughout the year we had a number of requests for hearings arising out of matches and referees reports and in some instances very short notice was given for such a request, but all requests were heard.

This is a break down of all the cases that came before the committee in 2015.

We had requests for nineteen hearings in total, three received a twelve week suspension. four received an eight week suspension. Two cases received four weeks. With regard to match bans two cases received a two match ban, and three cases received a one match ban. No action taken in two cases and we had a request for two appeals in which one was lost and we the hearings committee were not the correct forum to hear the second appeal received as it should have been directed to the provincial hearings committee, and one case received debarment from playing the remainder of the game including extra time. All cases were dealt with under the relevant rules of an T.O 2015.

In the out set it is stated that the hearings committee received requests for hearings with regard to transfers and attachment to first club, and permission to play. In total eight such requests were received. The breakdown of the appeals are as follows. Four upheld, two lost, one ruled out of order, and one received out side the time allowed for seeking an appeal which is three days under rule of an T.O 2015. This was

subsequently appealed to Leinster Council and again ruled out of order.

I would like to thank the players and club officials who appeared before the hearings committee for their courteous co-operation. I would also like to thank the various members of the CCC and the contribution they made to the proceedings who made their case honestly.

Finally I would like to thank the members of the hearings committee who freely gave of their time and more often than not at very short notice as previously stated and the manner in which each of the cases were

so diligently considered before reaching a final decision.

A very special thank you to our chairman John Hanniffy who often goes above and beyond his duties in order that justice is administered in a professional manner. John sometimes likes a challenge and some of the cases that came before the hearings committee in 2015 lived up to that.

Mile Buiochas go leir.

**Liam Stacphuil**  
Runaí  
Coiste Eisteachta

# Public Relations & Marketing Committee Report

Good evening and welcome to the 2015 Laois GAA convention. Below we outline the role of the Public Relation and Marketing Committee.

## Social Media

As we all know in today's world, social media plays a big part in everyone's life and it's no different for Laois GAA. Our social media sites give great service to people who can't come to our games and especially people who have moved abroad, it allows them to follow our county and club teams over the year and they can feel that they are a part of it all. Facebook, Twitter and our web site are great tools that our clubs can use to help promote themselves and advertise events they are holding. I would like to thank Brian Ramsbottom, our IT officer and Tomas Moore office administrator for running this section.

## Match Programmes

The match programme plays a big part of the County and club games that are held in O Moore Park. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all Inter County secretaries and club secretaries for having their match panels in on time, to allow us to produce a high quality match programme. Our programme is also a great way to get different types of information out to our supporters and keep everyone up to speed on what is going on in Laois GAA. A big thanks to Tomas Moore, Pat Delaney and Mochua Print & Design for all their hard work and time in this area.

## Local Media

As you all know without the support and help from our local newspapers and radio, the word about our County and club teams would not get to a lot of people around the county. It's great to have local running commentary on our County and club games. It's great that we have a club sports notes section in both local newspapers to help clubs promote themselves. I would like to thank Midlands Radio 103, Leinster Express and Laois Nationalist for their services also to Denis Byrne, Alf Harvey and Canice McCarthy, photographers.

## Awards Night

It's always the last big event before convention to allow us honour the men and women that give us so much joy in the games we love throughout the year. Congratulations to all the award winners and best of luck for 2016. Thanks to Mochua Print & Design for their sponsorship for this event, Mochua are great supports of Laois GAA and give us great value and service throughout the year. A big thanks to Will O' Callaghan and Jack Nolan from Midlands Radio 103 for doing MC on the night, Pat Delaney for working on the programme for the night, Tomas Moore for all his work in all areas.

## P.R.O Information night

Midway through the year we had a P.R.O information night I would like to thank all clubs who attended and hope you

got some benefit from it. We are hoping we can hold another night in the new year, and hopefully we can get some more clubs to attend.

### **Conclusion**

I would like to thank my committee for their support throughout the year, Grainne McCann (Secretary), Brian Ramsbottom (IT Officer), Tomas Moore, Canice McCarthy, Pat Delaney, Greg Mulhall.

It's been a pleasure working with you all. I would also like to thank Gerry Kavanagh (Laois Chairman) and the Executive for their help and support.

Thanks to all involved in Laois GAA and beat the luck for 2016.

Is mise

**Brian Allen**  
P.R.O.

# Coaching and Games Officer Report 2015

2015 has been a busy and eventful year in Coaching and Games and I will deal with each area separately further on in the report.

The excellent work and attention to detail has to be complimented of the four GDA's working for Laois GAA.

They have had a busy year covering both codes as well as looking after our five main areas of the programme that is (1) Games, (2) Camps, (3), Coach Education, (4) Development Squads, (5) Others and New Initiatives.

They have tried to have as much input into schools as was possible. They deserve great credit for their work so I would like to thank Ciaran Muldowney, Andrew Kavanagh, James Kelly and Donal Brennan.

While the majority of activities have finished for 2015, the work off the field continues as the planning for 2016 is almost complete and ready to start again before Christmas.

It has been recognised again this year that the club players attending Development Squads are all not of the standard of skill levels that is required.

The Laois Player Pathway is almost complete and should be ready for the New Year. However, there is little point in producing a well structural and researched document if it isn't embraced and acted on. The work should only start once the document is launched.

The goal of this project is to give our clubs the tools to develop their players, to provide the coaches with education and guidelines, set minimum skill levels for each age group and the ways in which these skills can be measured before they then step forward to represent their county.

I'd like to thank Dr Aine McNamara, sports psychologist, for facilitating the group which has brought both hurling and football people together who's only goal is to improve both grades and our young players. Special thanks to Fergal Byron and Eamon Jackman who both have taken on the task of monitoring the pathway and overseeing its implementation in their respective codes.

Our four Games Development Administrators, as ever, will play a huge role as they did in contributing to the Pathway Development. Also part of the team was Pat Critchley, John Sugrue and Niall Handy.

The Pathway will give clear direction and offer great support to clubs and their coaches but will only be successful if we all take it on board and use it to our advantages.

I sincerely hope when it's launched the clubs will be to the forefront in directing and contributing to the future of hurling and football in Laois for years to come.

## AREA 1: GAMES

### Hurling

Go Games at u8, u10 and u12 with over 400 hurling matches played. At U12 there were three divisions. Abbeyleix retained their division 1 crown, Clonaslee/St Manmans won Division 2 while St Fintans/ Ballypickas Gaels emerged victorious in Division 3. Great credit is due to all clubs for taking part especially our two new clubs, Slieve Margy and Portarlinton.

The Hurling Go Games Experience Night was held on June 22nd. Special thanks to all the clubs who participated.

### Football

31 clubs were represented on June 15th in the O'Moore Park Under-10 Football Experience Night.

In the Under-12 competition there was five divisions, which gave clubs seven rounds of games. There was also two blitz days for the Under-12 clubs.

In Under-8 and 10's all clubs had ten outings with over 300 games taking place between the two age groups.

## AREA 2: CAMPS

Thanks to all the clubs who hosted the camps and the excellent grounds and facilities that our young players could enjoy. Because of the increase in numbers, and in particular the people who registered on the day of the start of the camp, we did run into a shortage of supply for gear. Again apologies to the clubs affected, but in particular to the parents and guardians who paid

the subscription expecting a certain level of service. Once again this issue has been raised at the highest level with also our displeasure with the situation. Assurances have been given the same issue won't arise next year so hopefully this will be achieved.

### Cul Camps

We ran 29 Cul Camps over 6 weeks. Once again, we had record numbers with 1872 attending.

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Castletown Slieve Bloom (H)	80	62
Abbeyleix (H)	119	76
The Heath (F)	29	29
Portlaoise (C)	35	46
Killeshin (F)	59	51
Ballyroan (F)	102	85
Park Ratheniska (F)	122	110
Barrowhouse (F)	51	42
St Fintans Gaels (H)	44	38
Clough/Ballacolla (H)	25	24
Borris-in-Ossory- Kiltotton (H)	56	51
Clonad (H)	56	52
Rathdowney Errill (H)	104	69
Ballylinan (F)	80	73
O'Dempseys (F)	78	67
Mountmellick (F)	72	56
Rosenallis (H)	68	51
The Harps (H)	90	64
Stradbally (F)	103	95
Graigucullen (F)	42	55
Kilcavan (F)	67	55
Mountrath (H)	40	32
Na Fianna (H)	27	18
Clonaslee St Manmans (F)	23	20
Portarlinton (F)	29	50
Camross (H)	100	91
Portlaoise (C)	67	44
The Rock (F)	61	55
Emo (F)	43	37
	<u>1872</u>	<u>1598</u>

- Under-7 to Under-13 Easter Camp held in Knockbeg, in conjunction with IT Carlow. 113 players attended the camp.
- Under-14 and Under-15 Football Development Squad camp last Easter.
- O'Mordha Og Under-12 and Under-13 football camps were held during August with over 90 participating in Ratheniska.
- 30 attended the Under-13 Football camp in Ratheniska at Halloween break.
- The Setanta Programme held the following camps in Heywood Centre of Excellence. 7-10 April, 11-14 August, 27-29 October. Special thanks to the following inter-county players, in conjunction with the GDA's, PJ Scully, Kevin Bergin, Colm Stapleton and Mark Kavanagh.

### **AREA 3: COACH EDUCATION**

#### **Hurling**

6 hurling foundation courses completed with a number of these using the online method. Award 1 courses are currently being arranged in two clubs and there will be a county Award One course in January. Any club that wishes to run a Foundation or Award One course should contact Ciaran or Andrew. Our series of successful workshops continued with Donal O'Grady (Possession Based Hurling) and Paddy Stapleton (Raising the Tempo through First Touch) with huge numbers attending on both days (including coaches from Derry, Antrim and Roscommon). A number of clubs have also received Coach Mentoring visits from Ciaran and Andrew

who have put together a very good Club Development Program and this service is available to all clubs. Most coach education work for clubs is done early in the new year when clubs have mentors for the coming season appointed. Our second level schools currently receive a specially tailored Coach Education Course.

#### **Football**

An Award One Football course was held in Graiguecullen GAA Club in March last. It was extremely successful and it's something we hope clubs will aspire too in the coming year. There's an Award One Youth Football course taking place in Heywood CS at present and we would like to thank everyone who has taken part. Laois GAA also carried out Online Foundation Coaching Courses in O'Dempsey's, Stradbally Parish Gaels, Park Ratheniska, Ballyroan Abbey, Arles-Killeen, Mountmellick, The Rock, Mountrath. The GDA's also carried on TY Coaching Courses in Clonaslee Vocational School, Heywood CS, Knockbeg College and Colaiste Iosagain.

Our series of successful workshops for club coaches continued with Kerry's Jack O'Connor (Modified Games) and Donie Buckley & Jerome Stack (Developing players for game scenarios). While everyone who attended found them very beneficial we are always looking for more people to attend our workshops.

### **AREA 4: DEVELOPMENT SQUADS**

This year again we had great mentors who gave up freely their time and expertise all for the good of our future Laois players.



The good work they do isn't always appreciated and is sometimes commented on. We're always looking for suitable people to help out so if you feel you've something positive to contribute please step forward and we can talk to you.

Unfortunately we had some unforgiveable actions by clubs/players and we're always quick to criticise other codes when players are withdrawn from representing their county because of club commitments. We really have to question our commitment to the future of Laois Gaelic games.

I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank the following mentors for their time and dedication to the future of Laois GAA.

### **Development Squads Hurling**

Mentors

U16 – Tony Doran, Michael Boyhan, Tadgh Doran.

Took part in the Arrabawn Tournament in Tipperary. Lost their group games to Kilkenny and Cork.

U15 - Niall Rigney, Jack Nolan, Enda Lyons, Dwayne Palmer.

Took part in the annual Michael Foley tournament in Wexford where they won their first two group games against Offaly and South Dublin and lost their last two group games to Wexford and Kilkenny.

U14 – Fenton Kavanagh, Andrew Kavanagh, Ciaran Muldowney

Took part in the Tony Forristal tournament where they lost their group games to Kilkenny and Wexford.

### **Development Squads Football**

Mentors

U-17- James Kelly & Donal Brennan.

Took part in the Damien Reid Under-17 Football Competition. Reached the semi-final but lost out to Meath in Dunganny.

\*Note: All Development Squads benefited from the expertise of a Strength and Conditioning program, devised and implemented, by Nigel Pearson. All squads were tested throughout the year by Nigel Pearson and IT Carlow. Thanks to Colm Browne and Michael Dempsey for arranging the IT Carlow testing. All testing scores are stored by the GDA's.

U-16- Paul Lawlor, Billy Delaney, Eddie Kinsella

The side played Westmeath, Sligo and Longford in the Fr Manning Cup, while they also took part in a Leinster Blitz in Wicklow. They also played numerous of challenge games throughout the year. Highly respected coaches Donie Buckley and Jerome Stack also took this group for a Skills Acquisition Workshop. 34 players were on this panel.

U-15- John Sugrue, Eoin Kearns

By agreement this group had the following challenge games, in an inter-county tournament form, against Roscommon, Tipperary and Monaghan. They also played in numerous of Leinster GAA Blitzes, while also defeating Offaly in their final game of the year in O'Moore Park.

U-14- Donal Brennan, Peter O’Leary & Pat Brennan

The side played a number of Leinster blitzes during the year. In a promising year they defeated Cork, Kildare and Meath. The group ran with a panel of 40 throughout the year with a good representation from the clubs.

U-13- James Kelly, Evan O’Carroll, Colm Murphy & Daniel Luttrell

This group had a panel of 40 and played blitzes in Westmeath, Wicklow and Carlow.

## **AREA 5: OTHERS AND NEW INITIATIVES**

Under 15 Football Floodlit Competition: Special thanks to Donal Brennan for his organisation with this competition. Nine clubs are involved in the competition which has seen clubs playing at least four games each. Special thanks to Portarlinton, Crettyard, Annanough and Graiguecullen whom have acted as venues.

Laois Post Primary Senior Football Competition: Once again special thanks to Donal Brennan for his organisation of the competition. Six schools took part with all getting at least two games each. Congratulations to Heywood CS who edged out Colaiste Iosagain in the final.

Cross Border U12 Hurling League. 8 Clubs took part in the Kilkenny U12 Hurling league this year with all clubs acquitting themselves very well. It is hoped to expand this project in 2016 to include extra clubs at U12 and also to send our U10

teams to play a game on the same day as the U12 fixture.

U8 Friday Night Lights saw 9 clubs enter a 4 week U8 Indoor Hurling Program over the winter months.

This year seen Rathdowney Errill enter the Under-13 Development Football League for the first time. The side reached the semi-final, congratulations to them on their progress.

Our GDA’s also coached in secondary schools throughout Laois including Heywood CS, Knockbeg College, Clonaslee Vocational School, Mountrath CS, St Fergal’s Rathdowney.

### **Super Games Centre**

Once again special thanks to James Kelly for his work with the Super Games Centre in 2015. Participants in the pilot programme, which is run in a number of locations countrywide, includes players aged 12-16 who have dropped out of Gaelic Games, or may be on the point of doing so.

### **Laois Player Pathway**

Laois Player Pathway is almost complete and it will give the tools to all our clubs and their coaches. What I now require is the acceptance of this plan from the clubs by acknowledging we need to improve the skill levels and standards. We also need to be able to accept and use the help offered and be open to change. The Pathway includes a structured calendar of events for each code and guides for all club coaches. A merit award system needs to be introduced for clubs to aspire to and be measured on.

## Facilities

Our partnership with Heywood is now a year in existence and has been a huge success. The facilities at our disposal are second to none. Special thanks to everyone who has transported our players to this Centre of Excellence. The big addition to all will be the availability of the Centre of Excellence beside O'Moore Park. We all amazed at the development so far and looking forward to the next two phases and the eventual opening next Summer will be warmly anticipated. This will be a huge benefit to all and thanks again to the county chairman, Gerry Kavanagh, and his committee for their tireless work and foresight for the project. Exciting times are ahead for all Laois Gaels.

## Thanks

Thanks again to all the clubs for your support and we will continue to assist you whatever we can, just ask!.

Thanks to all the referees who officiate at our games and help out at development tournaments.

Special thanks to my wife and kids for their understanding as I spend lots of time juggling different GAA jobs. The very best of luck and enjoyment of our games to one and all for 2016.

Yours in sport,

**Pat O'Sullivan**

Coaching and Games Officer.

# Coiste Peil Report 2015

Full result lists are available in Secretary's report.

## MINOR

I want to thank the entire panel for their efforts in our County jersey during 2015; unfortunately luck deserted us in the match against Kildare losing to a last minute goal and a single point. Kildare went on to win the Leinster. Thanks to Michael Lillis, John Strong and Kieran Kelly. Thanks also to Thomas Moore for stats. This year sees Minor Football changes being introduced from Congress, a runai has circulated all details to club secretaries and clubs should be fully briefed on the changes. I would like to wish Mick, John and Kieran all the best with our seniors for 2016 and am confident that they will do an excellent job.

## UNDER 21

Under 21 grades is a very difficult grade to manage due to the tremendous time constraints on players. College, Senior and Club teams are all pulling from the one group. I want to thank the management team of Derek Conroy, Francis Finn and Padraig Dunne; they brought a different style of football and had some great wins and performances in both the Hastings Cup and Championship losing narrowly to a very strong Dublin team. I am delighted to see Derek and Francis back for 2016 and due to work commitments Padraig has finished up.

## SENIOR

I would like to thank all our Senior County panelists for their dedication and commitment to play football for Laois. The time and commitment required to play Senior Inter County football is unbelievable and almost unsustainable.

Starting on a positive we maintained our Division 2 status by showing some great spirit and skill to close out games and in some instances create a tough fight back to gain points.

Finishing in 2014 fairly confident of the next season we started 15 with some very poor results in the O'Byrne Cup and saw us play Westmeath away in our first league match although with confidence very little support. Losing this game saw the panel having to grind out results from thereafter in the League and showing a great attitude they did and retained our Divisional status.

The Championship started with a great victory in Aughrim and some excellent football. This saw us meet Kildare in Tullamore and for the first half hour saw us play some of the best football we have played in a long time. Unfortunately the second half saw a Kildare comeback and eventually ending in a draw. The replay was one sided by Kildare and saw us lose and have to play in the qualifiers.

The draw was favourable to us drawing Antrim in Portlaoise; we entered the game with confidence.

Having a large lead at half time we allowed Antrim to come back into the game and to everyones dismay saw them eventually turn us over for a less than memorable defeat.

On reflection the manager Tomas O Flaherty resigned his position thus starting a process for the appointment of a new management team.

I want to thank Manager Tomas O Flaherty and his management team of Darren Rooney, Gerry McGill and Jerome Stack.

To Physio, Barry Ryan

To Strength and conditioning coaches  
Leo Tiernan, Alan Malone, Nigel Pearson

To Dr Montague

To Video and analysis team, Liam Delaney, Nial Creery, Alan Hartnett and Richard Dunne

To Nutritionist David Tobin

To Bosco Ramsbottom and his staff

I also want to thank Ollie Byrne Football secretary and Pat O'Sullivan for their commitment and work at every match and training session.

A special thanks to County Secretary Niall Handy and Administrator Tomas Moore whereby no task was too difficult.

I want to thank all players and mentors that helped promote Laois Football in an exemplary manner both on and off the field.

A new Management team have been appointed after a review committee chaired

by Michael Dempsey and including Gerry Kavanaugh and Martin Byrne steered the process. I want to thank them for their diligence and being so generous with their time.

Manager Michael Lillis and selectors John Strong and Kieran Kelly.

I wish them the very best and would urge all Gaels of Laois to get behind our Senior Footballers and drive them on for the coming season. We have very difficult league groupings with 5 Ulster teams baying for advancement. Our first Championship game is against Wicklow and the prize for winning that is not alone advancement but the possibility of getting Dublin into O Moore Park.

## **CLUB**

Congratulations to all clubs that fielded in any grade, a special congratulations to all our championship and league winners.

In reference to the Club Championship there is an annual review being conducted and all clubs can make a contribution by contacting committee chair Liam Delaney at Co Board Office.

I take this opportunity to thank all our referees that officiated at all games and without your help there would be no games. In particular I must congratulate our Inter County referees once again on a successful season.

I want to congratulate all our award winners for Football Players of the year and a special word to Donal Kingston on receiving a well deserved All Star nomination.

On a final note I am looking forward to the development of our centre of excellence and improvement at our County Grounds. These facilities will provide every assistance to our players young and old going forward and will allow them to compete at the highest level.

## **COMMITTEE**

Peter O Neill, Ollie Byrne, Willie Ramsbottom, Pat O Sullivan, Kieran Leavy and J.P. Cahillane.

**Peadar O' Neill**

Chairman

Football Steering Committee.

# Report of Children Officer 2015

## Introduction

This year a lot of clubs took on their responsibility for ensuring that all mentors and officials were Garda Vetted, completed Code of Behaviour and Training in the role they are working in, i.e. coaches been trained in coaching. This is an on-going piece of work for all clubs. Although some clubs still have a very small number of qualified, vetted trained coaches it is essential that this is prioritised as soon as possible. The Code of Behaviour needs to be up dated every three years without exception. These three elements of involvement are enshrined in legislation and therefore are not to be ignored. We are due to be audited on an on-going basis by Tusla and as such the reports completed are likely to be very comprehensive and possibly published.

Each club has been asked to form a committee of three persons to review all breaches of the Code of Behaviour, this committee along with its members are to be trained in the Code of Behaviour and Garda Vetted. This committee can be drawn from all the different codes in the GAA, for example Ladies Football, Rounders etc, this committee is able to work with the various different groups within your catchment area. The Children's officer is not to be a member of this committee.

Each club is requested to provide the county board with details of all officials involved in GAA working with any person under 18. This rule applies to all teams where a minor has any involvement in the team

preparations and or match day. For clubs that recruit mentors from outside you club or county it is essential that you all to ensure that each mentor is vetted, completed Code of Behaviour and has a coaching qualification. It is not acceptable to accept verbal reassurances from the person but to have a true copy of the relevant paperwork is required.

We will be renewing all Garda vetting throughout 2016. This being so does not give permission to clubs to await for this to occur to ensure that all officials are vetted so please quality assure your club now and ensure that your club is not open to been evaluated in a poor manner.

There is a training course being developed for children's officers and will compulsory for all officers to complete prior to taking up the role of children's officer in your club.

The importance of keeping a register of each training session and match day squad signed off by at least two coaches and kept as a record will from part of your child protection practices. This is essential to ensuring that child protection is been managed in a manner that is positive and progressive. The rights of the child to a safe structured environment where they are allowed participate in sport is something that should not be under estimated in any circumstances.

The role of club school link person is also to be training to the same extend as if undertaking any other role within the club. The school is entitled to a copy of your vetting



letter from the GAA and a copy of your Code of Behaviour certificate. The school itself may copy these from the originals provided. In some cases schools may require the link person to undertake vetting as part of their child protection procedures.

The designated person is also to be named by each club prior to the beginning of 2016. As per role this responsibility falls to the Chairperson of the Club. In cases where the Chairperson gives this responsibility to another official I am to be informed without issue. If I am not informed then it is assumed that the Chairperson will accept this responsibility. Training in this role will also be made available in the new year provided there is sufficient requirement within our county otherwise it will occur within Leinster.

We are now open to Audit by TUSLA for compliance with Children's First and as such it is the responsibility of each club to ensure that they are fully compliant. At the beginning of the 2016 season it is essential that all mentors are vetted and have completed a Code of behaviour before any training starts. It is no longer good enough to state that you have applied for vetting and begin fulfilling a role while waiting for vetting to be completed. It is the responsibility of the Children's officer to ensure that each mentor has this done and s/he has recorded this information so that when they are audited it is available without issue.

Going forward I wish all clubs the best for 2016.

# Cumann na mBunscol Laoise

**Allianz** 

Cumann na mBunscol

## AGM

The AGM for the 2014/15 year took place on Thursday, September 4th 2014, in the Laois GAA offices.

Fifty-nine schools took part in Cumann Na mBunscol Laoise competitions throughout the year with forty-three schools present at the AGM.

## Leagues

We arranged football leagues for the months of September and October. Fifty-three teams entered our boys football and forty-four teams entered our girls football.

Hurling and camogie competitions were arranged for April and May with fifty-one teams entering the hurling and thirty-seven entering the camogie.

- Each team received a minimum of four games.
- The finals of all our football, hurling, and camogie divisions were played in O' Moore Park, Portlaoise. We would like to thank Laois GAA for their continued support with this.

## Rounders

Our Rounders blitzes continue to grow from strength to strength with an incredible fifty teams from over twenty schools taking part

last May and June. We must thank Michael Dowling (The Heath NS) for his continued dedication and commitment to same.

## Table Quiz

Our annual Table Quiz again took place in Stradbally. We thank Sean Mullaney (former principal of Paddock NS) for his continued role as quizmaster on the night.

## Handball

Our GAA Handball Blitzes were held in Cullohill Handball Hall on Wednesday 21st January. The number of schools competing doubled in 2015.

Successful players were selected to represent Laois at Provincial Level in Wexford.

## INTO Mini-7s Skills Days

We organised INTO Skills Days for Football and Hurling/Camogie last April. The football days were split over two days in Stradbally with our hurling/camogie day in Clonad.

In total, over 200 boys and girls attended the days and many young players were selected for half-time representative games as well as seven pupils who were selected to represent Laois during All-Ireland hurling/football semi-finals and finals in Croke Park.

## Representative Games

We sent representative teams to Carlow (Hurling- Lift & Strike), Kilkenny (Football) and we initiated an inter-county match in Boys and Girls Rounders in Wexford. (We

will host Wexford in a return fixture next June.)

We also intend to organise and host an inter-county camogie Blitz next May/June.

### **3rd / 4th Class Blitzes**

Our 3rd and 4th class blitzes have quickly become a permanent and increasingly popular fixture on our calendar. Blitzes will again be arranged with the Laois GDAs in the Spring.

### **2015/16**

The AGM for the current year took place on September 3rd in the Laois GAA Offices.

A new school has come on board with Ardough NS bringing our total to a new high of 60.

We have recently concluded our Football Leagues with a record number of teams entering both boys and girls divisions.

**Shane Ó Meachair,**  
Runaí Cumann na mBunscol Laoise

# Laois Handball Year 2015

This year has proven to be the most successful year in the history of Laois Handball. The year began with Cullohill H.C. being named Leinster Handball Club of the year for 2015 and success on the courts soon followed with numerous provincial, All-Ireland and World Titles being captured by Laois handballers.

## WORLD HANDBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Over 1000 handballers from twenty countries travelled to Canada to compete in the 2015 World Handball Championships that took place from between 11th to 21st August in Alberta, Calgary. Laois had three representatives who each entered these championships with realistic ambitions of capturing World Titles.

Michael Donovan and Tómas Lennon impressively claimed the Men's C World Handball Championships Doubles Final against the partnership of Noel Holohan (Wexford) and Dan Breen (Kilkenny) on a 21-6 21-9 scoreline.

Paddy Donovan was extremely unlucky not to claim at least one gold medal at these championships having progressed to two World Doubles Finals with playing partner Tómas Donegan of Limerick. In the Men's 45+ Final, the Irish pairing lost out to American opponent's John Stoffel and Michael Wells 21-19 21-15. Tómas picked up a very bad leg injury in the Men's 45+ final which resulted in them having to concede their Men's B Doubles Final to Michael Morgan and Vincent Maling (USA).

## 40X20 HANDBALL SEASON

### All-Ireland 40x20 Club Final

Monavea claimed the Leinster Junior B Club Team Title in December with victory over Leixlip. In the All-Ireland they were defeated by Broadford of Limerick 105-61 having beaten St. Gall's (Antrim) 86-29. The team comprised of Pauric Buggy, Michael Donovan, Joe Brennan and Eamon Brennan.

### Kathleen Burke Cup Finals

On Sunday, 25th January the Kathleen Burke Cup Finals were played in front of a large attendance in Monavea. This is the most prestigious singles competition in Laois handball and the quality of handball served up on the day was reflective of the ever rising standards within the county.

#### *Results:*

Division 3 Final: Eamon Brennan defeated Frank Nolan 21-17 21-17

Division 2 Final: Joe Brennan defeated Peter Brennan 21-12 21-18

Division 1 Final: Pauric Buggy defeated Peter Whelan 21-17 21-14

### Martin Mealy Cup Finals

The Martin Mealy Cup Finals were played on the May Bank Holiday Monday. This is the biggest doubles competition in Laois handball.

### *Results:*

Division Three Final: Brian Brennan & Ivan Neale defeated PJ Brennan & John Kealy 21-3 21-9

Division Two Final: Wesley Neale & Eamon Brennan defeated Larry & Kevin Brennan 21-9 21-19.

Division One Final: Andrew Dowling & Tómas Lennon defeated Michael Donovan & Peter Whelan 21-13 21-3

### **Leinster Juvenile 40x20 Handball Finals 2015**

It was a busy end to February for Laois juvenile handballers with fifteen of our players reaching Leinster finals in nine grades. Laois claimed two Leinster titles on the day with Avril Deegan & Emily McGuigan winning the Girls U17 Doubles and Aoife Brophy & Eimear Fitzpatrick claiming the Girls U13 Doubles title. Runner-up medals went to Josh & Jonah Kelly (BU12D), Podge Delaney (BU16S), Eoghan Doheny & Pdraic Dunne (BU16D), Lauren McGuigan (GU13S), Maeve Bergin & Maeve McNeill (GU15D), Eimear Dunphy & Louise Walsh (GU16D) and Rebecca Walsh (GU17S).

### **Leinster Adult 40x20 Handball Finals 2015**

The Leinster 40x20 Handball Championship season ended with a number of Laois handballers challenging for provincial honours.

Niamh Dunne powered to a Ladies Junior B title with an impressive victory over Ashling Maher of Kilkenny with a 21-16 21-13.

In the Men's Junior B championships, Laois were to complete a clean sweep of

the titles on offer thanks to the exploits of Michael Donovan and Pauric Buggy. Michael Donovan won the Men's Junior B Singles title with a 21-17 21-11 victory over Diarmuid Burke of Kilkenny. In the Junior B Doubles final Michael & Pauric defeated Kilkenny's Anthony Martin and Diarmuid Burke 21-10 9-21 21-14.

In the Men's Golden Masters B Final, Mick Armstrong (Wexford) defeated Joe Brennan 21-14 21-17.

In the Men's Golden Masters A Final, Paddy Donovan beat Pdraig Maguire (Kildare) 21-7 21-11.

### **All-Ireland Adult 40x20 Finals 2015**

Laois were represented in four 40x20 All-Ireland Championships Finals with two successes.

Ladies Junior B Final: Niamh Dunne defeated Linda Connolly (Roscommon) 21-16 21-11

Men's Junior B Final: Michael Donovan lost to Daniel Relihan (Cork) 18-21 6-21

All-Ireland Junior B Doubles 40x20 Final: Pauric Buggy & Michael Donovan lost to Daniel Relihan and Aidan Kerins (Cork) 21-16 17-21 21-10.

Men's Golden Masters Final: Paddy Donovan defeated Joe Dowling (Mayo) 18-21 21-14 21-12

### **Golden Gloves**

Pauric Buggy (Monavea) captured the Men's C Golden Gloves title with victory over Carlow's Aaron Geoghegan 20-21 21-10 11-0 while Pdraig Delaney lost out in the Boys U15 Final to Anton Fox of Tyrone 21-2 21-8.

## ONE-WALL HANDBALL SEASON

Laois Juvenile Handball One-Wall Championships 2015

### *Results:*

Girls U13: Lauren McGuigan (Cullohill) defeated Lucy O'Connor (Cullohill)  
Plate Final: Emma Delaney (Cullohill) defeated Sorcha Brennan (Ballacolla)

Girls U17: Molly O'Connor (Cullohill) defeated Emily McGuigan (Cullohill)  
Plate Final: Maeve Bergin (Cullohill) defeated Eimear Dunphy (Cullohill)

Boys U11: Jonah Kelly (Monavea) defeated Luke Dunphy (Cullohill)  
Plate Final: Dylan Foyle (Cullohill) defeated Jack Dunphy (Cullohill)

Boys U13: Conor Delaney (Cullohill) defeated Ben Dunphy (Cullohill)  
Plate Final: Tiernach Doheny (Cullohill) defeated Josh Kelly (Monavea)

Boys U17: Padraig Delaney (Cullohill) defeated Eoin Doheny (Cullohill)  
Plate Final: Stephen Halley (Ballacolla) defeated Philip Henneberry (Ballacolla)

## 2015 Leinster Juvenile One-Wall Championships

Laois had the honour of hosting this year's Leinster Juvenile Wall Ball Championships and the county captured an impressive haul of four winners and seven runner-up medals. This was a fantastic achievement by Laois and demonstrates once again the ever growing strength of the game within the county.

Conor Delaney played fantastic handball to defeat Joe Cowhig of Kilkenny in the BU13S. Laois won the BU12D title when Dylan Foyle and Dan Kirby defeated Kilkenny's Padraig Lennon and Sean

O'Keeffe. The BU13D title soon followed when Tiernach Doheny and Ben Dunphy proved too strong for Thomas Nolan and Ciaran Heussaf of Dublin. To cap off a fine day in the Boys competition Eoghan Doheny and Padraic Dunne were victorious in the BU16D with a win over Conor Hoban and Conor Condon of Kilkenny.

Hard luck to losing finalists Evan Hawkes, Luke Dunphy, Lauren McGuigan, Molly O'Connor, Emma Delaney & Lucy O'Connor, Maeve McNeill & Maebh Bergin, and Emily McGuigan & Eimear Dunphy.

## Clough Ballacolla One-Wall Tournament

The newly formed Clough Ballacolla Handball Club held their inaugural one-wall club tournament this year. The results were as follows.

Boy's U14 Final:  
Evan Hawkes defeated Padraig Brennan

Boy's U16 Final:  
Diarmuid Conway defeated Cathal Dunne

Men's Challenger Final:  
Jimmy Heneberry defeated Ollie Byrne

Men's Open Final:  
Kevin Brennan defeated Seamus Brennan

## Leinster Adult One-Wall Championships

Clough Ballacolla played host to this year's Leinster Wall-Ball Championships and once again our players performed admirably taking three Leinster titles in the process.

Kevin Brennan (Clough-Ballacolla) & Michael Donovan (Monavea) claimed the Men's Leinster Doubles One-Wall Championship with an impressive victory

over Westmeath's Darren McCarthy & Jack McCarthy.

In an all Laois Men's C Singles Final, Pauric Buggy (Monavea) defeated Kevin Brennan (Clough-Ballacolla) 22-6.

Golden Masters Final, Paddy Donovan (Monavea) defeated Martin Lalor of Kilkenny 21-4.

### **Irish One-Wall Nationals**

In the Golden Masters, Paddy Donovan (Monavea) recorded hugely impressive victories over Oisín Quinn (Sligo) 31-4 and Sean McNally (Down) 28-13 to progress to the final where he faced Robbie McCarthy Snr. (Westmeath). Robbie McCarthy Snr. won a very competitive affair 17-12.

### **Laois One-Wall League and Mick Dunne Cup**

The Laois One-Wall league that has been running over the last few months and the final will be a repeat of the Men's Junior C Leinster Final with Pauric Buggy and Kevin Brennan both progressing to face one another at the end of the month.

The Laois One-Wall Championships (Mick Dunne Cup) takes place in November with Michael Donovan the defending champion.

## **60X30 HANDBALL SEASON**

### **Leinster 60x30 Championships**

Cullohill handballers Eoghan Doheny & Padraic Dunne won the Boys U15 Doubles 60x30 Leinster title with victories over Kilkenny and Wexford.

Ray Fogarty & Tomás Lennon captured the Men's B 60x30 Title with

victory over Jamie & Gary Balfe of Kildare 21-5 6-21 21-7.

Paddy Donovan gained revenge on Robbie McCarthy Snr. (Westmeath) for his loss at the Irish Nationals One-Wall with an impressive 21-11 21-13 win in the Golden Masters Final.

Ray Fogarty was beaten in the Men's Masters B 60x30 final. In a close game, Ray lost out to John Roche of Wexford 21-16 21-14.

### **All-Ireland 60x30 Finals**

Laois claimed two All-Ireland 60x30 titles with success in both the Ladies and Men's grades.

Niamh Dunne was defeated in three games in the Ladies Junior Final by Roscommon's Lauren O'Riordan 18-21 21-12 13-21.

Paddy Donovan completed a remarkable 40x20 and 60x30 double by winning the Golden Masters 60x30 Final against Joe Dowling of Mayo 21-6 21-7.

In the Ladies Junior Doubles Final, Niamh Dunne (Cullohill) teamed up with Ciara Dowling (Monavea) to claim the title by defeating Ashling Fitzgerald and Edel O'Grady of Clare 21-3 21-11.

In the Boys U15 Final, Eoghan Doheny & Padraic Dunne were defeated by a strong Tipperary pairing in Daire Madden & Conor Burke 15-12 15-8.

The Men's Junior B Final, saw Ray Fogarty & Tomás Lennon going down 21-1 21-16 to Shane Murphy & Ben Walsh (Limerick).



# Irish Cultural Committee Report

In 2015 the Committee ran Scor Sinsir, Scor na nOg and Scor na bPaiste in Laois. While we had a reasonable response to the Scor na nOg and Scor na bPaiste Competitions, the response to Scor Sinsir was disappointing. This led us to holding an information night recently which was well attended and very positive ideas were generated. The handbook "An Turas Teanga" which promotes the Irish Language was distributed on the night. On behalf of Laois County Board I would like to thank all involved. Looking forward to 2016 we hope to run some extra events commemorating 1916 and we would encourage all clubs to get involved. We hope that now we are rebuilding all aspects of Scor throughout Laois, we will have increased competitors for our competitions.

I would like to thank the members of Laois Comhaltas who attended our information night and contributed greatly to the lively discussion, and we look forward to closer links for the promotion of all aspects of Scor at every level. We appreciated the attendance of Mr. Liam O'Neill and Mr. Gerry Kavanagh at the meeting. I would also like to thank Laois County Board for their continued support. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Irish Cultural Committee:-

Michael Martin, John Paul Nevin, Paddy Connolly, Pat Sullivan, Christine Kelly, Margaret Culliton, Monica Middleton, Julia Stapleton, Donal Deegan.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go leir

**Seosamh Mac Conbhuí**

## Ainmniúcháin (Nominations)

**Cathaoirleach (Chairperson):**

Gerry Kavanagh (Outgoing), Kieran Leavy.

**Leas Cathaoirleach (Vice Chairperson):**

Peter O'Neill (Outgoing).

**Cisteoir (Treasurer):**

Martin Byrne (Outgoing).

**Leas Cisteoir (Asst. Treasurer):**

Kieran Leavy (Outgoing), Brian Allen.

**Ard Comhairle (Central Council Delegate):**

Brian Allen (Outgoing), Kieran Leavy.

**Comhairle Laighean (Leinster Council Delegate) (2):**

Tom Jones (Outgoing), Paschal McEvoy (Outgoing), Brian Allen.

**Oifigeach Forbartha (Development Officer):**

PJ Kelly (Outgoing)

**Oifigeach Oiliúna (Coaching Officer):**

Pat O'Sullivan (Outgoing)

**Oifigeach Cultir agus Gaeilge (Cultural and Irish Officer):**

Jody Conway (Outgoing)

**Oifigeach Caidrimh Poiblí (P.R.O.):**

Tom Clear (Outgoing)

**Congress Delegates (5):** (*Cathaoirleach agus Runaí automatically attend*);

Martin Byrne, Tom Jones, PJ Kelly, Paschal McEvoy, Peter O'Neill

**Leinster Convention Delegates (5):**

Brian Allen, Martin Byrne, Jody Conway, Gerry Kavanagh, PJ Kelly, Kieran Leavy, Pat O'Sullivan.

## Na Rúin (Motions)

1. As outlined in Rule 6.4, T.O 2015, in order to define by what means a person becoming a member of the Association shall be **Attached to his / her First Club**, the following be included in Laois Byelaws - “A person seeking to become a member of the Association shall be restricted to joining a Club in the Catchment area of his permanent residence”; (CLG Laoise)
2. As outlined in Rule 6.19, T.O. 2015, in order to set down the **Regrading of Clubs and Players**, the following be included in Laois Byelaws – “All Clubs to name and list a minimum of 17 players for each grade of Championship excluding the Club’s lowest grade before 28 February each year. The names for each grade of championship must comply with Riail 6.19 and correspond in most instances to their previous year’s championship status, except where a team is relegated or promoted or where a Club use in excess of 17 players in a championship grade. In order for players to be officially regraded to a lower level, they must be named at that level. Each Clubs list is subject to examination by the CCC, who may at their discretion make additions or amendments to the names listed.” (CLG Laoise)
3. Riail 6.18, T.O. 2015 be amended, with the deletion of Point 1 as highlighted below in bold and underlined:

### **Rule 6.18 - Club Championship and League Status of Players**

A Player is graded by his Championship Status e.g. if a Player plays in a Senior Championship game he is graded Senior for the remainder of that Championship Year, and may not be subsequently regraded during that Championship Year. Participation in the Provincial and/or All-Ireland Club Championships, other than as allowed in Rule 6.7 Exception (3), grades a Player by the relevant status of that Championship. Player shall not thereafter play in a current year’s Competition (Championship, Relegation Play-Off, League etc.) of a lower grade than that of his current Championship status.

A Player shall not lose his current Championship status by:

**(1) Participating in a game or Competition the purpose of which is to determine Qualification/Relegation for the following year’s Championship.**

**or**

(2) Participation as a Temporary Substitute, as provided for in Rule 1.5 (b) Rules of Control, in a Championship Match of a higher grade than his current Championship status.

### **Penalties:**

#### **Player**

-Twelve weeks Suspension.

#### **Team**

- On a proven Objection -- Award of Game to Opposing Team.

On an Inquiry by the Committee-in-Charge- Forfeiture of Game without Award of Game to Opposing Team, or Fine, depending on the circumstances. (Naomh Laisrian Mainistir Laoise)

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