

C.L.G. Laoise



Comhdháil Bhliantúil

**The Midlands Park Hotel
Port Laoise**

**Monday, 3rd December, 2018
7.30 p.m.**

Laois

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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 2017 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 Midlands Park Hotel on Monday 4th December 2017

Cathaoirleach Gearóid O'Caomhanaigh presided at County Convention in Midlands Park Hotel on 04/12/17. The following Executive Members were also in attendance Sean O'Muireartaigh, Mairtín O'Broin, Ciarán O Consléibhe, Briain O hAlúinn, Tomas Mac Seoin, Pascal Mac Aodh Bhuí, Tomas O 'Cléirigh, PS O'Ceallaigh, Padraig O Suilleabháin, Seosamh O'Conbhuí, Peadar O Néil agus Niall Mac Laitimh (Runáí).

The following Clubs were represented as follows:

R. O'Cinnéide, D. O'Doinn & R. Mac Comhaill, Mainistir Laoise; L. O'Colmáin, C. Ní Cholmáin & C. Mac an Gahaill, Anach; SS. O'Conbhuí, M.A. Ní Seoirse & P. Mac Aogáin, Ard Lios Cilchrúis; L. O'Braonáin, PS O'Cinnéide & B. Mac Dónaill, Ard Lios Cilín; L. O'Seachnasaigh, A. Mac Giolla Padraig & M. Ní Ghiolla Padraig, Baile na Coille; B. O'Conghaile & M. Ní Fhiobhuí, Baile Fionn; S. Hovendon, W. Hovendon & C. O'Loinín, Baile Laigheanáin; P. O'Dúlaoich, S. O'Deá & M. Ní Fhaoláin, Baile Píocas; S. O'Doinn & M. O'Scoláí, Mainistir Baile Atha Róine; S. Dáibhis, E. de Búrca & A. O'Braonáin, Teach an Bhearra; C. O'Siacháin, E. O'Faoláin & S. O'Caolláí, Buiríos Mór Osraí; S. O'Ceallaigh, S. Mac an Ghaill & P. O'Cuileannáin, Buiríos Mór Osraí Coill Choitín; U. Ní Dhonnchaidh, T. Deoráin & M. Coiléir, Camros; S.

O'Dubhsláinne, M. Ní Dhubhsláinne & B. Mac Pheadair, Baile an Chaisleáin; C. Ní Chonraoi, P. O'Cathail & S. O'Conraoi, Cluain Fhada; D. Ní Chonraoi, S. O'Gormáin & S. O'Floinn, Cluain na Slí Naomh Manmáin; C. O'Meachair, S. O'Meachair & M. O'Bruadau, Cloch Baile Cholla; E. O'Faoláin, P. O'Duinn & L. De Stacphúil, Coillte; M. O'hOgáin, B. O'Nualláin & M. O'Beacháin, Coill na Cúirte; J. O'Cianaigh & S. De Búrca, Crochta Ard; A. Ní Leathlobhair, M. O'Leathlobhair & M. O'Riain, Ioma; P. O'Cearbhúill, M. de Cléir & P. O'Deá, Eiréil; M. Ní Fhaoláin, M. O'Leathlobhair & M. Boltún, Graig Chuillinn; T. O'Fiach, S. Mac Aodh Bhui & M. O'Tarpaigh, Cill Chabháin; D. Beirgin, S. Beirgin & J. O'Muineacháin, Coill Choitín; L. O'Faoláin, G. Diring & M. O'Gealagáin, Gleann Uisean; T. O'Caoinnealbháin, M. O'Dubhsláinne & N. O'Dubhsláinne, Coill; T. O'Mionacháin & A. Challoner, Móinteach Mílic; S. O'Caomhanaigh, P. O'Laoire & L. O'Fionnalaigh, Na Diomasaigh; B. O'Rannacháin, D. O'Cinnéide & S. O'Ceallaigh, Páirc Raithín Uisce; C. Mac Cartaigh, N. O'Sliebhín & A. Mhic Chartaigh, Cúil an tSudaire; SP O'Cathaláin, S. O'hAinfaidh & P. Laoghóg, Portlaoise; P. O'Faoláin, S. O'Caomhanaigh & S. O'Reachtáir, Rath Domhnaigh; M. Puiriséil, R. O'Ceallaigh & M. Mac Giolla Phadraig, Rath Domhnaigh Eiréil; P. O'Meachair, S. O'Leathlobhair & S. O'Dúlaoich, Ross Fhionnghlaise; T.

O’Cearúill, T. O’Leacha & N. Mac Giolla Phóil, Seanchua; G. Caimpion, S. O’Braoin & S. O’hIfeárnáin, Sliabh Bladhma; M. Mac Gearailt, S. Pléimeann & M. O’Loinín, Sliabh Margy; C. Mac Aodh Bhuí, P. O’Braonáin & D. O’Duibhir, Spinc; D. Sionóid, Naomh Fiontáin; M. Ní Mhideltáin & S. O’Cearbhúill, Maighean Rátha; M. O’Mórdha, B. O’Doinn & A. Mhic Gabhann, Naomh Seosamh; L. O’Dubhsláinne, S. O’Dubhsláinne & E. O’Dubhsláinne, Sráidbhaile; S. Caimpion, T. Breatnach & D. O’Fionnagáin, Na Clairsigh; S. O’Dúllaing, L. O’hAonasa & P. O’Céin, An Fraoch; P. Harding, S. O’Cronáin & S. O’Murchú, An Charraig; S. O’Daltúin, L. O’Rannacháin & M. O’Muilleoir, Tigh Mochua; S. Ní Dhubhuí, G. Ní Chiarubháin agus S. Mac Peaircín, Tromaire.

Donall O’Gormáin - Referee Administrator; Seamus Laibheartaigh – Childrens Officer; Seosamh O’Braonáin – Handball; Niamh Caimpion, Cumann na mBunscol;

Leithscéil – Sean O’Rannacháin (Uachtaráin)

1. **Standing Orders** were adopted on the proposition of Seán O’Dubhsláinne, seconded by Mairtín O’Gealagáin.
2. **Minutes of 2016 Convention** was adopted on the proposition of Liam O’Rannacháin, seconded by Eamann O’Dubhsláinne.

3. **Secretary’s Report** was adopted on the proposition of Liam de Stacaphúil, seconded by Micheál O’Riain.

- Laois Senior Football Team performance – SS O’Conbhuí complimented detail in Secretary’s Report and concurred with his view that our team lacked “pride and passion” in some of their performances in 2017;
- Referee Recruitment – An Cathaoirleach reiterated Secretary’s appeal for a recruitment drive to source suitable personnel for Refereeing our games;
- Strategic Review – An Cathaoirleach informed delegates that the launch of this Review was scheduled for this venue on Monday 8 January, stating that he was looking forward to the review document and hoped it would be beneficial to both our clubs and county in future of our long term planning. He thanked Review Chairperson Nickey Brennan and his committee for the huge efforts and consultation process they put into this review.

4. **Treasurer’s Report** showing an operating surplus of €114,096 in County Committee A/c and €21,078 in O’Moore Park A/c was adopted on the proposition of SP O’Cathaláin, seconded by Seán O’Ceallaigh.

- An Cisteoir gave a detailed explanation of our financial accounts,

explaining both Income and Expenditure Accounts and Schedules to accounts. He thanked his fellow Executive members for their support with our finances, our main sponsors and fundraising sponsors, our O'Moore Park stewards and gate staff. He stated that whilst it was great to record a surplus of over €135k, he briefed Convention delegates outlining that loan repayments will increase from almost €60k to over €110k when the new Laois Gaa Training Centre is completed;

- Club Laois – L. O'Rannacháin expressed disappointment with the uptake on "Club Laois" membership;
- Tier 2 Team Expenses – S. O'Caomhanaigh queried as to what effect our participation in this new competition would have on our Team Expenses in the future. An Cisteoir stated none, other than they would be processed by Central Council rather than Leinster Council;
- County Board Income – M. O'Leathlobhair expressed his concern that County income was becoming too excessive at expense of Club in relation to County Board Draw and Gate Receipts and that consideration be given to playing Senior Championship games at venues outside O'Moore Park. An Cisteoir explained firstly that Clubs were members of County Committee, the proportionate of profit income

County Board Draw income to Club and County and the difference in revenue generated in playing games in Club grounds and O'Moore Park. S. O'Daltúin and S. O'Dubhsláinne also contributed to this discussion. An Cisteoir informed Emo delegate, that this discussion had previously taken place at January County Committee meeting, where it had been overwhelmingly decided to play all Senior Championship games in O'Moore Park where possible;

- Sports Gear Allowance – S. O'Ceallaigh queried the increase in Sports Gear costs for 2017. An Cisteoir briefed meeting that was as a result of new GPA agreement negotiated with Croke Park, which included increase in mileage allowance of 15 cent, an additional nutritional allowance of €20 per week and an increase in sports gear allowance. He explained that whilst Croke Park compensated counties for the increase in mileage and nutritional allowance, the cost of the sports gear increase was bore by the County;
- Training Centre Phased Development – S. O'Ceallaigh queried the various phased development and the cost implications involved. An Cisteoir outlined the three phased developments and that both phase 2 and 3 were dependent on Sports Capital grant allocation and sale of present Office respectively;

- Training Centre Costs—S. O’Conraoi queried what he believed excessive costs on repair to Training Centre versus the same costs in O’Moore Park. An Cisteoir explained that the heading was probably misleading and that the costs for training centre was for three pitches in comparison to one in O’moore Park;

5. **Tellers** – the following were appointed and approved by Convention – Seán de Brúin, Damian de Brúin, Tadhg Deoráin, Micheál O’Cearbhúill, Seamas O’Caomhanaigh, Breandáin McDónaill, Aine Mhic Gabhann agus Pól O’Deargáin.

6. **Election of Officers:** The following of-ficers were elected –

- Cathaoirleach (Chairman): Peadar O’Néil was deemed elected after de-feating Ciaran Conléibhe on a vote.
- Leas Chathaoirleach (Vice Chairman): Tomas O’Cléirigh was elected unopposed.
- Cisteoir (Treasurer): Mairtín O’Broin was elected unopposed.
- Leas Cisteoir (Asst. Treasurer): Ciarán Consléibhe was elected un-opposed.
- Ard Comhairle (Central Council) Delegate: Gearóid O’Caomhanaigh

was deemed elected after defeating Briain O’hAlluinn on a vote.

- Comhairle Laighean (Leinster Council) Delegates (2): Tomas Mac Seoin agus Paschal Mac Aodh Bhuí were elected unopposed.
- Oifigeach Forbartha (Development): P.S. O’Ceallaigh was elected unop-posed.
- Oifigeach Oiliuma (Coaching): Fergal O’Beirn was deemed elected after defeating Seosamh O’Conbhuí on a vote.
- Oifigeach Cultir agus Gaeilge (Cultural and Irish): Moncha Ní Dhubhsláinne was elected unop-posed.
- Oifigeach Caidrimh Poibli (P.R.O.): Pdraig O’Suilleabháin was deemed elected after defeating Cainneach Mac Cartaigh on a vote.
- Congress Delegates (5): Peadar O’Néil, Niall Mac Laitimh (both automatically elected); Mairtín O’Broin, Gearóid O’Caomhanaigh agus PS O’Ceallaigh were elected after vote.
- Leinster Convention Delegates (5): Mairtín O’Broin, Tomas O’Cléirigh, Gearóid O’Caomhanaigh, Briain O’hAlúinn, agus Moncha Ní Dhubhsláinne were elected after vote.

All elected candidates returned thanks.

7. Incoming Chairperson's Address – P. O'Neil

P. O'Neil addressed Convention, thanking Clubs for their support, stating that he was honoured and privileged to be elected the position of Cathaoirleach and extended his commiseration to fellow candidate Kieran Leavy. He stated his disappointment in losing the Vice Chairperson contest last year and acknowledged the support of a number of people whom encouraged him to keep involved and challenge again. He thanked his Club Portlaoise for their support and outgoing Chairpersons whom he had served under Gerry Kavanagh, Brian Allen and Dick Miller. He was awaiting the reports of Liam Delaney Fixture Review Committee and looking forward to the launch of Nickey Brennan's Strategic Review in the coming weeks, which will provide pathways for the growth of our Clubs through new structures, whilst also presenting many challenges and opportunities. He briefed delegates on his role as Laois Partnership Director and opportunities for Club's here, whilst also outlining the various challenges our county faced with social inclusion. He acknowledged our Inter County squads being at such a low ebb at present and looked forward in working with our Senior Managers John Sugrue and Eamonn Kelly in achieving goals with realistic prospects of success in Allianz League Division 4 and Tier 2 Hurling respectively. He acknowledged the development of

our Training Centres and the use of Heywood CS facilities in developing our young players in both football and hurling. He concluded by asking for Club's cooperation and patience, stating that he wasn't infallible, but that he would work his hardest for the betterment of our Clubs and County.

8. Outgoing Chairperson's Address – G. O'Caomhanaigh

An Cathaoirleach Gearoid O Caomhanaigh addressed Convention, thanking and acknowledging the huge commitment of Club Officers in the running of their Clubs. He informed Clubs that it has been a huge honour for him to serve the Clubs of Laois as their Chairperson and that he was very grateful for that opportunity. He announced a new sponsorship deal for the County that had been launched earlier this evening, with the supply of two kit vans for hurling and football, on a two year deal with Downey's Auto Stop, whom he sincerely thanked for their generous sponsorship. He thanked his fellow Officers N. Mac Laitimh and M. O'Broin for their daily help and advice, his Executive Members during his tenure, particularly his vice Chairpersons P. O'Neil and S. O'Muireartaigh, Mattie Walsh MW Hire and our other sponsors Laois Shopping Centre, People First Credit Union, Midlands Park Hotel, Magni Group, Mochua Print and Design, Glanbia, Brady Signs

and Colm McEvoy for their support, our Referees and Coaching and Games Staff and Office Administrator Tomas Moore and finally his wife Marie for her support during his chairmanship of the association.

9. NA RÚIN

1. Laois GAA Byelaw No. 8 – Grading be amended as follows –

All Clubs, competing in more than one grade in each code, shall name and list a minimum of 15 players for each grade of League excluding the Club's lowest grade before 28 February each year and list a minimum of an additional 2 players for each grade of Championship before 14 May each year. The names for each grade of league and championship must 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. Only in exceptional circumstances, which must be submitted in detail, may a Club's Championship panel vary from that approved by County Committee for League. All players subject to the aforementioned exceptions and wishing to play at a lower grade, must be named at that grade, in order for them to be officially regraded to play at that lower grade. Each Clubs list is subject to examination by the CCC, who may at their discretion make additions

or amendments to the names listed. Grading is subject Riail 6.14 and 6.20, T.O. 2017. (CLG Laoise).

Motion was carried on a show of hands, after being proposed by Liam Dubhsláinne and seconded by Micheal Muilleoir.

2. Rules 3.19 & 6.25, T.O. 2017 be amended as follows (Amendment in bold italic) -

Riail 3.19 Powers

A County Committee shall be the governing and controlling body of all the affairs of the Association within the County, excepting those functions reserved to the Provincial Council and Central Council under this Official Guide. The following shall be the powers of the County Committee:

(i) To allow players of Junior and Intermediate Clubs, including players of Clubs that are unable to field Junior and/or Intermediate Teams, to play for Divisional or Group Senior Teams.

(ii) To allow players of Junior Clubs, and the players of Intermediate Clubs that are unable to field in that grade, to play for Group Intermediate Teams.

(iii) To allow a maximum of three players of a Junior or Intermediate Club to play with a Senior Club for Divisional or Group Senior Team

Arrangements shall be subject to annual review by the County Committee.

Players by so playing in these Divisional or Group teams shall not lose their Championship status.

Riail 6.25 Organisation (Provincial and All-Ireland)

Provincial and All-Ireland Club Championship shall be organised in Senior, Intermediate and Junior Grades.

The following Eligibility Rules shall apply:

(i) A Divisional or Group Team winning a County Championship shall not participate, *exception being a Divisional or Group Senior Team compliant with Rule 3.19 (m) (iii) TO 2017.*

(ii) The Intermediate and Junior Grades shall be confined to Clubs whose top grade is respectively Intermediate or Junior save in circumstances where a Club is nominated by a County Committee, recommended by the Competitions Control Committee of Provincial Council, and prior approval is given by the Central Competitions Control Committee for that Club to compete in the Provincial and All Ireland Club Championships in a lower grade than its grade status within its County.

If a County Championship winning team is ineligible as a result of (i) or (ii) above or alternatively ineligible by reason of Debarment, Suspension or

as a result of any Disciplinary Action whatsoever, the County Committee concerned shall nominate an eligible Club of the appropriate Championship status to represent it.

Similarly, in the event of a County Championship not being completed but only one remaining team in that championship is eligible to participate in the Provincial Championship, the County Committee shall nominate that Club to represent it.

Nominations in any other circumstances are not allowed.

Except as provided above, in the event of a County or Provincial Championship not being completed, the respective Provincial or All Ireland Championship shall continue without a representative of the County or Province concerned. The County, Provincial and All-Ireland Stages of the respective Club Senior, Intermediate and Junior Football and Hurling Championships constitute the one Competition.

(b) Where a player's Own Club and College Club win their respective County Championships in the same grade, the player shall be eligible to play only with his Own Club in the Provincial and All-Ireland Championship in that grade.

If a Player's Own Club and College Club win County Championships in two different grades, the player shall

be eligible to play with both Clubs in the Provincial and All-Ireland Championships in their respective grades. (Na Coille CLG)

Motion was lost on a show of hands, after being proposed by Tadhg O’Caoinnealbháin and seconded by Máire Ní Fhaoláin.

3. That the Central Fixtures Analysis Committee (as defined in the Official Guide 2017, Chapter 3, Organisational Structures, National, Central Committees, Rule 3.52) shall become “The Central Fixtures Committee” and that it shall, before the 1st. January each year, prepare and present an overall Master Plan for the entire fixtures programme of every Inter-County and County Club game, Leagues and Championships, to be applied at National, Provincial and County level simultaneously. (Portlaoise CLG).

Motion was lost on a show of hands, after being proposed by Seán hAinfaidh and seconded by Micheál O’Scoláí.

4. That One (1) Players Representative (i.e. a Member who has participated as a player for their Club within the previous 48 weeks) shall be added as a delegate to (i) a Club’s delegation to Annual County Convention, (ii) a County’s delegation to Annual Provincial Convention and (iii) a County’s delegation to Annual Congress and the

following Rules be amended as follows (Amendment in bold italic) –

Rule 3.10 Convention – An Annual County Convention shall be held before 18th December. It shall consist of the Officers and Members of the outgoing Committee (voting rights as on the Committee) and three delegates from each Club which competed in a Junior or higher grade Championship of the current year, one of whom shall be a Players Representative. The Players’ Representative shall have participated as a player for the Club within the previous 48 weeks. A newly elected Officer, unless a member of the outgoing County Committee or a delegate, shall not have the right to vote at any stage of the Convention. In special circumstances, a County Committee may summon a Special Convention. Representation and Notice shall be determined by the County Committee.

Rule 3.12 Delegates - County Convention shall elect or authorise selection and/ or election of:

(a) Delegates to attend Annual Congress, who shall include the Chairperson and County Secretary, when available, and it shall also include a Players Representative. The Players’ Representative shall have participated as a player for the Club within the previous 48 weeks.

(b) Delegates to attend the Provincial Convention, one of whom shall be a

Players' Representative. The Players' Representative shall have participated as a player for the Club within the previous 48 weeks. (CLG Portlaoise).

Motion was lost on a show of hands, after being proposed by Seán hAinfaidh and seconded by Pól Harding.

An Cathaoirleach informed Convention delegates that a number of other Motions were received and were deemed by Coiste Bainisti not to be the remit of Convention and had been referred to Fixture Review Committee and January County Committee Meeting.

10. Any Other Business:

- Seán hAinfaidh, Portlaoise CLG on behalf of his Club congratulated Peter O'Neill on his election stating that he knows the hard work and honesty that he will bring to the role. He also thanked the Clubs of Laois for their support of the Save the Portlaoise Hospital Campaign.
- M. MacGiolla Phadraig, S. O'Caollaí agus M. Boltúin all paid tribute to outgoing Chairperson Gerry Kavanagh for his work during his five years, outlining his fairness to all Clubs and Codes and his role in the acquisition and development of Laois GAA Training Centre, which they stated is a fitting legacy to his tenure.
- Portlaoise Hospital Campaign – An Cathaoirleach appealed for the support of our Clubs and their members in getting behind the campaign to save Portlaoise Hospital and its services.



Votes of Sympathy

Votes of Sympathy were extended to the following families:

- Annanough Fennelly, Delaney and Hennessy Families;
Barrowhouse Whelan, Brennan and Fitzgerald Families;
Ballyfin Culleton and Carroll Families;
Ballylinan Walsh and Delaney Families;
Ballinakill Walsh Family;
Ballypickas O’Gorman, Wallace, Carter, Hosey and Larkin Families;
Ballyroan Abbe McDonald, Larkin and Irwin Families;
Borris-in-Ossory O’Donnell Family;
Camross Hyland, Moore, Tyrell, Carroll, Doran, McCartney, Keenan,
Higgins, Lacumbre, Carroll, Mortimer, Scully, Bennett,
Ryan and Hogan Families;
Castletown Coss and Mullaney Families;
Clonad Maher, Larkin, McCormack and Hennessy Families;
Clonaslee St Manmans . . . Corcoran Families;
Clough Ballacolla Bergin and Quigley Families;
Colt Delaney, Hearn and Fitzpatrick Families;
Courtwood Ryan Family;
Crettyard Delaney, Doyle and Hughes Families;
Emo Mulhall Family;
Errill Delaney and Bergin Families;
Kilcavan O’Brien Family;
Kilcotton O’Connor, Bergin (Kieran) and Bergin (Mick) Families;
Kyle Rigney and Gilmartin Family;
Mountmellick Conroy, O’Loughlin, Challoner, Forde, Hyland, Donogher,
O’Brien, Scully, Maguire and Moloney Families;
O’Dempseys Slevin Family;
Park Ratheniska Kelly, Casey and Cahill Families;
Portarlinton O’Rourke Family;

Portlaoise Brennan Family;
 Rathdowney McCormack and O'Brien Families;
 Rosenallis O'Loughlin, Brophy, Conroy, McEvoy, Bennett, Flanagan and
 O'Brien Families;
 Shanahoe Lahart and Hanhouser Families;
 Slieve Bloom Fogarty Family;
 St. Fintans Mountrath Bennett, Doheny, O'Rourke and Phelan Families;
 St. Josephs. Kealy, Brennan, Leech, Fleming, Brennan, Fleming, Cody and
 Malone Families;
 Stradbally Mulhall Family;
 The Harps Dempsey and Fitzpatrick Families;
 The Heath Hennessy, Conroy, Hackett, Callaghna, Hyland, Jones and
 Fitzpatrick Families;
 The Rock. Flynn Family;
 Timahoe Lalor Family;
 Trumera Bennett Family;

Tuairisc an Runaí 2018

Once again I welcome you all to our annual Laois GAA Convention, whereby we all have the opportunity to analyse and reflect on Laois GAA affairs during the past year.

Briefly my reflections on the year past -

Senior Hurling

As normal, our season commenced in the Walsh Cup and whilst success was achieved against Kildare in our opening game, we exited this competition disappointingly to an experimental Kilkenny side.

With the commencement of the League, our ultimate goal was to maintain our Division 1B status. Our opening games, Limerick away and All Ireland Champions Galway at home, both ended in defeat, albeit with encouraging displays. Our next games offered us our best chance of survival in this Division, Antrim at home and Offaly in Tullamore. Unfortunately disappointing performances in both games resulted in successive defeats and regardless of the result in our final game to Dublin, we faced a relegation play-off against Antrim in Dunloy. After a dismal league to date, expectations of a result up north on St Patrick's weekend were not inspiring, however our team and management defied the odds with a committed and spirited performance, resulting in a narrow victory and thereby ensuring Division 1B status for 2019.

This year was the inaugural running of the Joe McDonagh Cup, a new second tier championship for counties outside the top ten Liam McCarthy teams, which Laois

were designated to as a result of our placing in the 2017 championship. At the time, this provoked much debate among some of our hurling fraternity, who believed we were well capable of being competitive and rightly belonged in the Leinster Senior Hurling Championship. As a firm believer in results don't lie, particularly over a number of years and as a result, I can see the merits of this new competition. It affords us the opportunity of building our young team in an environment that we can be competitive in, with a realistic chance of silverware and if successful, we then get the chance to test ourselves against McCarthy opposition in an All Ireland Hurling preliminary quarter final and more importantly re-enter the Leinster Senior Hurling Championship the following year. The promises made at the advent of the introduction of this new competition, I don't believe were fully fulfilled. Whilst the final as a curtain raiser to the Leinster Senior Hurling Final and the introduction of Champion 15 Awards for Joe McDonagh teams were welcome. However, the entire promotional aspect of this competition on TV was generally very disappointing, whilst promised rewards for the successful team never materialised either. I believe a commitment that the Joe McDonagh winning team would be part of the annual Fenway Hurling Classic in Boston each year would be a just reward



SFC Portlaoise



SHC Camross

and greatly enhance this new competition for both counties and players.

Naturally there were great expectations that we could give this Joe McDonagh Cup a real “lash” and that our sojourn in Tier 2 would only be for the year. Indeed this belief may have been too great within our panel and management team and in my opinion either one or both underestimated some of our opposition, whom we’ve had many tight battles with in recent years. Our opening two games resulted in disappointing defeats to both Westmeath at home and Kerry in Tralee, where our opponents displayed a far greater desire and hunger for success and both were deserving winners at the final whistle. Pressure on, we again faced the daunting journey north to Dunloy and whatever is in that Antrim air, it certainly brings out the best in Laois hurlers. Another tight affair, our lads battled hard to emerge victorious by the narrowest margins and at least keep our qualification hopes alive for another week. Next up Carlow, eventual Joe McDonagh champions, in O’Moore Park, where somehow we still remained in the game at half time. However a far fitter and more determined Carlow team were deserving winners in the end. Our final game was Meath in Navan, result at least required, to try and ensure Joe McDonagh Cup status in 2019, result got, with our hurlers giving their best performance of this campaign. Thankfully our manager’s former team Kerry doing both him and us a favour up north in snatching an unexpected success against Antrim, meaning we avoided the relegation process.

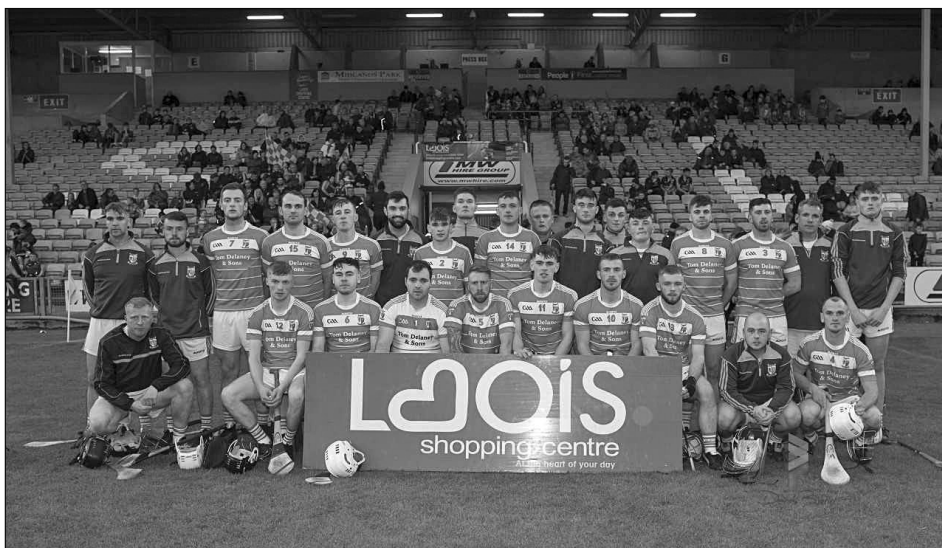
All in all, a very disappointing Joe McDonagh campaign. I believe our pan-

el to be better than the performances we gave, but as previously stated results don’t lie, three successes (2 x Antrim and 1 x Meath) in eleven games. Our outgoing management, after a relatively successful 2017, have come in for some criticism for these performances, but our players must also bear some of this criticism. As a Senior Inter County hurler and the present financial outlay being expended on our senior team, there comes a responsibility to prepare like a Senior Inter County hurler in relation to honesty in your preparation and developing your skills, your strength and conditioning, your fitness, diet and lifestyle. This must be a requisite for all Laois panellists for the coming year. I wish to thank the entire panel their dedication to Laois hurling during the past year. The loss of such experienced regular team players who have retired and not committed over the past two years is a detrimental blow to any panel. In a county of our population we do not have readymade replacements and huge responsibility is placed on young and inexperienced shoulders. In time, these players with the proper commitment and development will represent our county with honour and pride. I believe progress can be made, but it must be remembered that a rebuilding process is in place and stress that patience must be a virtue and that further progress will only happen with an even greater commitment and effort from both our Clubs and players.

I wish to congratulate our Captain Ross King on being the recipient of a McDonagh Champion 15 GAA award, and also acknowledge and congratulate Enda Rowland on his selection and success on the Ireland Senior Hurling / Shinty International against Scotland in Inverness



IFC Courtwood



IHC Slieve Bloom

last October and Mark Kavanagh and Conor Phelan on their selection Ireland U21 Hurling / Shinty International team.

Our thanks to Eamonn Kelly and his backroom team for their dedication to Laois Hurling in 2018, which include Owen Coss (Selectors), Conor Gleeson and David Hogan (Coaching), Dr Sharon McDonald, Alison Holmes (Physiotherapy), Jack Harding, David O'Brien and Brian O'Sullivan (Stats and Analysis), Pat Delaney (Kit), Ann Barry (Liaison) and John Kealy (Servicing Secretary). Eamonn and his management team declined to go forward for another term on conclusion of this year's championship. I also wish to convey a special thanks to Dr Sharon McDonald, who steps down as team doctor for the coming year, and commend her for the tremendous professional service she has given to this group for the past number of years.

In the coming year, Eddie Brennan will take charge and will be assisted by Fran Dowling and Tommy Fitzgerald (Selectors), Niall Corcoran (Coaching), Dave Moriarty (Strength and Conditioning); Alison Holmes (Physiotherapy), Jack Harding, David O'Brien and Brian O'Sullivan (Stats and Analysis), Pat Delaney (Kit), Ann Barry (Liaison) and John Kealy (Servicing Secretary). I wish them the very best of luck and appeal for all your co-operation as they try to restore Laois hurling back to Leinster Senior Hurling championship status.

My thanks to our Eamon Jackman, Niall Rigney and Declan Conroy for their endeavours in the selection process for this management team.

BORD NA MONA WALSH CUP

Round 1: 30th December – Hawkfield COE

Laois 1-16, Kildare 0-9

Round 2: 3rd January – O'Moore Park Kilkenny 6-24, Laois 1-11

ALLIANZ HURLING LEAGUE DIVISION 1B

Round 1: 28th January – Gaelic Grounds Laois 0-18, Limerick 1-25

Round 2: 3rd February – O'Moore Park Laois 0-17, Galway 2-18

Round 3: 17th February – O'Moore Park Laois 0-27, Antrim 2-16

Round 4: 25th February – O'Connor Park Laois 1-16, Offaly 1-21

Round 5: 11th March – Parnell Park Laois 0-17, Dublin 3-23

Relegation Play-off: 18th. March – Dunloy

Laois 1-16, Antrim 0-17

JOE MCDONAGH CUP

Round 1: 5th May – O'Moore Park Laois 1-21, Westmeath 2-21

Round 2: 13th May – Tralee Laois 0-19, Kerry 3-20

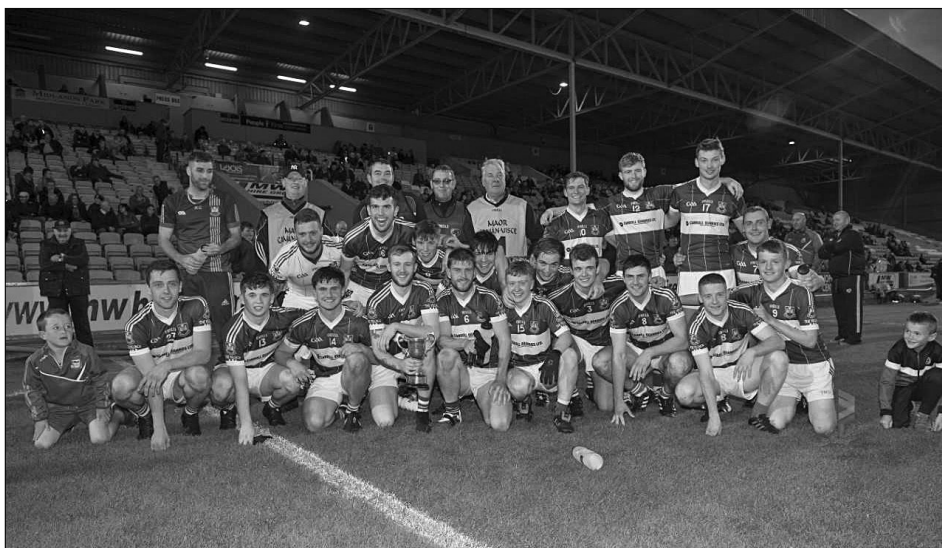
Round 3: 19th May – Dunloy Laois 1-20, Antrim 1-19

Round 4: 2nd June – O'Moore Park Laois 2-15, Carlow 2-25

Round 5: 9th June – Navan Laois 3-23, Meath 0-14



JFC Anmannough



JFC B Castletown

Under 21 Hurling

Our Under 21 panel also trained and prepared under our Senior management team for 2018. Whilst not ideal, with the large crossover of approximately twelve players, it was decided that it was the most feasible way to prepare this panel.

The fact that this championship was sandwiched in the middle of a Joe McDonagh campaign, which was not going well in itself, did not help matters. Our opening championship game was against Dublin in O'Moore Park, where an early goal blitz by the visitors effectively ended our championship aspirations at this grade and in the end we were outplayed by a far more physical and skilful Dublin side. I again wish to take this opportunity to thank the aforementioned outgoing senior management team for their efforts with this panel.

In the coming year, this grade reverts to U20, similar to football this year, the only difference being that a senior championship panellist is eligible to play U20 hurling championship. It is a grade we have performed poorly at in recent years, which hasn't been aided by the need to bring players into our senior set up earlier than desired. There will certainly not be the same turnover at this age grade and will hopefully give players a greater opportunity to develop into senior players.

For 2019, David Cuddy will manage this panel and will be joined by Brendan Lowry, Enda Meagher, Chris Murray and Derek Delaney (Selectors), Michael Boyhan (Strength and Conditioning) and Karen Rowe (Physio).

LEINSTER UNDER-21 HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP

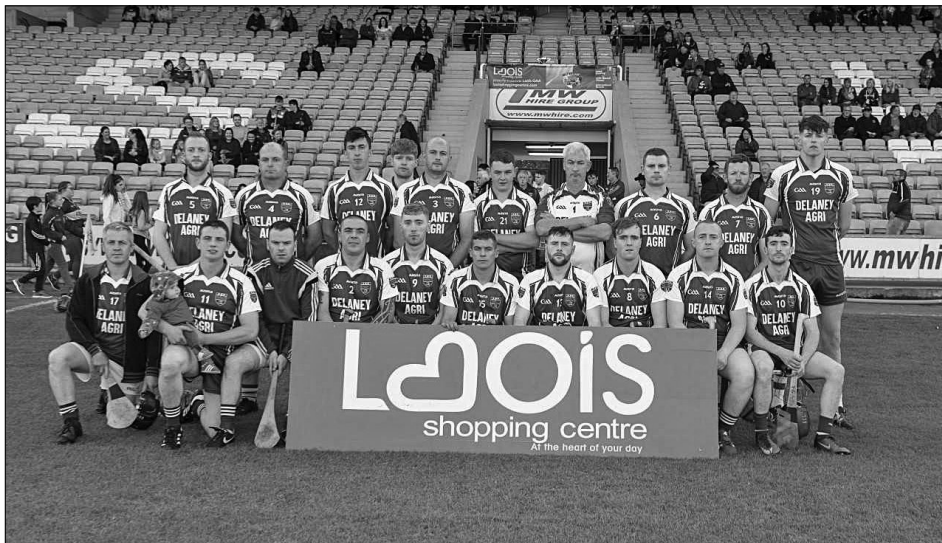
Round 1: 26th May – O'Moore Park
Laois 1-10, Dublin 4-16

Minor Hurling

Minor Hurling in 2018 reverted from U18 grade to U17 age grade. The reasons for change have been well documented in relation to burnout and fixture scheduling, the merits for our games and clubs, I am not convinced and only time will tell. Leinster Minor Hurling league was discontinued and championship reverted to a round robin / back door competition based on your previous years placing.

As a Leinster Minor Hurling championship semi-finalist in 2017, we were placed in Tier 1 along with Wexford, Dublin and Kilkenny. Whilst we suffered defeat in all our Tier 1 games, our performances were encouraging, particularly against Kilkenny and Wexford, where we were competitive in the games up until the last ten minutes. As a result of our position in Tier 1, we were drawn to play Offaly in Tullamore, where perhaps our performance lacked that of previous displays and we disappointingly exited this championship.

This panel also participated in the Celtic Challenge, a competition in its second year which is designed to cater for the Under 17 grade in an environment more to their standard. Players who had competed in full championship games were deemed ineligible for this competition, thus enabling all panellists to be provided with competitive games, which worked extreme-



JHC B Kyle



JHC C Portlaoise

ly well and kept all players happy with game time. Our early results dictated that we qualified for knock out stages of Jerome O'Leary competition, which we proceeded to go on and win, defeating Antrim in finals day in Tullamore. My congratulations to all involved.

I wish to thank our management team for their endeavours with this panel in 2018, Enda Lyons (Manager), Ollie Hally, Chris Hartnett, Sean Conroy (Selector), Dermot McGill (Strength and Conditioning), Miriam Harrison (Physio) and David O'Brien (Team Secretary). In the coming year, Ollie Hally, Chris Hartnett and David O'Brien have stepped down from their roles and have been replaced by James Walsh, JJ McHugh and Gary Moore (Coach / Selectors) and Martina Henneberry (Team Secretary) and we wish them well in the year ahead.

LEINSTER MINOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP TIER 1

Round 1: 12th May – Innovate Wexford Park
Laois 0-18, Wexford 1-21

Round 2: 19th May – O'Moore Park
Laois 0-7, Dublin 2-21

Round 3: 25th May – O'Moore Park
Laois 1-12, Kilkenny 1-26

Quarter Final: 16th. June- Tullamore
Laois 1-14, Offaly 2-19

CELTIC CHALLENGE

Round 1 – Laois 0-05, Offaly 0-11

Round 2 – Bye

Round 3 – Laois 1-14, Dublin Clarke 2-22

Round 4 – Laois 0-11, Wexford 3-16

Round 5 – Laois 0-10,
Dublin Plunkett 5-14

Corn Jerome O'Leary Q'Final –
Laois 3-10, Carlow 2-11

Corn Jerome O'Leary S'Final –
Laois 5-09, Armagh 2-13

Corn Jerome O'Leary Final –
Laois 3-12, Antrim 2-10

Senior Football

Our season commenced with the O'Byrne Cup and our new Management team used this competition to give all panellists some game time, in an effort to finalise their League panel. However two defeats to Westmeath seen us exit this competition.

Following our recent demise and successive relegations to Allianz Football League Division 3 and 4 in as many seasons, there were hopes and expectations under new management again, that we were capable of being strong contenders for promotion back to Division 3. In our League campaign we went through unbeaten, albeit not in impressive fashion, grinding out results in typical Division 4 manner against Limerick, Leitrim, Waterford, Wicklow, London and Carlow. Our game against Antrim had been postponed due to weather and when permutations were done after Round 7, this game was considered void, resulting in Laois and Carlow qualifying for the final of the series in Croke Park. In a local derby game our lads emerged vic-



JFC C Slieve Bloom



SHC A Portlaoise

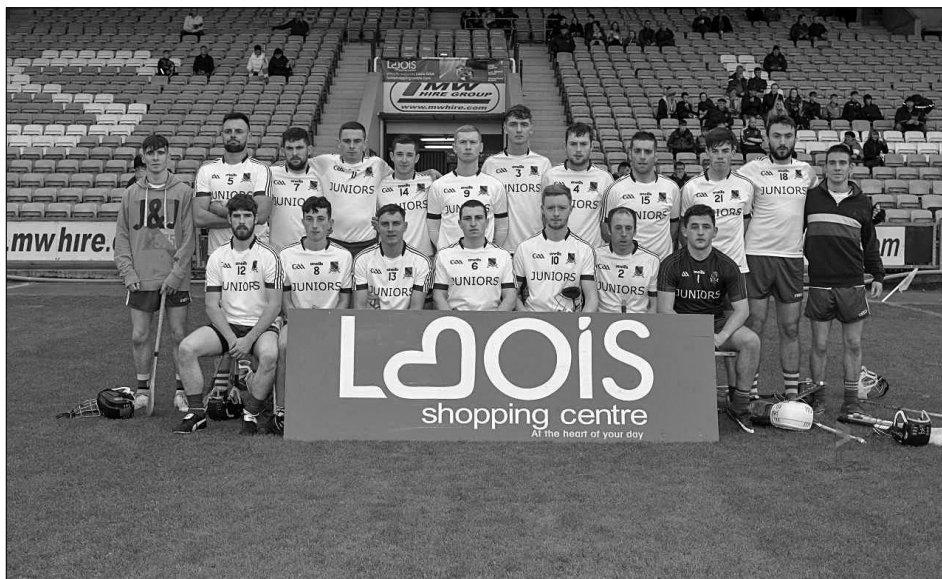
torious, claiming silverware, and probably more importantly pride restored and promotion to Division 3 secured for 2019.

In our Leinster Championship opener, we played Wexford in Wexford Park, confidence high after a successful league campaign. If I'm being honest, at half time in this game I seen no way back, our team being completely outplayed by a spirited home side and all one could think of was what the Qualifier Draw on Monday morning would bring. In a remarkable second half, our lads battled, showing courage in abundance and with a little bit of luck on our side, forced the game to extra time, where we ran out easy winners. Next up Westmeath in Tullamore, with a facile victory qualifying us for a Leinster Semi-final in Croke Park against neighbours Carlow, once again. In another tense game, our lads displayed patience and with a brave and committed performance, our run of success continued, to qualify for our first Leinster Senior Football final since 2007. The final against All Ireland Champions Dublin was always going to be an awesome task, however coming from the disappointment suffered by our supporters over the past number of years, there were no complaints, with one of the highlights of the year being to see our support back in such numbers and as someone said everyone with a smile on their face. In the final our lads took the game to Dublin and were competitive enough up to half-time, however the experience, skill and pace of our rivals saw them run out easy and deserving winners at the final whistle. The Qualifier route saw us travel to Navan to play Monaghan, a game we could have been out the door early on

but for the heroics of our keeper Graham Brody on the day. Whilst we were competitive in the second half, we had left ourselves too much to do, with Monaghan deserving winners in the end.

The year has to be considered very successful with a lot of goals achieved and most importantly pride and passion in the Laois jersey restored. I wish to compliment the entire panel for their efforts and diligent manner in which they prepared for this year's Championship and League, their efforts and honesty were indeed praiseworthy. I look forward to 2019 with optimism, where the goal must be to continue our upward march with the aim of promotion from Division 3 and where our Leinster Championship draw is favourable and another Leinster Final appearance is certainly achievable. I would also like to extend our congratulations to Graham Brody on his All Star Nomination, certainly deserved and also worthy of mention and praise are Evan O'Carroll and Eoin Lowry on their Sigerson Cup success with UCD.

The issuing of recent disciplinary action, in the form of loss of home venue for our first upcoming home game in the Allianz League, for breach of Rule 6.22 (b), displays the hypocrisy that we have at times in our association. Yes, we breached Rule 6.22 (b), for travelling to Kerry on a training weekend in April, 13 days prior to our opening championship game and after committing to the spirit of the Rule where our Inter County players fulfilled four league games with their Clubs during that month. Yes, we admitted to the breach of the Rule in goodwill at the request of An



JHC Mountmellick

Uachtaráin and Ard Stiurthóir, as might I add did 17 other counties in their reply. To be honest if all counties had been treated in a fair and equal manner, I would have no issue accepting our punishment. The fact that we stated it was a training weekend and not a holiday or bonding or historical excursion and punished for this whilst others for stating otherwise is difficult to take.

In November 2018, Central Council convene to debate a number of proposals from the Standing Committee on Football Playing Rules. After our recent Division Football Trial competition, where there were no defensive restrictions placed on any of our teams, one can see how entertaining the game of football can actually be when played in the right spirit. However certain management teams now at both Club and County teams now seem intent on limiting defeats to the minimum margins with their blanket defensive systems which has endured football to be a poor spectacle in recent years. Our County Committee has decided to support the introduction of the “Sin Bin” for Black Card Infractions and also to extend the application of the Mark to clean catching of the ball on or inside the 20 metre line from a kick on or beyond the 45 metre line without it touching the ground, both of which I believe are worth experimenting with. The introduction of a Tier 2 competition in Football is also I believe inevitable and has to have merits in considering the expenditure on our Senior Football Inter County panels. I would be wary of the manner in which the Joe McDonagh Cup was enforced and that the same mistakes are not made again, insisting that all teams be afforded the opportunity

to compete in their provincial championship and that the promotion and rewards of such a competition are agreed in totality to ensure that it is attractive to both counties and players and merits its place in our Inter County schedule.

Our Management and backroom team are also deserving of our thanks – John Sugrue (Manager); Eoin Kearns and Brendan Delaney (Selectors); Jerome Stack (Football Coach); Robbie Cannon (Strength and Conditioning Coach); Brian Breen (Liaison Officer); Ian Costigan (Performance Analysis); Willie Power (Statistics); Dr Sean Montague; Sean Gaffney and Joe Morris (Physiotherapist) and of course Servicing Secretary Ollie Byrne, who was ably assisted by Pat O’Sullivan.

I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Dr Sean Montague, who is stepping down from the role of team doctor and sincerely thank him for his commitment to Laois football for the past five years and hopefully in the not too distant future he will be in a position to again in this role. The rest of the team will remain intact for the coming year, with the exception of Eoin, whom unfortunately is unable to give the time commitment to continue in his role as Selector and will instead revert to the role of Statistics on match days, whilst Jerome is also unavailable for the coming year. They will be replaced by Sean Cotter and Willie Harman who each will combine the roles of Coach / Selector and we wish them all success in their endeavours.

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- Maurice Deegan
(All-Ireland Senior Football Final Referee 2008, 2012, 2016)



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- 1,200 games at adult levels
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BORD NA MONA O'BYRNE CUP

Round 1: 30th December – Mullingar
Westmeath 1-13, Laois 1-12

Round 2: 7th January – Stradbally
Westmeath 3-16, Laois 1-13

ALLIANZ FOOTBALL LEAGUE DIVISION 4

Round 1: 27th January – O'Moore Park
Laois 2-12, Limerick 0-9

Round 2: 4th February – Carrick on
Shannon
Laois 3-16, Leitrim 3-10

Round 3: 10th February – O'Moore Park
Laois 0-18, Waterford 1-11

Round 4: 25th February – Aughrim
Laois 1-16, Wicklow 0-10

Round 5: 11th March – Ruislip
Laois 0-17, London 2-9

Round 6: 25th March – Netwatch Cullen
Park
Laois 1-6, Carlow 0-8

Final: 31st March – Croke Park
Laois 0-15, Carlow 0-11

LEINSTER SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Round 1 (AET): 12th May – Innovate
Wexford Park
Laois 2-21, Wexford 1-18

Quarter Final: 26th May – O'Connor
Park
Laois 4-13, Westmeath 1-12

Semi Final: 10th June – Croke Park
Laois 0-12, Carlow 0-8

Final: 24th June – Croke Park
Laois 0-10, Dublin 1-25

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS

Round 4: 8th July – Navan
Laois 1-11, Monaghan 0-19

Under 20 Football

This was the inaugural year of this competition at this grade and was in many ways a learning process as we went along. As I have stated in a previous report the rule prohibiting U20 players named on senior championship panels from participating in this competition is definitely prejudicial to our most talented players and a distinct disadvantage to counties with a small population base similar to Laois. Strangely U21 hurling reverts to this grade in the coming year, but the same prohibition does not apply. Fortunately this rule only affected one player from participating at this grade. A greater problem at the outset was the vast number of players who failed to come into the panel due to Leaving Cert commitments, with the competition commencing in or around examination time. There are proposals to organise a league competition during this time and push the commencement of the championship back to a later date, with the final to replace the minor final on All Ireland Senior Final dates. The jury is out on this, but I certainly would advocate going back to the old dates and

commencing the championship in March, after the conclusion of the Sigerson and Fitzgibbon competitions.

In the competition itself played on a round robin league system for the first time, we opened our campaign against near rivals Kildare in Newbridge and in a closely fought game we only lost out to the eventual All Ireland Champions in the closing minutes. Next up we had Wicklow in O'Moore Park, where in another tight encounter we emerged victorious by a point. Our final game was Meath in Navan, where a result was required to have any chance of advancing in this competition. In another close game, Meath emerged deserving winners taking their goal opportunities on the day. I wish to thank all players who committed to this grade during the last year. It is a grade I think we can be competitive in the next couple of years and the appointment of Robbie Cannon to oversee the strength and conditioning programme for these panellists along with our minor panellists will benefit the development of all our players long-term.

I have mentioned before the difficulties in sourcing suitable and interested personnel to manage and mentor our inter county panels, unfortunately this grade was no different with a number of more experienced personnel turning down the opportunity to manage this grade, prior to Billy O'Loughlin being appointed to the position in January. I wish to take this opportunity to thank Billy for his commitment to this panel and also his backroom team consisting of Liam Brophy (Selector); Tom Byrne (Coach); Ian Costigan (Performance Analysis); Ria Breen (Physio); Tom Scully (Liaison / Logistics)

and Johnny Ramsbottom (Kit). Billy and his team deservedly remain in position for 2019, where Billy Delaney has also been included as a Selector.

LEINSTER UNDER-20 FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Round 1: 28th May – Newbridge
Laois 4-6, Kildare 1-17

Round 2: 4th June – O'Moore Park
Laois 1-14, Wicklow 1-13

Round 3: 16th June – Navan
Laois 0-13, Meath 2-13

Minor Football

Similar to Minor hurling, and with the same sentiments I stated earlier, this grade reverted to U17 age grade for 2018, with the League also being abolished and Championship reverting to a League Round Robin competition. In our Championship campaign we opened with two victories against Longford and Wicklow, a draw with Carlow, prior to succumbing to a heavy defeat to Kildare in our final game. Our results qualified us for a semi-final pairing against Meath in O'Moore Park. Unfortunately there was some fallout from the Kildare game as reports emerged as to the unsatisfactory manner a number of our panellists prepared for this game, resulting in repercussions for those involved for the Meath game. In this game we were outplayed by a far more physical and powerful Meath side.

It was a disappointing conclusion to a minor campaign, but lessons were learnt in relation to disciplinary requirements and the requisite physical development of our players to now compete at inter county level. Whilst Colm Begley and more recently Pater Hally, have been overseeing a winter athlete development for our Talent Academies for the past two years, this has been further concentrated on in recent months, with Robbie Cannon also involved in monitoring this programme. It has also been decided that our U16 academy will be intertwined with our Minor panel for coming year, in what will be a more condensed panel for athlete development purposes and preparation for their respective competitions.

I wish to thank Donncha Phelan (Manager), PJ Kelly (Selectors), Donal Brennan (Coach), Donagh Flannery (Strength and Conditioning Coach), Alan Dunne (Physio), Liam Delaney and Richard Dunne (Stats) and Paddy O'Connor (Kitman) for all their efforts and work over the past year. For the coming year, PJ Kelly and Donagh Flannery have stepped down from their respective roles and have been replaced by Sean O'Shea, Peter O'Leary and Michael Scully as Selectors and Niall Walsh as Strength and Conditioning Coach.

LEINSTER MINOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Round 1: 7th May – O'Moore Park
Laois 1-12, Longford 0-11

Round 2: 23rd May – Innovate Wexford Park

Laois 0-11, Wexford 2-3

Round 3: 30th May – O'Moore Park
Laois 0-10, Carlow 0-10

Round 4: 27th June – Newbridge
Laois 1-6, Kildare 5-10

Semi-Final: July 7th – O'Moore Park
Laois 0-8, Meath 5-18

Local Championships

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Portlaoise on their success in a competitive Senior Football Championship and Camross on winning the Senior Hurling Championship. All our other winners are outlined in the Roll of Honour at the end of my report and whilst not wishing to go through each competition, I congratulate all winners on their championship and league success and to those Clubs remaining in contention in Leinster Club championship as I pen this report, Portlaoise (Senior Football and Intermediate Hurling) and Courtwood (Intermediate Football), I wish them all the very best of luck in their quest for provincial honours.

All our Competitions thankfully are in the process of running to finish on Schedule. Our Fixture Programme consisted of 1,900 games (excluding U9 & 11 Go Games) and I wish to compliment all our Club Officers for their co-operation in achieving and completing this mammoth programme.

Just a small couple of observations on fixtures and scheduling over the past year:

- Senior Hurling Championship reverted from a knockout competition with a backdoor in 2017 to a round robin basis with two groups of four for this year on a trial basis. In my opinion this took the competitive nature out of our championship and I would certainly canvass for a return to the original format. If we continue with the present series, I predict there will be the call for seeding of the groups from our stronger clubs, which if approved will further negate the competitiveness of this competition.
- Senior Football Championship was entertaining and competitive in nature to a point and a championship without reigning champions Portlaoise, would have quite a number of clubs with realistic opportunities of championship honours. However, that is not to be and it has to be the aspiration of all Clubs to achieve Portlaoise standards. I do believe consideration should be given to reducing the number of teams in our Senior championship and reverting to a structure similar to hurling, whereby we create an additional championship, thus having two championships with eight teams. It would increase competitiveness between both the top and bottom levels of our present 16, with a second tier also creating the opportunity for club players to train with the realistic goal of silverware and achievable goals in Leinster Club Intermediate Championship.
- Our Football League has been the rumour and subject of criticism during the year from certain quarters, that there are too many games involved and that

it should be limited to less games in the future. Whilst unaware of the outcome of the Fixture Review committee's deliberations, I would be slow to reduce the number of games in this competition. I believe the GAA is about the promotion of our games and such business is to provide as many games as possible for our players. With the proposed advent of one of our competitor sports moving to a direct clash with our fixture schedule, I think it is imperative that we now endeavour to provide more attractive and streamlined games fixture programme and schedule than ever before.

- The number of applications to participate as Group Senior or Intermediate teams is increasing annually. It is an area of concern identified in the Strategic Review document, both in the lack of conditions surrounding the formation of such teams and the knock on effect it has on fixture scheduling. In my view such Group teams will provide no long term viability or stability for any of our clubs who feel the need to enter into such alliances. Clubs with second teams entering in such alliances should not be entertained and Group Senior or Intermediate teams should only be sanctioned where there is a previous traditional alliance. The increasing number of teams of this nature at Senior and Intermediate grades during the past year has made fixture scheduling incredibly difficult, due to vast crossover of players in the number of clubs involved and in both codes. The fact that players from the Club that is accommodating the Group Senior or Intermediate team and not named on their submitted championship grading, can now play in Senior or Intermediate championship and also play in their clubs lower grade

championship, is another anomaly that has arisen and has been utilised by some clubs to their benefit this year. It is the remit of the Fixture Review committee to bring forward a solution to this increasing trend, a report which I await with interest.

- Divisional Football Trial Competition is the brain child of our Senior Football manager John Sugrue. The methodology for the purpose of this competition was to see potential panellists, by giving our elite club footballers the opportunity to play in a more talent concentrated environment other than our club championships. The competition also created four additional weekends of football thereby extending our football season, which would normally have ceased on the first weekend and earlier for many of these club players. The “Trial” was a tremendous success with terrific buy in from players and indeed the general public coming out to see what were very entertaining games. It is certainly something we will look at making a permanent fixture in our schedule. Our designated charity, Kolbe Centre, also benefitted financially from gate receipts of approximately €4k. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the respective team managements Greg Ramsbottom, Brendan Quigley, Dan Nelligan, Martin Gorman, John Kealy, Brian McDonald, Paul Lawlor, Frank Finn, John Scully, Shane Conlan and Derek Conroy for their input into the success of this competition. I would also like to acknowledge Gerry Browne Jewellers sponsorship of wrist watches for the winning Division.
- This year the month of April was designated free of Inter County activity for

Club fixtures. Our CCC following consultation with our Inter County managers designated four rounds of league in each code, whereby all Inter County players were released for club duties. To a point it worked well, but the dual player at club level suffered with overload during this period and the demands put on our Inter County players to fulfil club commitments in such close proximity to their Inter County championships is also debatable. The condensing of the Inter County calendar as in 2018, does not further facilitate the release of Inter County players to their clubs until their Inter County season concludes. The exception being players not getting game time in Inter County championship or league, should be facilitated with club league games on those weekends. The Club v County debate has received plenty of discussion in recent months and in my opinion will never be resolved to everyone’s satisfaction. In Laois, I would be happy that our championship structure is compatible with the Inter County fixture programme, it is deliverable within the time frame available with Leinster Club competitions, it allows clubs training time with their Inter County players in advance of Club championship games and it provides as much certainty as possible regarding dates of our championship games.

- The changes to our underage grades came into effect in 2018 and had an adverse effect on many of our rural clubs in fielding adult teams without the services of U17’s, which is a view that had been highlighted at previous conventions. CCC made efforts to put a meaningful fixture programme in place to accommodate these players, now that they wouldn’t be eligi-

ble to play at the adult grade and I don't know whether we fully achieved this and certainly needs to be reviewed. The U19 competitions were introduced also, the conception being that they would facilitate our U17 grade and also players in the earliest adult grade with a meaningful programme of games. Whilst U19 hurling was satisfactory, U19 football was a disaster, with only a handful of games fulfilled. The wisdom of County Committee insisting that an U21 competition be also included in our programme did not help matters. For 2019, I would propose that we revert to U20 competition as a compromise and review the most feasible time frame within our calendar for playing this competition.

- The Motion before you this evening is to introduce a specific closing date for submission of Club Affiliations and Entry to our Club Competitions of 7th. January. The intent is to streamline these aforementioned areas and to ensure CCC has ample time to prepare recommendations for the January County Committee meeting and as such have a complete Fixture Programme and Schedule available to our Clubs for early February.

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. Referees have an onerous task and none of the games that occur in any of these competitions would be possible without an appointed referee.

Our Referee Administrator Danny Gorman and his Committee, serviced by our Office Administrator Tomas Moore, are also deserving of our thanks for their efforts to try and improve refereeing standards and bring consistency at all levels. I have no hesitation in admitting that this is the most difficult and thankless position in Laois GAA administration. All of our Adult Referees completed an Inservice training course, Rules testing questionnaire and Fitness testing, prior to commencement of league competitions and I believe for 2019, the intention is to introduce such training and testing again prior to championship.

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 scheduled, in excess of 1,900 Fixtures in 2018 over a 9 month period works out at approximately 50 referees required per week. In working from a pool of less than 50 referees, it is not rocket science to understand the problems we have. Unfortunately in 2018, a number of fixtures were cancelled due to the unavailability of referees, my apologies to the Clubs involved at it was often at short notice. Whilst, we are grateful to our Clubs who supply referees and who actively try to recruit officials, a large number of our Clubs do not have a referee and make no attempt either in the recruitment stakes. CCC intend making a proposal for inclusion in 2019 Competition Rules and Regulations, that Clubs without a Referee shall forfeit home advantage to their opponents for league games. 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.

It would be wishful thinking to say that these officials are universally appreciated for the tireless work they do in refereeing our games, and it is alarming at just the level of verbal and sometimes threatening abuse that is being meted out to them. Unfortunately, there continues to be an escalation and an increasing lack of respect displayed by some of our Club Officials / Mentors / Supporters and Players towards Referees and their Officials. Laois GAA have dedicated GAA men who are doing their best to serve their county and the association and without them our games could not continue. The complexity of GAA rules ensures that they will not get every decision right. Unfortunately there is some who believe that this behaviour in entertaining, in my view it is embarrassing and serves no serves no purpose at a game save to draw attention to themselves and bring their club into disrepute, indeed if any of them were offered a whistle they would run a mile. Their conduct certainly does not help Referee recruitment. While suspensions have been imposed for all reported infractions, I'm afraid continued reports of this behaviour seem to be in the ascendancy. For a player reported for this infraction, the proposed minimum penalty is a One Match Suspension, for club officials or team mentor, the proposed minimum penalty is a Four Week Suspension, which in my view is inadequate in stamping out this behaviour. It is CCC's intention to introduce a monetary fine to the club involved of a minimum of €150 for each report of this nature in 2019.

I have often being asked, what makes a good referee and in my opinion a good

referee is the official who is consistent in his application of the rules and gets the big calls correct on the day. Perhaps during the year, some of our officials did not get all these big calls right on important championship days. One particular incident in the Senior Hurling Final prior to half time, in my opinion certainly merited more than the colour of the card shown, for the type of behaviour that has no place on our football or hurling fields. I have sympathy for the Clubs on the wrong end of these sometimes game changing decisions, which often cause anguish and despair after the huge efforts, the finance and the time put into the preparation of their club teams. Our disciplinary system is not perfect and no doubt decisions are made from time to time that people don't agree with. At the same time, I honestly believe no referee goes out to deliberately give wrong decisions. In our competitor sports, we have seen the introduction of the TMO and VAR, in an effort to eliminate human error, perhaps it's an area the association should consider!

Páirc Ui Mhórdha

During the 2018 season, Pairc Ui Mhórdha hosted 27 Inter County and Inter Club games, including Leinster Senior Club Hurling and Football finals, Leinster U21 & Minor Hurling finals, All Ireland Senior Football Qualifier double header, as well as almost all our local Senior Championship fixtures. 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, as well as our local gate receipts.

In recent weeks the stadium was subject to an Allianz Insurance audit, which admittedly did expose some areas of concern that do require addressing, but initial feedback was positive following his perusal of our facilities, match day practices, record keeping, etc. He was complimentary on how our voluntary stewards and staff have safely hosted fixtures big and small heretofore and once we adhere to same high safety standards and practices, we will continue to attract profile games.

I wish to acknowledge the support of our local Gardai for their help on match days, our Event Controller Tom Jones, Safety Officer PJ Kelly, Chief Stewards Jody Conway and Jim Morrin and most importantly our numerous voluntary stewards, without whose co-operation and support we wouldn't be able to host such games.

I must pay tribute to our Groundsman Colm McEvoy for the pristine condition in which he continues to keep our pitches in both the stadium and training centre. Our Caretaker Willie Stackpool is also deserving of our thanks for ensuring the grounds are opened when required and also our TUS workers and PCE Group Scheme team for their continued upkeep of the stadium during the year.

Laois GAA Training Centre - Project Development – Progress Report

I am pleased to report that this project is entering the final phases of completion and am hopeful that our new building complex will be operational prior to convention. Our former Chairperson Gerry Kavanagh continues to oversee this devel-

opment along with our present Chairperson Peter O'Neill, Martin Byrne and PJ Kelly, under the guidance of our project management team headed by David Tobin MGM and builder Colm Byrne. The following is a briefing on the project to date:

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;
- Acquisition of mower for ongoing and extra maintenance.

Phase 2 – Completed

- 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;
- Construct “machinery” shed.

Phase 3 – Completed

- Erect perimeter boundary fence and build pathway on Pitch 1 & 2;

- Replace boundary walls with “Paladin” Fence on Fr. Browne Avenue and
- O’Moore Park, incorporating new entrance and additional turnstiles;
- Install Amenity lighting;

Phase 4 – Completion Date November 2018

- Building of new Complex incorporating:
 - 4 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 Hall;
 - Kitchen and Catering Area;
 - Reception / Foyer Area / Ticket Sales;
 - Office Area and Meeting Rooms / County Committee Meeting Room;
- Car Parking Areas – tarmacadam and mark;

The total cost of the project will be somewhere in the region of approximately €3.3 million for the first four 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 has worked hard to secure funding commitments from Central Council GAA €1.15 million and Leinster Council GAA €375,000. Laois GAA has

committed its own funding of €750,000, derived from sale of lands in Ballyroan & Portlaoise and the “FAI / IRFU” Croke Park funding, to this project. Laois GAA has also received Sports Capital Regional funding to the tune of €137,000. This will leave approximately €900,000 to be raised by Laois GAA through fundraising and loan facilities.

Laurence Phelan was charged with the unenviable task of securing additional funding to meet the extra financial commitments involved in completing this project and meeting our new loan repayments, and must be commended for his efforts to date. He has been aided and abetted in this role at times by Michael Scully. To date sponsorship of the Centre of Excellence has been secured through LOETB, to whom we extend our thanks to CEO Joe Cunningham for this generous sponsorship and at moment the sponsorship of Pitch 1 is presently being finalised. There are a number of other sponsorship opportunities in the development that are also currently being explored, as well of course as the naming rights for O’Moore Park. Laois GAA is also appealing to our GAA community seeking either a once off or annual subscription towards our “Club Laois” Patron Wall (see following article “Help us Build the next Generation”), with all profits raised going towards this development project.

Finance

At the time of penning this article, I am not exactly sure of our present financial affairs, I would hope for them to return in a satisfactory state, particularly as we have achieved budget in most sectors. I have to say it was a difficult year financially in trying to balance our payments towards the new building complex, our monthly



Help Us Build The Next Generation



Laois GAA need to develop additional income streams to achieve our ambitious but realistic goals to fund the complete development of our "LOETB" Centre of Excellence project. We are seeking commercial sponsorship to do this by either a once off or annual subscription from our Laois Companies or Supporters, as follows:
 "Club Laois" Patron Wall

Silver Subscription - €500

Entitles subscriber:

- Laois GAA "Club" Jacket, Umbrella & Car Sticker
- In recognition of your subscription, your Name will be inscribed on "Patron Wall" in "LOETB" Centre of Excellence.

Gold Subscription - €1,000

Entitles subscriber:

- Complimentary Car Pass to Laois Centre of Excellence on Match Days for 2018 and 2019 Seasons
- Laois GAA "Club" Jacket, Umbrella & Car Sticker
- In recognition of your subscription, your Name will be inscribed on "Patron Wall" in "LOETB" Centre of Excellence.

Platinum Subscription - €2,500

Entitles subscriber:

- Access to 2 x All Ireland Final Tickets of your choice;
- 2 x Complimentary Tickets for all Games in O'Moore Park for 2018 and 2019 Seasons;
- Complimentary Car Pass to "LOETB" Centre of Excellence on Match Days for 2018 and 2019 Seasons;
- Advertising Signage in "LOETB" Centre of Excellence (back of Stand Wall – 14ft x 4ft) and in O'Moore Park (Pitch perimeter Wall opposite Stand – 13ft x 2ft) for 2018 / 19. (Company to provide Signage);
 - Hospitality Refreshments and access to Laois GAA panels on major Match Days;
 - 2 x Complimentary Laois GAA Awards Night Tickets
 - Laois GAA "Club" Jacket, Umbrella & Car Sticker
- In recognition of your subscription, your Name will be inscribed on "Patron Wall" "LOETB" Centre of Excellence.

Look out for promotional DVDs on Laois GAA Social Media outlets in coming weeks or
 Contact:

Peter O'Neill, Chairperson: 085 2523326, chairperson.laois@gaa.ie

Niall Handy, Secretary: 087 6868482 secretary.laois@gaa.ie

Martin Byrne, Treasurer: 087 7448048 treasurer.laois@gaa.ie

Laurence Phelan, Coiste Peil Chairperson: 086 8521941 laurencephelanlaois@gmail.com

We welcome the opportunity of discussing it with you.

creditor expenditure and the lengthy delay in drawing down our loan. Thankfully all now seems to be in order, with just the stark reality of repaying it.

Whilst present fundraising meets our current demands, our new loan repayments will require additional fundraising, with a €110,000 annual surplus now required to meet AIB repayments, which is an increase in excess of €50,000 on our present liabilities. As I have already stated Laurence is exploring further sponsorship and naming right opportunities and seeking support for our “Club Laois” Patron Wall and we are also in the process of trying to finalise a lease on our office in Parkside. It is hoped additional revenue can be raised through some of these areas, failure to do so will merit consideration to some small increase in club levies.

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 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 2018 Clubs benefited to the tune of €602,000, while the County profited to almost €108,000. This Draw continues for 2019, with one small change, County Committee agreed at the October meeting to allow Laois GAA retain an additional 2euro on tickets sold after the levy, this will be entirely transferred into the prize fund, cre-

ating an addition 40 prizes, 10 per draw of €250. I would again appeal for your co-operation in making this your Clubs primary fundraiser for the year;

- Our “Golf Classic” in Portarlinton Golf Club, was kindly sponsored by Aidan Colgan, Colgan Sports, in early July. Our thanks to Aidan for his generous sponsorship and our organising committee headed by our Chairperson Peter O’Neill and ably assisted by Liam Delaney, Gerry Kavanagh, Fergal Byron, Kieran Leavy and Gareth Keogh
- Our “Race Day” at the Punchestown Racing Festival in April continues to grow and proved to be very successful in selling 20 tables, with all guests thoroughly enjoying the Punchestown “corporate” experience. Our thanks to Glanbia / GAIN for their continued sponsorship of this event, and special mention to Leas Cisteoir Kieran Leavy for his input into the organisation of the event;
- Our “Night at the Dogs & Buster Draw” in Newbridge Greyhound Stadium, was kindly sponsored by Martin Reddin last October, sponsorship which was gratefully appreciated. This is an excellent fundraiser for our County and I wish to thank our fundraising committee Chairpersons Paschal McEvoy & Gerry Kavanagh for their efforts here, where they were ably assisted by all our Executive members, Canice Sheeran, John Hyland, Sheila Devoy, Donie Brennan, our talent academy panellists and not least all our Clubs;

It would be remit of me in writing this report, without acknowledging the generosity of JP McManus and his family in their donation of €100,000 to the Clubs of

Laois to utilise towards the continued development of Gaelic Games. This resulted in a contribution of €2,087 to each of our affiliated adult Clubs and I would like to publically like to express our thanks for this generous contribution.

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.

Data Protection Legislation

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Irish Data Protection Act 2018 have been in effect since May 25th 2018 and it is important that every GAA Club is aware of how these changes in the law will affect the ways in which members' personal information can be collected and used for GAA Purposes.

Data Protection legislation is intended to protect the right to privacy of individuals and seeks to ensure that Personal Information is used appropriately by organisations that may have it (Data Controllers/Data Processors). Data Protection relates to any information that can be used to identify a living person such as Name, address, phone number, Date of Birth etc. The onus is on the person or entity that uses a person's information - Data Controller/Data Processor - to comply with the legislation and to demonstrate compliance. This means that GAA clubs must be compliant and must be able to demonstrate compliance.

What do clubs need to do?

It is imperative that every GAA club understands what Data Protection legislation means and how the changes in legislation affect them.

A significant amount of guidance has been provided on what clubs need to do and this has been published in GAA Club Newsletters, on the GAA website (www.gaa.ie/dataprotection) and shared with GAA Club Officers through Microsoft OneDrive. (This content can be viewed by Club Officers who Logon to Microsoft Office365 with their @gaa.ie email address and selecting the following menu option: OneDrive> Shared> Shared With Me > GDPR Repository).

A useful summary of the content (GDPR For GAA Clubs.pdf) is available and can be downloaded here: www.gaa.ie/my-gaa/administrators/gdpr-support.

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 Laois Today, Laois Nationalist and Leinster Express and their various correspondents; Midlands Radio 103 and their various reporters; Alf Harvey and Denis Byrne who both do a magnificent job on photographs and enhance the work of the scribes; Laois TV is an initiative from Michael Egan and endorsed by Laois GAA, which greatly enhances and promotes our championships by way of highlight coverage of the games online; Paul Dargan from our local PR committee must also be complimented

for his match day photo albums which were very well received.

Although we may not always be in favour of everything they produce and state, but we are fortunate that almost all our press are passionate about Gaelic games and play a role in spreading our message and promoting our games.

Our website, www.laoisgaa.ie, and our Laois GAA Iphone App, are both presently being upgraded and will hopefully be operational in early January. The popularity of both is highlighted by the fact that we have now increased to 665,000 Website Pageviews in the past 12 months. We continue to embrace social media with 26,000 Twitter Followers, 10,000 Facebook Fans and Instagram 3,500. Almost all our Inter County and local Senior Championship games are carried live on Twitter. All our website and social media work is a tribute to the tremendous work of principally Tomas Moore and of course PRO Pat O'Sullivan and his PR Committee.

Social media is a wonderful and powerful communication platform when used in the appropriate manner, however as we have witnessed during the year when used in an inappropriate manner with careless and unwarranted personal remarks by individuals representing our county and club individuals mockingly posting images highlighting the misfortune of others, it can be a dangerous and disheartening tool that can cause huge damage to our association. It is intended to explore the introduction of talks / seminars in an attempt to educate our panellists on the use of social media.

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 has been part and parcel of Laois GAA now since 2010 and has been renewed up to and including this year. I sincerely hope his company will get the exposure they deserve and desire from our association with them.

Our thanks to Ted Berry and his company The Magni Group for their continued support as our associate jersey sponsor.

Our Championships and Leagues are kindly sponsored by Laois Shopping Centre and again we are entirely appreciative of Kevin Doyle and his company for their generous sponsorship.

Midland Park Hotel is sponsor of all our Juvenile Championship and Leagues and our thanks are extended to Colm Neville and Dara Cruise for this sponsorship.

Our appreciation and thanks are also extended to –

- O'Neill's, 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;
- People First Credit Union, sponsors of our Football and Hurling Talent Academies;
- LOETB (Laois Offaly Educational Training Board), sponsors of our Centre of Excellence;

- Downey’s Autostop, suppliers of our kit vans in both Football and Hurling;
- Mochua Print and Design, our Awards Night sponsor;
- Colgan Sports, for their support of our Golf Classic and “Club Laois” shop;
- Browne Jeweller’s, Scoreboard sponsorship;
- GAIN / Glanbia, main sponsor of our Punchestown Race Day;
- Martin Reddin Ltd, main sponsor of our Race Night in Newbridge Greyhound Stadium;
- Freesoul, 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.

Strategic Review

Our Strategic Review was launched last January and whilst we all acknowledge that there is a lot of good about the GAA in Laois, the review was instigated in the knowledge that there are a lot of areas which must be improved, particularly in view of the many challenges being encountered by the Association in the County and especially in our Clubs. Implementing

the recommendations in the report is the responsibility of every GAA stakeholder in Laois and not just Laois GAA and its executive officers. Due to time constraints with printing, I am not in a position to include an update of the implementation of recommendations to date, but promise that they will be circulated to all Clubs prior to Convention.

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 contributed so much to our association at both club and county and readily come to mind – Alan Mulhall, Noel Buggy and Michael Mulhare, Stradbally; Liam Kealy, St Joseph’s; Micheál Carroll, Crettyard, Timahoe and The Harps; Jimmy Lalor Fitzpatrick, St Fintans Mountrath; Pat Brophy, Emo; Mick Jones and Sean Larkin, Ballyroan Dick Slevin, O’Dempsey’s; Terry Leahy, Shanahoe; Liam Dunphy, Ballinakill; Mick Leigh, Arles Killeen and Ballylinan; Sean “Cooper” Brophy, Castletown; Peter Keenan, Clonad and The Heath; Mick Kavanagh, The Heath; Fr Nicholas Flavin, Rathdowney Errill; Anton Heffernan, Slieve Bloom; Pat Doyle and Bill O’Reilly, Portlaoise; Micheál Kinsella, Courtwood; Dan Norton, Clonad 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 nan-amacha.

Congratulations

I wish to acknowledge some outstanding achievements by our members in other sectors of the association during the year:

- Borris-in-Ossory Kilcotton Instrumental group comprising of David Scott, Ellen Scott, Maeve Scott, Peter Bennett and Conall O Cnamhin on their success in the All Ireland Scor na nOg competition in Sligo last February;
- The Heath Senior Mixed Rounders team on their success in the All Ireland Competition last August;
- Paddy Donovan on his success in the Men's 50+ World Handball Singles.

Buíochas

As I conclude my review of 2018 and my observations about the state and structures of our games, I want thank all those individuals and units who have assisted Laois GAA and I, during the year and who continue to keep our organisation in the County on sound footing through their hard work, co-operation, fair play and goodwill.

I wish thank my Cathaoirleach Peter O'Neill for his leadership and continued support, while also acknowledging the huge commitment and dedication he has given the Association in the County during the year.

Likewise my fellow Executive Members, CCC, Hearings and our other sub Committees for their advice, help and

cooperation during the year, each in their own right through their tireless effort and work ethic greatly contribute to the smooth running of the Association within the County. All sub Committee reports are outlined later in this booklet.

Our Office Administrator Tomas Moore, 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, and his routinely work in dealing with Referee appointments and reports, handling Ticket Sales, recording Coach Education courses, Programme editing and PR role greatly reduces the work of yours truly.

Our Coaching Staff, I thank for their tremendous work under the guidance of Lead GDA Andrew Kavanagh, whom along with Donie Brennan, Peter Hally and latest recruit Jason Coffey, all tirelessly contribute to the promotion of our games within our Clubs and Talent Academies. During the year, two of our GDA's Colm Begley and Ciaran Muldowney have moved on to greener pastures. Each in their own respective areas of expertise have contributed greatly to the enhancement and promotion of our games at grass root level and I want to sincerely thank both lads for their work with Laois GAA and wish them well in their new employments. I also want to acknowledge Laois County Council for their generous financial contribution towards the employment of our GDA's.

Our Talent Academy Mentors work tirelessly with our academies and are charged with bringing forward the next generation in both codes. They all work under the supervision of our GDA's and the introduction of athlete development programmes

in recent years in all grades will greatly compliment the coaching work of our mentors in all squads. Our thanks to: U14 Football – Daryl Egan, Alan Abbey, Glen Brennan and Paddy Travers; U15 Football – Padraig Dunne, Willie Hooney, Sean O’Shea, Adrian White, Mossy O’Connor and Michael Scully; U16 Football – Killian Fitzpatrick, Daryl Egan and Niall Walsh; U14 Hurling – Tadgh Doran, Richie Comerford, Kevin Galvin, Gary Moore and JJ Gorman; U15 Hurling – Liam Dunne, Seamus Dooley, Ollie Quinlan and Jimmy Dunne; U16 Hurling– Lorcan Mahony, Noel Delaney and Declan Qualter. I congratulate our U15 hurling academy on their success in the Tier 1 Shield Final of the Arrabawn National Hurling Tournament and our U15 football academy on reaching the Damien Reid U15 Tournament Final against Dublin, a final which has yet to be played.

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.

Thanks to our sister organisations in their promotion of our games, Ladies Football and Camogie. Our congratulations to Laois Ladies on their Leinster Intermediate Championship success.

Our sincerest thanks go to Michael Reynolds and his staff in Comhairle Laighean CLG for their constant accessibility, courtesy and support.

In March this year, our Ard Stiúrthóir Paraic Duffy retired after ten successful years at the forefront in driving the Association forward. On behalf of everyone associated with Laois GAA, our thanks for your advice, leadership and support during this period and I wish you and your family many enjoyable years ahead.

To his successor Tom Ryan and all the staff in Croke Park headquarters are also deserving of our thanks.

In conclusion, I thank all our Club Officers and Members for your co-operation and support and wish you all an enjoyable and successful 2018.

Le meas

Niall Mac Laitimh

Runaí CLG Laoise, Nollaig 2018

2018 Championship and League Results

HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP

Laois Shopping Centre SHC Final

(07/10/18) *O'Moore Park*

Camross 2-15 . . . Rathdowney Errill 0-19

Relegated: Ballyfin Gaels

Laois Shopping Centre SHC "A" Final

(07/10/18) *O'Moore Park*

Portlaoise 1-15 The Harps 1-13

Relegated: Trumera

Laois Shopping Centre IHC Final

(22/09/18) *O'Moore Park*

Slieve Bloom 3-12 Camross 1-12

Relegated: Park Ratheniska Timahoe

Laois Shopping Centre JHC Final

(22/09/18) *O'Moore Park*

Mountmellick 1-15 Castletown 0-10

Relegated: Ballinakill

Laois Shopping Centre JHC "B" Final

(23/08/18) *O'Moore Park*

Kyle 0-15 Camross 1-11

Relegated: Clough Ballacolla

Laois Shopping Centre JHC "C" Final

(29/08/18) *O'Moore Park*

Portlaoise 1-13 Ballyfin 0-07

Midlands Park Hotel U17

Hurling Championship Final

(07/10/18) *O'Moore Park*

Clough Ballacolla Mountrath 0-10

The Harps 0-08

Midlands Park U17 "B" Hurling Championship Final (05/10/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Castletown Slieve Bloom 3-08

Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 3-07

Midlands Park U17 "B" Hurling Shield Final (08/10/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Portlaoise 4-13

Clonasteele St Manmans 2-12

Midlands Park Hotel U15 Hurling Championship Final (13/10/18)

O'Moore Park

Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 1-21

Portlaoise 1-06

Midlands Park Hotel U15 "B" Hurling Championship Final (13/10/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

St Fintans Mountrath 3-06

Park Ratheniska Timahoe Gaels 0-09

Midlands Park Hotel U15 Hurling Shield Final (13/10/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Rosenallis 2-14 . . . Clough Ballacolla 3-09

Midlands Park Hotel U15 "B" Hurling Shield Final (02/10/18) *Clonad*

Ballinakill 1-17 . . . Raheen Parish Gaels 3-08

Midlands Park Hotel U13 Hurling Championship Final (22/09/18)

O'Moore Park

Camross 4-10 . . . Clough Ballacolla 2-03

**Midlands Park Hotel U13“B” Hurling
Championship Final (22/09/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

St Pauls Portarlinton 3-02

Ballinakill 1-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 Hurling
Shield Final (21/09/18) *Rathdowney***

Castletown Slieve Bloom 6-05

Rathdowney Errill 5-04

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 “B” Hurling
Shield Final (22/09/18) *Ratheniska***

Park Ratheniska Timahoe 6-04

Raheen Parish Gaels 1-03

Football Championship

Laois Shopping Centre SFC Final

(14/10/18) *O’Moore Park*

Portlaoise 2-16

O’Dempsey’s 1-13

Relegated: Clonaslee St Manmans Gaels

Laois Shopping Centre IFC Final

(29/08/18) *O’Moore Park*

Courtwood 0-16

Mountmellick Gaels 1-09

Relegated: Barrowhouse

Laois Shopping Centre JFC Final

(29/08/18) *O’Moore Park*

Annanough 0-12. O’Dempsey’s 0-10

Relegated: Errill

Laois Shopping Centre JFC “B” Final

(28/08/18) *O’Moore Park*

Castletown 2-16. Rosenallis 1-06

Relegated: The Rock

Laois Shopping Centre JFC “C” Final

(12/09/18) *O’Moore Park*

Slieve Bloom 1-11 Colt 1-07

**Midlands Park Hotel U17 Football
Championship Final (14/10/18)**

O’Moore Park

Ballyroan Abbey 2-11 . . . Portarlinton 3-08

**Midlands Park Hotel U17 Football
Championship Final Replay (21/10/18)**

O’Moore Park

Ballyroan Abbey 2-15

Portarlinton 0-08

**Midlands Park Hotel U17 “B” Football
Championship Final (12/10/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Graigucullen 0-16

Clonaslee St Manmans 1-10

**Midlands Park Hotel U17 Football
Shield Final (14/10/18) *Rathleague***

Portlaoise 3-07 The Heath 0-13

**Midlands Park Hotel U17 “B” Football
Shield Final (14/10/18)**

O’Dempsey’s

O’Dempsey’s 4-15. . . Park Ratheniska 2-06

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 Football
Championship Final (06/10/18)**

O’Moore Park

Ballyroan Abbey 1-11 . . . Portlaoise 1-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 “B” Football
Championship Final (06/10/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Rosenallis 3-07

Clonaslee St Manmans 2-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 “C” Football
Championship Final (06/10/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Rathdowney Errill 4-13

Portlaoise B 2-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 Football
Shield Final (23/09/18) -AET**

Portarlington

Portarlington 1-18 . . . Na Fianna Og 4-09

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 Football
Shield Final Replay (04/11/18)**

Ratheniska

Portarlington W/O . . . Na Fianna Og SCR

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 “B” Football
Shield Final (06/10/18) *Ratheniska***

Park Ratheniska 3-15

Killeshin Crettyard 2-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 “B” Football
Plate Final (06/10/18) *Ballylinan***

Mountmellick 7-11 Ballylinan 1-06

**Midlands Park Hotel U15 “C” Football
Shield Final (14/10/18)**

Slieve Bloom

Castletown Slieve Bloom 4-14

Clough Ballacolla 0-07

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 Football
Championship Final (29/09/18)**

O’Moore Park

Killeshin Crettyard 3-08 . . . St Pauls 0-03

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 “B” Football
Championship Final (29/09/18)**

O’Moore Park

Clough Ballacolla 2-05 . . . Camross 1-03

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 “C” Football
Championship Final (29/09/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Stradbally Parish Gaels B 1-12

Spink 0-09

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 Football
Shield Final (29/09/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Ballylinan 1-13

Stradbally Parish Gaels 2-05

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 “B” Football
Shield Final (29/09/18)**

Mountmellick

The Harps 8-06 Ballyfin 1-06

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 Football
Plate Final (15/09/18)**

Ballyroan

Ballyroan Abbey 6-16 . . . Graiguecullen 2-01

**Midlands Park Hotel U13 “B” Football
Plate Final (29/09/18)**

Slieve Bloom

Castletown Slieve Bloom 2-08

Clonaslee St Manmans 0-02

HURLING LEAGUE

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
1 Final (04/07/18) *Mountrath***

Camross 1-20 . . . Rathdowney Errill 2-13
(Relegated – Portlaoise (after Playoff))

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
1A Final (06/07/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Rosenallis 1-19 . . . Rathdowney Errill 2-14
(Promoted – Rosenallis; Relegated – Clonad)

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
2 Final (06/07/18) *Colt***

Clough Ballacolla 0-17 . Slieve Bloom 1-13
(*Promoted – Clough Ballacolla; Relegated –
Castletown*)

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
3 Final (06/07/18) *Rathleague***

Camross 1-15
Park Ratheniska Timahoe 1-07
(*Promoted – Camross; Relegated – St
Fintan’s Mountrath*)

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
4 Final (13/07/18)**

Shanahoe
St Lazerian’s Abbeyleix 0-19
Rathdowney Errill 0-09
(*Promoted – St Lazerian’s Abbeyleix;
Relegated – Colt (after Playoff)*)

**Laois Shopping Centre ACHL Division
5 Final (07/07/18) *Colt***

The Harps 1-12 Portlaoise 0-12
(*Promoted – The Harps*)

**Palmer Cup (League Basis) – St
Lazerian’s Abbeyleix**

**Midlands Park U17 Hurling League
Division 1 Final (23/07/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence
The Harps 1-17 Ballinakill Gaels 1-07

**Midlands Park U17 Hurling League
Division 2 Final (14/07/18) *Errill***

Castletown Slieve Bloom 2-16
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 2-06

**Midlands Park U15 Hurling League
Division 1 Final (29/09/18)**

Rathdowney
Rathdowney Errill 1-14
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 1-07

**Midlands Park U15 Hurling League
Division 2 Final (15/07/18)**

St Fintan’s Mountrath W/O
Park Ratheniska Timahoe SCR

**Féile na nGael U14 Hurling (08/04/18)
*Castletown***

Castletown Slieve Bloom 3-05
Camross 2-04

**Féile na nGael U14 “B” Hurling
(08/04/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence
Ballinakill 2-05
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton 2-04

**Midlands Park U13 Hurling League
Division 1 Cup Final (03/07/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence
Camross 4-08 The Harps 1-04

**Midlands Park U13 Hurling League
Division 2 Cup Final (01/07/18)**

Portarlinton
Ballinakill 4-03
St Pauls Portarlinton 1-07

**Midlands Park U13 Hurling League
Division 1 Shield Final (29/06/18)**

Abbeyleix
Rathdowney Errill 2-10
St Lazerian’s Abbeyleix 2-07

**Midlands Park U13 Hurling League
Division 2 Shield Final (02/07/18)**

Clonad

Raheen Parish Gaels 4-06 . . . Rosenallis 1-09

**Laois U11 Hurling Division 1 Cup
Final (06/09/18)**

O'Moore Park

The Harps 3-06 . . . Clough Ballacolla 1-07

**Laois U11 Hurling Division 2 Cup
Final (06/09/18)**

O'Moore Park

Park Ratheniska/Timahoe 4-08

Portarlinton 3-02

**Laois U11 Hurling Division 1 Shield
Final (06/09/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Camross 2-05 Mountrath 1-03

**Laois U11 Hurling Division 2 Shield
Final (06/09/18)**

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Mountmellick 2-05 The Harps 1-02

FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

1 Final (14/07/18) *O'Moore Park*

O'Dempsey's 1-17 St Joseph's 0-14

(Relegated – Ballylinan & Stradbally)

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

1A Final (14/07/18) *O'Moore Park*

Ballyroan Abbey 0-09

Arles Kilcruise 1-10

(Promoted – Arles Kilcruise & Ballyroan

Abbey; Relegated – Rosenallis & Crettyard)

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

2 Final (11/07/18) *Stradbally*

Courtwood 4-14 Courtwood 1-08

(Promoted – St Joseph's & Courtwood;

Relegated – Ballyfin & Kilcavan (after

Playoff))

**Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division
3 Final (07/07/18)**

Mountmellick

The Heath 2-16 Portarlinton 2-12

(Promoted – Portarlinton & The Heath;

Relegated – Timahoe & Portlaoise)

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

4 Final (08/07/18) *Mountrath*

Camross 2-14 Rosenallis 2-14

(Promoted - Camross & Rosenallis; Relegated

– Crettyard & The Harps)

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

4 Final Replay (19/10/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Rosenallis 2-10 Camross 2-07

Laois Shopping Centre ACFL Division

5 Final (07/07/18) *Ballylinan*

Graigucullen 2-03 St Joseph's 0-07

(Promoted – Graigucullen & St Joseph's)

Kelly Cup (10/11/18)

Crettyard

O'Dempsey's 2-19 Stradbally 0-14

Midlands Park U17 Football League

Division 1 Final (31/07/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence

Ballyroan Abbey 3-18

Killeshin Crettyard 2-04

Midlands Park U17 Football League

Division 2 Final (10/09/18)

Mountmellick

Portlaoise 2-10 Park Ratheniska 2-09

**Midlands Park U15 Football League
Division 1 Final (14/07/18)**
Ratheniska
Ballyroan Abbey 1-10 Portlaoise 2-06

**Midlands Park U15 Football League
Division 2 Final (11/07/18)**
LOETB COE
Clonaslee St Manmans 2-12
Park Ratheniska Spink 3-05

**Midlands Park U15 Football League
Division 3 Final (14/07/18)**
Ballacolla
Rathdowney Errill 2-07
Clough Ballacolla 2-06

**Féile Peil na nOg U14 Football
(15/04/18)**
LOETB Centre of Excellence
Portlaoise 6-05 Portarlington 0-00

**Féile Peil na nOg U14 “B” Football
(16/04/18)**
LOETB Centre of Excellence
Graiguecullen 6-06. The Heath 1-01

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 1 Cup Final (06/07/18)**
Killeshin
Crettyard W/O St Paul’s SCR

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 2 Cup Final (20/06/18)**
The Harps
Camross 2-08 The Harps 3-03

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 3 Cup Final (02/08/18)**
Spink
Spink 5-06 Portlaoise 2-07

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 1 Shield Final (08/07/18)**
Kilcavan
Portarlington 3-12 Kilcavan 1-09

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 2 Shield Final (14/06/18)**
The Heath
The Heath 1-10
Castletown Slieve Bloom 3-03

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 3 Shield Final (27/06/18)**
O’Dempsey’s
St Pauls 5-08. O’Dempsey’s 6-05

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 3 Shield Final Replay
(10/08/18)**
Courtwood
O’Dempsey’s 5-11 St Pauls 4-02

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 1 Plate Final (04/07/18)**
Rathleague
Portlaoise 6-12 Graiguecullen 4-08

**Midlands Park U13 Football League
Division 2 Plate Final (15/06/18)**
Kilcruise
Na Fianna Og 8-14
Clonaslee St Manmans 1-02

**Laois U11 Football Division 1 Cup
Final (19/08/18)**
O’Moore Park
Killeshin 5-12 Portlaoise 5-04

**Laois U11 Football Division 2 Cup
Final (19/08/18)** *O’Moore Park*
The Harps 2-06 Na Fianna Og 1-03

Laois U11 Football Division 3 Cup

Final (23/09/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence
Castletown 3-03 . . . Clough Ballacolla 1-12

Laois U11 Football Division 4 Cup

Final (19/08/18)

O'Moore Park
St Fintans Gaels 3-03 Portlaoise 0-01

Laois U11 Football Division 1 Shield

Final (19/08/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence
St Joseph's 4-06 Ballylinan 0-06

Laois U11 Football Division 2 Shield

Final (19/08/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence
The Heath 4-02 Stradbally 1-07

Laois U11 Football Division 3 Shield

Final (19/08/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence
Crettyard 4-06
Clonaslee St Manmans 1-02

Laois U11 Football Division 4 Shield

Final (23/09/18)

LOETB Centre of Excellence
The Harps 4-06 Railyard 1-06

LEINSTER CLUB

AIB Leinster Club SFC

Q/Final in Newbridge on 11/11/18

Portlaoise 1-14, Moorefield (Ke) 1-11

S/Final in Parnell Park on 25/11/18

Portlaoise v Kilmacud Crokes (Dub)

AIB Leinster Club IFC

Q/Final in Ardee on 10/11/18

Courtwood 2-9, St Mochtas (Lh) 1-10

S/Final in Newbridge on 24/11/18

Courtwood v Two Mile House (Ke)

AIB Leinster Club JFC

Q/Final in Dowdallshill on 10/11/18

Annanough 0-5, Dundalk Young Irelands (Lh) 2-14

AIB Leinster Club SHC

Q/Final in O'Moore Park on 05/11/18

Camross 2-16, Naomh Eanna (Wex) 3-18

AIB Leinster Club IHC

Q/Final in Aughrim on 03/11/18

Portlaoise 0-16, Glenealy (Ww) 1-10

S/Final in O'Moore Park on 17/11/18

Portlaoise v Ballinamere (Oy)

AIB Leinster Club JHC

Round 1 in Round Towers Lusk on

20/10/18

Slieve Bloom 0-13, St Maurs (Dub) 3-14

Sub - Committees Reports

Coiste Na nÓg Laoise Annual Report 2018

On behalf of the Laois GAA Juvenile Committee, I would like to thank everybody who contributed to the successful running of an extensive programme of games in 2018. It was another busy year which started in March and continued right up to late November. This was the first year that the main competitions moved to the odd years as in under 11, 13, 15 and 17 and it was in the latter age grade that the real benefit of doing so can be best seen as a full programme of matches were run for this age group without having any impact on adult activity as was the case in previous years.

We were treated to some very exciting games during the year particularly at the finals stages which were run over 4 weeks in September and October. Another feature of the programme was the continued running of a number of shield and plate competitions for teams that did not make the knockout stages of their grade. This was in the main a success and led to teams having an interest in competitive action well into the autumn. I would like to thank the Midlands Park Hotel who sponsored our championships during the year. They also kindly hosted our draws back in May.

The workload of the juvenile committee is made much easier by Niall Handy and Tomas Moore who take on the brunt of the workload with regard to the running of games. Also, I like to thank the GDAs who organise the go games activities, summer camps and the autumn development com-

petitions. Pat O'Sullivan ensured that we had programmes for our finals in O'Moore Park while Colm McEvoy had the pitch in pristine condition.

However, a number of challenges need to be addressed if we want our games to continue to prosper. The first concerns the structures within clubs. A feature of 2018 was the number of clubs who entered teams even though it should have been obvious that the players weren't there. The result led to walkovers with clubs contacting the county board looking for their players to be facilitated elsewhere. On a number of occasions particularly earlier in the season, the Laois CCC acceded to requests in the interests of participation but as the year went by, there was a glut of requests from clubs looking to be accommodated. In 2019, I believe it is vital that clubs have their house in order on time in order to ensure a level playing pitch for all teams and to facilitate the smooth running of competitions.

The second challenge that needs to be address is discipline both on and off the field. A perusal of the Laois CCC reports during the year highlights the issues involved. While a referee can deal with events on the field, a big difficulty has been the behaviour of mentors and supporters particularly at juvenile matches. The situation has reached crisis point as our already small group of referees continues to be depleted partly in my view down to the behaviour of not an insignificant cohort of parents and mentors.

Speaking of referees, I wish to acknowledge their role in the administration of games. Without them, there would be no games and in 2019 serious consideration will have to be given to reducing the overall number of games and competitions if the decline in the number of referees continues. I also like to express my gratitude to our linesmen and umpires who do what is often both a difficult and thankless job.

Finally, I like to thank the outgoing committee chaired by Danny Gorman.

Also thanks to Barry Murphy, Gary Moore and Alan Hartnett, who worked hard at getting the grading right and ensured that the finals were run off on schedule.

Best wishes for the year ahead to all our players, mentors and officials of clubs who contributed to promotion of games for 2018.

Seán O Conghaile
Runaí Coiste Na nÓg Laoise

Planning, Physical Development & Health and Safety Report 2018

As County Development Officer of C.L.G. Laoise, it gives me great pleasure to present my annual report to County Convention 2018.

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 2018 included; assisting and supporting Clubs with their Club Development Grant Applications, Strategic Club Planning Programmes, Club

Leadership Development Programme (CLDP) and facilitating Safety Inspections & Stewards Training.

Club Development Grant Applications

2018 - The year under review again has seen continuous growth in physical development both at Club and County Grounds. It is expected that 10 GAA clubs will receive Leinster Council grant aid in the coming months. These applications have been processed and submitted to Leinster Council with appropriate recommendations.

Obtained from receipts submitted by the participating clubs, the total spend in Laois for physical development in 2018 was in the region of €300,000.00. At the time of this report going to print, Leinster Council had not finalised a percentage for which clubs will be given on receipts submitted. However, it is anticipated that this percentage will be in the region of between 7 & 8 percent.

At this juncture I would like to acknowledge and thank the volunteers and staff

of Comhairle Laighean, in particular Michael Reynolds (CEO), Jim Bolger (Chathaoirleach) and Patricia Clear for their continued advice, help and support.

In the present climate I am acutely aware of the limited grant aid available to clubs. G.A.A. grant aid to all counties is again in line with the previous year allocation. However, the Sports Capital Funding announced for Laois, 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.

Well done to all the successful applicants. These funds will add to the already impressive facilities dotted around our county.

Club Strategic Development Plan

There are Clubs presently in the process of initiating their Clubw Strategic Plans while others already have plans in place and are progressing with same. This is a time to reflect on the structures and development of our Club units as they approach their Annual General Meetings. Some Clubs are still suffering from the effects of emigration including work commitments involving long commutes and some are also finding it challenging to attract new volunteers. The Club Development Planning process will help Clubs focus on what they are presently doing and what is required to move forward. I would strongly urge each and every club to put a '3 Year Club Development Plan' in place over the coming months.

In supporting the above, Croke Park have recently identified and provided training for appropriate persons (i.e. Club Planners) to deliver and assist clubs in drafting same. The role of GAA Club Planner is to engage with Clubs on an individual basis to facilitate the development of 3-year Club Plans. Planners identified for Laois are Liam O Neill (Trumera) and Pat Leogue (Portlaoise).

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 all Clubs who officially launched their Club Strategic Development Plans during the departing year.

Please note, going forward the Club Strategic Development Plan is be changing to a **3 Year Club Plan**.

Pairc Ui Mhordha/ Centre of Excellence

It is heartening to see the upgrade works completed in Pairc Ui Mhordha and the on-going 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, Jody Conway 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 Ollie Byrne 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 C.E. Group Scheme and Tús Programme, who continue to keep and maintain our grounds to a very high standard.

Unfortunately one of our long standing and respected stewards passed away during the year. I want to offer my sincere condolences to the Lawlor-Fitzpatrick family on the sad passing of Jimmy. Jimmy is and will continue to be sadly missed in O' Moore Park on match days. The presence of Brian Carty (RTE) at Jimmy's removal mass was testament to his character and fondness he bestowed on all GAA Gaels.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam

I want to record and acknowledge the cooperation, help and good will I received

from Peter O Neill, Niall Handy and Thomas Moore and the other members of the executive, together with the representatives of Comhairle Chontae Laoise and An Garda Síochana, when organising and planning all major fixtures and other pertinent projects.

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 Coordinator 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 –The new Club Leadership Development Programme was rolled out for all Principal Club Officers in March 2018. The Principal Officers in each club were given the opportunity to:

- Gain a better understanding of what their role involves
- Develop basic leadership, management and communication skills
- Experience increased role satisfaction
- Have an awareness of where to access resources and supports
- Be able to share ideas and solve problems with fellow officers
- Be better prepared for future roles in the Association
- Receive a Certificate of Achievement

24 Clubs, 70 Club Officers circa have already benefited from the programme in Laois in 2018. It is envisaged that this training will take place again in 2020. Further training, namely Club AGM training was offered to all clubs during the year however, as only 2 clubs responded it was not viable to run.

Steward Training – Additional stewards are required for the forthcoming season and any assistance from your Club in this regard would be greatly appreciated. It is now mandatory that all stewards are competent and accredited by The Portobello Institute hence, training will be provided accordingly. Croke Park will also facilitate any training requirements for new stewards as required.

Croke Park will also be providing refresher training in the coming months for stewards in Laois who have already completed this training back in 2013/2014.

Conclusion

I want to sincerely thank my committee of Tom Jones, 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 including the GDA’s, 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



Laois Senior Football Team 2018



Laois Senior Hurling team 2018

Coiste Eisteachta (Hearings Committee) Report 2018

A new County Hearings Committee (C.H.C.) was formed in January 2018 and we immediately got together as a group to discuss the role and remit of the committee under the rules of the Association and the Laois County Bye Laws. The role of the Hearings Committee in simple terms is to assess the evidence put before it in an impartial manner and to adjudicate on the disputed facts or interpretations in dispute. The C.H.C. must discharge this function fairly and in good faith and always in accordance with the rules of an Teoraí Oifigiúil. All members of the C.H.C. gave a commitment that all decisions would be transparent and the Secretary of the committee could be contacted if a referee, individual or club required clarification on any decision reached by the committee (in which they were a relevant party).

The Chairman and Secretary of the committee then met with the Competitions Control Committee (C.C.C.) to discuss the procedures and relationship between both committees for the year ahead. Following a meeting with the referees to outline the role of the committee and the importance of referees submitting good quality, fully completed reports following each match we had all the groundwork done in preparation for the year ahead.

The first task of the year was to hear the appeals to decisions on transfers issued by the C.C.C. In total we had 7 appeals to the C.C.C. decision which we could uphold, overrule or refer back to the C.C.C. Of these 5 were upheld and 2 were referred back to the C.C.C. for rehearing, these 2

were appealed again following the second decision of the C.C.C. but was subsequently withdrawn and the decision of the CCC stood. Arising from the C.H.C. decision in 3 of these transfers (which related to 3 siblings) the matter was referred to the DRA (Case DRA 03/2018) by one of the clubs involved which we were required to defend along with the C.C.C. The DRA upheld our decision in all 3 cases. It is worth noting that 6 of the 7 appeals on transfers related to players under the age of 18 and I would urge clubs who are amalgamated at juvenile level to put procedures in place to ensure parents are aware of which club they are registering their child with initially to avoid disappointment and conflict at a later stage.

While still in the process of hearing appeals on transfers the first of the hearing requests started to come in and these continued right up to the end of October. These hearing requests were in response to disciplinary action taken by the C.C.C. on foot of referee reports. In total we received 21 requests for hearings which we heard and issued decisions based on the evidence provided. In all cases we were not aware what penalty had been issued by the C.C.C. and once we reached our decision the penalty was in accordance with rule in all cases. A summary of the cases are as follows:-

Players – 13 Hearings Requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 case was not heard as it was deemed out of time (over 3 days) in accordance with rule. • 3 requests were withdrawn before the scheduled hearing took place. • 5 received a One Match Suspension. • 1 received a Two Match Suspension. • 3 Had No Case to Answer however during the course of 2 of these hearings other infractions were highlighted which were notified to the C.C.C.
Officials/Supporters – 8 Hearings Requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 had No Case to Answer • 5 Received 4 Week Suspensions • 1 Received a 12 Week Suspension • 1 Received a 4 Week Suspension and €200 Fine (for Club)

In the case of all Appeals and Hearings individual members of the C.H.C. excused themselves if there were any perceived conflicts of interest. All those in attendance at appeals or hearings also have the opportunity to object to any member of the C.H.C.

In 2018 there were some high profile matters before the C.H.C. which of course were picked up by Social Media and some cases the details of the hearings were reported inaccurately leading to inappropriate or unjustified commentary. The C.H.C. can stand over all decisions reached and while some of those appearing before the committee may be disappointed with the outcome they can be assured that all matters are given the same consideration and all decisions reached are in accordance with the Rules of the Association. While it might be the opinion of some that these rules are outdated or not appropriate, by adhering to these rules every member is held accountable to the same standard which is the fairest way to operate.

I would like to thank all of the individual players and club representatives for their courteous co-operation in their dealings with the C.H.C., the representatives of the C.C.C. for their courtesy and consideration and the referees who replied so promptly and professionally when clarification of their reports was requested to assist the committee in reaching their decisions. I would also like to acknowledge the role of Niall Handy and Tomás Moore in the preparation of paperwork and for liaising with referees on our behalf when we sought clarification of their reports.

My biggest thanks must go to the members of this year's C.H.C, Glen Brennan, Seamus Campion, Michéal Condron, Sheila Devoy, John Kelly, Richard Kennedy, Michael Lennon and Alex Stenson who gave so generously of their time often at very short notice to conduct the hearings and for the professional and respectful manner in which they conducted themselves at all times. It was a pleasure working with you all! And finally on behalf of all of the committee I would like to thank John Hanniffy

our Chairman who guided us throughout the year and shared with us his vast knowledge of the rules of the Association from his many years of experience. We must also congratulate John on his recent appointment to the DRA panel, we wish him every success in this role.

Many thanks to everyone involved in Laois GAA and I wish you all every success in 2019.

Adrainne Mhic Cárthaigh

Runaí

Coiste Eisteachta Laoise 2018

Public Relations & Marketing Committee Report 2018

Thank you for taking the time to read our report which will reflect the very busy and successful year we have had as a committee and demonstrate that while we are at an end of year report stage the role of this committee is a constant year round commitment given by a very hard working group of volunteers which I have been privileged to have working with me on this committee.

This was my first year in this role and we had to hit the ground running as no sooner had the county convention finished when we were straight into action. The commencement of my role came very shortly after the publication of the “Strategic review of Laois GAA” and there was many recommendations relevant to the role of County PRO and our committee. With that in mind we did our utmost throughout the year to target the areas suggested for improvements, while also carrying on what would be considered to be the day to day duties of our group and the need for the GAA community and the public at large to be made aware of what was going on that may benefit themselves and their respective clubs.

One of the recommendations referred to in the report was “Develop stronger relations with all media “From the outset that was our goal where we could work with the print press, Leinster Express, Laois Nationalist, online press, Laois Today and Radio Midlands 103 and TV with Laois TV. Having press nights arranged in a good and timely fashion pre competition and pre games was important and putting in place our media group which ensured any in-

formation was received by all at the same time was, I think another important initiative. The success on the field of play by our Senior football team brought us in contact with the National media where we organised press nights, photo shoots, with players and managers available for interviews as well as arranging press access on match days . Again it was all very new to us but while very demanding it was also satisfying when we received very positive feedback. All reporters I now realise have very long and sometimes unsocialable hours and the provision of much needed food and drink was very welcome in the press box and allows non interrupted work. Our hospitality was another initiative that also drew universal praise, thanks must go to Bosco’s Catering. I believe we have made strong connections with the National press and strengthened our links with our local media groups and we thank them all sincerely for the publicity they give all our games and activities.

Another recommendation was “Expand the use of social media and other communications” We use 4 different platforms in this regard now.

Facebook: Our Facebook numbers have increased by over 2000 new followers, which is positive. This is mainly attributed to Laois TV and the good work they do and try and cover as many matches as possible and provide viewing highlights with commentary in particular to our diaspora living in far off places and also our members who cannot make it to our matches for one reason or another. The photographs and images that Paul Dargan has brought to us

has been phenomenal and for me brings the term volunteerism to a whole new level as he has gone around the country and even overseas to capture both our players and supporters in both codes and make them available to you to cherish and keep . I can safely say that Pauls work has been the main reason why our Facebook page has increased in popularity.

Twitter: This platform has shown a marked increase of followers where we have over 26K at present which shows an increase since the start of the year. Through twitter we have brought you score by score accounts for our Laois teams in League and championship which this year had its challenges while we enjoyed a shorter year at intercounty the condensed fixture schedule saw both our senior and Minor teams at both codes playing the same weekends. We have also provided score by score updates of all matches that took place in O Moore Park. Our twitter is also important to advertise upcoming events and record other GAA events. Twitter also throws up huge challenges where it appears that even good news stories won't escape the wrath.

Instagram: Has been introduced for 2018 and has become a great hit. It again appeals to a different age group and gets great reaction to our live videos of behind the scenes, team areas, and activities to action on the field. Again the quality of Paul Dargan's work has contributed hugely to this success story.

Laois GAA Website: The website is in a transition stage at the moment where we are in the process of updating and making it more user friendly in particular to people's mobile phones. Thanks to Tomas

Moore who is keeping the current one up to date but hopefully our goal is to have the update ready for the New Year.

I would like to put on record my gratitude to all the counties we visited and Croke park officials who allowed our media team access and cooperation on each occasion. Long may it continue and may our trips to the GAA headquarters increase for both codes in 2019.

As you can see we have made terrific use of our Social media platforms with increased traffic on them all. Of course like all organisations we have had low points and in this regard I appeal to all members to take personal responsibility for what you do or post in this regard. I also appeal to all clubs to ensure you monitor and manage your media accounts vigilantly and remind your members of their responsibility. While these outlets can be great way of promoting your club and all the good work you do if not monitored can quickly do the opposite if club committees don't keep this to the forefront of their agendas.

Another recommendation was "Provide briefings to Media prior to Inter county League and championship games". I believe we met this target and did the best we possibly could but of course I am sure there is always room for improvement. With that in mind I need to sincerely thank the team's management in particular Eamon Kelly and John Sugrue who were always giving of their time in a courteous and professional manner and always had players available also. Thanks also to Enda Lyons and Donnacha Phelan and without all of the above my job would have been a lot more difficult.

The strategic report also suggested “The upgrade of Media facilities in O Moore Park”. This project is much needed and the national infrastructure committee have this work earmarked for funding very shortly and we hope that will come to pass very soon. We the PR committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the Strategic review committee and their report which has given us a clear vision of where we are and where we need to get to.

This committee set about our goals for the year and most have been mentioned in this report however another aim of ours was to try and enhance and make the experience for our fans who spend their hard earned money to come to O Moore Park a better one and one they would remember for the right reasons. The introduction of Fans photos and the selfie frame upon arrival went really well as did the handing out of our county flags to our young and

Laois GAA award winners 2018

Ladies Junior Player of the Year:	Ciara Langton (<i>St Joseph's</i>)
Hall of fame award:	John Conway (<i>Arles Kilcruise</i>)
Special lifetime contribution award:	Ollie Byrne (<i>Portlaoise/Laois</i>)
Senior Hurling:	Ciaran Collier (<i>Camross</i>)
Senior Football:	Conor Boyle (<i>Portlaoise</i>)
Camogie:	Mary Keating (<i>O'Moore's</i>)
Senior Ladies Football:	Ciara O Loughlin (<i>Sarsfields</i>)
Senior A Hurling:	Aaron Bergin (<i>Portlaoise</i>)
Intermediate Football:	Niall Donohoe (<i>Courtwood</i>)
Intermediate Hurling:	Ciaran Conroy (<i>Slieve Bloom</i>)
Intermediate Ladies Football:	Isobel Finlay (<i>Shanahoe</i>)
Junior Hurling:	Donnchadh Hartnett (<i>Mountmellick</i>)
Junior Football:	Rory Stapleton (<i>Annanough</i>)
Junior Ladies Football:	Emma Lawlor (<i>St Paul's</i>)
Junior B Football:	Brendan Reddin (<i>Castletown</i>)
Junior B Hurling:	Eoin Quinlan (<i>Kyle</i>)
Scor:	Borris in Ossory instrumental Group.
Referee of the year:	Brendan Mc Cann (<i>Portarlinton</i>)
Rounder's person of the year:	Kevin Maher (<i>The Heath</i>)
Handball:	Paddy Donovan (<i>St Brigid's</i>)
Minor Hurling:	Mark Hennessy (<i>Clough Ballacolla/Mountrath</i>)
Minor Football:	Ciaran Byrne (<i>Ballyroan Abbey</i>)
Laois Ladies County Player of the Year:	Amy Potts (<i>St Brigid's</i>)

not so young supporters proved positive for us, as was our face painting at both senior county final days which was very well received. This aspect has to stay in place and even expanded on as we understand fully the importance of supporting your County and what that day means to you and your families.

Laois GAA Awards Function; Once again another very successful night and congratulations to all the deserving winners listed below. Particular thanks again to Mochua Print and design for their sponsorship of the event. To our MC Will O Callaghan a big thanks. To all our contributors on the night thank you and to our hard working committee who organised the night. Can I also thank the selection committee which was made up of representatives from all local media outlets and County board members of each code for their work in the selection of award winners. Thanks to the Ladies County boards of both Football and Camogie, The Rounder's and Handball associations.

Match Programmes: We have endeavoured to maintain and improve where possible the high quality programme available to you all and to ensure when you buy a programme you are getting an accurate and informative booklet that you value and appreciate. This takes hard work for both County and club programmes and I want to particularly thank Tomas Moore for his patience and diligence in this regard. His job would have been much harder without the support of the various County board secretaries and PROs who have to get the information to us in a timely fashion which isn't an easy task sometimes. To all the local club contributors a big thank you again

deadlines have to be met and in all cases you have greatly helped and assisted us. Our programme is greatly enhanced by the quality of material in particular photos from Paul Dargan again credit where it is due. The concept of a multi match programme introduced by my predecessor is a great idea and also offers good value for money. I thank the businesses of Laois who took out advertisements, also may I thank all the contributors. The programme sellers who have braved all the elements and gave up their free time to assist, to Mochua print in particular Andrew for his professionalism. Again to both Niall Handy and Tomas Moore appreciate your time and effort. To you the patron who bought the programmes I hope you have enjoyed what we have provided and will continue to support us into the future.

The strategic review all recommended “**The production of a Yearbook to capture all clubs and county features**”. This production was reviewed and went through the planning and approval stage but was not proceeded with. I strongly agree the merits of such a book and hope the committee next year will put it high on their agenda. In order to ensure such is possible the links with our club Pro needs to be strong. This is an area I agree we have been unable to develop beyond a voluntary what's App group. This should be a priority by clubs to enhance their PR officer and at county level by the County PRO putting together additional supports and training for these volunteers. If re-elected I intend to make this a primary focus for myself and my committee.

A highlight for us has been the collaboration with The Kolbe special school who

was nominated by both our Hurling and Football senior squads. The football divisional trials gave us that opportunity to not alone raise some much needed funds but more importantly highlight their daily struggle both pupils and staff have to endure in their current location. Once again the GAA people of Laois assisted as our gates to the games raised almost €4000.

In conclusion I would like to thank the following: The players at every level because without your efforts on the Hurling and football fields we would have nothing to report or promote. Your participation in this years meet and greet was also a great success.

To the Managers of all the teams both at county and club level thanks for your courtesy and time.

To all the club secretaries and Pro for your assistance and cooperation in particular on match days a sincere thanks.

To County Secretary Niall Handy and my fellow county board officials for your support and advice thank you.

To the Laois GAA administrator Tomas Moore for his work and attention to detail my gratitude.

I have been truly blessed by the unique and diverse committee that willingly volunteered to come on board this year. Each with their own area of expertise and people whom I have relied on constantly. They deserve special recognition for what they have done for Laois GAA this year.

They are Martina Carew, Enda Carroll, Paul Dargan, Bosco Ramsbottom, Michael Egan and Tomas Moore I can't thank them enough.

Finally it would be remiss of me not to thank sincerely my wife Pauline and my daughters Caitriona and Eimear who despite the slugging have made it possible for me to give as much time as I am committing to Laois GAA, a job I love doing and hope my work has been a positive to all in Laois GAA.

Is mise,

Pat O Sullivan
Laois GAA P.R.O.

Coaching and Games Report

Convention 2018

This is my final year as Coaching and Games Introduction

As the curtain comes down on another busy GAA year it's time to look back and reflect on what has been achieved and what we need to focus on for the coming year.

I would just like to take the opportunity to thank a couple of people for their contribution to Coaching and Games in our County over the last number of years. I would like to thank Ciaran Muldowney for his work and dedication to his role as a GDA for Laois, Ciaran has decided to pursue a new career and I would like to wish him success in his new role. I would also like to wish Colm Begley all the best in his new role with the GPA and thank him also for his hard work and dedication to his role as a GDA in Laois over the last few years. While we wish the two lads all the best in their new careers it also gives me the opportunity to welcome a new member of our GDA team in Laois and that is Jason Coffey, I hope you will all join me in wishing Jason all the best in his new role as a GDA in Laois, Jason comes with a wealth of experience and I feel his energy and enthusiasm for the job will only be a positive for Laois GAA.

As I complete my first year in this Coaching and Games Officers role I feel that we have made progress in implementing many of the recommendations of the Strategic Review that was commissioned by Laois GAA and published at the beginning of this year, I have to say that the review was

a very good template for me to work from and because it had the input from all the clubs and stakeholders of the GAA community in Laois it meant that I would be trying to implement the recommendations put forward by all Laois GAA people. One recommendation of the Strategic Review was that the Coaching Officer would attend organized monthly meetings with the GDA's and I have to say that we have managed to have a Coaching and Games meeting every month over the last year with the exception of one month around holiday time and I have managed to be present at them all and I have to say that they have been a very valuable exercise in keeping me in touch with what the GDA's are doing on a daily basis and has allowed me an input where I thought it was necessary.

1. Primary School Activity

I have a firm belief that primary school GAA activity is key to getting young people involved in Gaelic Games at an early age which in turn should see club's benefit from an increase in membership going forward.

At this point I would just like to mention the club school link, I think that this is a facility that clubs do not avail of enough and it's a facility that we would encourage every club to take up, not only does it give the club a chance to provide some coaching in the school but it also gives a club the opportunity to promote itself within the school which hopefully will also lead to increased membership.

If you require any further information on the club school link I would be very happy to share this information with you and your local GDA will assist you in getting this setup.

At this point in time I would like to sincerely thank Shane Ó Meachair who is very involved in GAA activity in our Primary Schools and ran a very successful Cumann Na mBunscol Development squad program for Boys and Girls in 6th class last year which saw over 50 Boys and girls get the opportunity to play in Croke Park on Leinster Final Day.

2. Urban GAA Participation

It was identified in our strategic review that we needed to have more urban participation in our Gaelic Games and one of our GDA's Peter Halley has been leading the way in this regard. Peter has organized a Town League in Portlaoise for Primary schools as a pilot scheme which will see a football town league take place this side of Christmas and hurling town league take place after Christmas. See below the detailed schedule and organization that has gone in to this program.

Primary School Football Town League 2018/19		Day 1	
5th and 6th Class Boys and Girls		Holy Family 2 Pitches	
		Centre of Excellence 4 Pitches	
Tue Nov 6th	Group 1	Group 2	
	Holy Family	Scoil Bhride	
	Gaelscoil	Ballyfin NS	
	Educate Together	Heath NS	
	Maryborough NS	Ratheniska NS	

	Boys	Boys	Girls
Venue	Holy Family	Laois Centre of Excellence	Laois Centre of Excellence
Time	Fixture Pitches 1 and 2	Fixture Pitches 1 and 2	Fixture Pitches 3 and 4
10am	Holy Family vs Educate Together	Scoil Bhride vs Ballyfin NS	Scoil Bhride vs Ballyfin NS
10.am	Gaelscoil vs Maryborough	Heath NS vs Ratheniska NS	Heath NS vs Ratheniska NS

10.40am	Holy Family vs Maryborough	Scoil Bhríde vs Heath NS	Scoil Bhríde vs Heath NS
10.40am	Gaelscoil vs Educate Together	Ballyfin NS vs Ratheniska NS	Ballyfin NS vs Ratheniska NS
11.20am	Holy Family vs Gaelscoil	Scoil Bhríde NS vs Ratheniska	Scoil Bhríde NS vs Ratheniska
11.20am	Educate Together vs Maryborough	Ballyfin NS vs Heath NS	Ballyfin NS vs Heath NS

	Girls		
Time	Fixture Pitches 1 and 2		
12noon	Holy Family vs Educate Together		
12noon	Gaelscoil vs Maryborough		
12.40am	Holy Family vs Maryborough		
12.40am	Gaelscoil vs Educate Together		
1.20pm	Holy Family vs Gaelscoil		
1.20pm	Educate Together vs Maryborough		

Primary School Football Town League 2018/19		Day 2
5th and 6th Class Boys and Girls		4 Pitches
Tue Nov 13th	Group A	Group B
	1st Group 1	3rd Group 1
	1st Group 2	3rd Group 2
	2nd Group 1	4th Group 1
	2nd Group 2	4th Group 2
Venue	Laois Centre of Excellence	Laois Centre of Excellence

	Boys	Girls
Time	Fixture Pitches 1 and 2	Fixture Pitches 3 and 4
10am	1st Group 1 vs 2nd Group 2 [Rd 1 A]	1st Group 1 vs 2nd Group 2 [Rd 1 A]
10.am	1st Group 2 vs 2nd Group 1 [Rd 1 B]	1st Group 2 vs 2nd Group 1 [Rd 1 B]
10.40am	3rd Group 1 vs 4th Group 2 [Rd 1 C]	3rd Group 1 vs 4th Group 2 [Rd 1 C]
10.40am	3rd Group 2 vs 4th Group 1 [Rd 1 D]	3rd Group 2 vs 4th Group 1 [Rd 1 D]
11.20am	Semi Final Winner A vs 2nd B	Semi Final Winner A vs 2nd B
11.20am	Semi Final Winner B vs 2nd A	Semi Final Winner B vs 2nd A
12noon	Semi Final Winner C vs 2nd D	Semi Final Winner C vs 2nd D
12noon	Semi Final Winner D vs 2nd C	Semi Final Winner D vs 2nd C

Primary School Football Town League 2018/19		Finals Day
5th and 6th Class Boys and Girls		2 Pitches
Tuesday Nov 20th	Finals Day	
Venue	O'Moore Park Pitch 1	O'Moore Park Pitch 2
Time	Fixture Pitch 1	Fixture Pitch 2
	Boys	Girls
10am	Plate Final	Plate Final
	3rd Group B vs 4th Group B	3rd Group B vs 4th Group B
10.40am	Plate Final	Plate Final
	1st Group B vs 2nd Group B	1st Group B vs 2nd Group B
11.20pm	Shield Final	Shield Final
	3rd Group A vs 4th Group A	3rd Group B vs 4th Group B
12noon	Cup	Cup
	1st Group A vs 2nd Group A	1st Group A vs 2nd Group A

Thanks to Peter for all his hard work on this project and we wish him every success with it.

3. Secondary School Activity

Transition Year Program

Our GDA's have started an initiative to help the link grow between our Secondary Schools the Primary Schools and the Club. This initiative is carried out with Transition year students we have four major Secondary Schools which have engaged in this program, Mountrath CS, St. Fergals College, Portlaoise CBS, Scoil Christ Ri. Over 65 students have taken part in this program which involves several training days within the school and then the students visit local schools and provide coaching, blitzes and fun days for the schools throughout the year. This type of involvement and engagement helps to build relationships between the schools and helps to promote Gaelic Games within our Secondary Schools. Our GDAs continue to support schools with both teams and the organization of blitzes. Thanks to all the school principals and teachers that have welcomed us into their schools and continue to promote our games. We will continue to strengthen our relationship so that all primary school kids get an opportunity to experience our games, they may or may not stay at them but they all must have had the opportunity to play and participate. The large number of competitions continue to be available and we hope schools will participate in as many as possible.

4. Cùl Camps 2018

Once again, the Cùl Camp program has been a huge success in Laois with the number of participants up from 2751 in 2017 to 3193 in 2018, thanks to all our GDA's for promoting the events and a huge word of thanks to the clubs who facilitated the Cùl Camps without your cooperation these camps could not go ahead. A word of thanks also must go to the Camp coaches who run these camps daily while being overseen by a GDA, these young coaches do a great job and we owe them a huge Thank You. I know Ciaran Muldowney has left us now, but I would also like to thank him for the work he put in to coordinate the Cùl Camps.

Thanks also to all our other GDA's who run Easter Camps and development squad camps during the year.

<i>Cùl Camp Bookings</i>		2018	2017	2016
Abbeyleix	2 to 6 July	112	132	134
Killeshin	2 to 6 July	83	68	58
Park/Ratheniska	2 to 6 July	118	124	130
Portlaoise	2 to 6 July	159	96	70
Rathdowney/Errill	2 to 6 July	100	106	122
Ballyfin	09 to 13 July	98	0	31
Ballyroan	09 to 13 July	114	110	149
Barrowhouse	09 to 13 July	75	78	68
Castletown Slieve	09 to 13 July	111	112	109
Emo	09 to 13 July	65	57	41
Raheen Parish Gaels	09 to 13 July	46	62	39
Ballinakill	16 to 20 July	53	43	
Borris/Kilcotton	16 to 20 July	64	67	71
Clonslee	16 to 20 July	70	0	19
O'Dempseys	16 to 20 July	119	92	100
Stradbally	16 to 20 July	134	146	142
The Harps	16 to 20 July	122	120	112
Ballylinan	23 to 27 July	124	98	97
Camross	23 to 27 July	126	134	130
Clonad	23 to 27 July	41	37	33
Rosenallis	23 to 27 July	106	115	117
The Rock	23 to 27 July	127	94	78
Graigucullen	30 July to 3 Aug	60	33	53
Mountrath	30 July to 3 Aug	98	69	64
Portarlinton	30 July to 3 Aug	85	59	47
The Heath	30 July to 3 Aug	145	110	84
Arles/Killeen	13 to 17 Aug	65	54	57
Kilcavan	13 to 17 Aug	72	81	82
Timahoe	13 to 17 Aug	90	84	
Clough Ballacolla	20 to 24 Aug	73	70	59
Mountmellick	20 to 24 Aug	74	83	76
Park/Ratheniska	20 to 24 Aug	61	50	
Portlaoise	20 to 24 Aug	147	105	90
The Harps	20 to 24 Aug	56	34	
Ballyroan	No Camp		28	
St Josephs	No Camp			
		3193	2751	2462

5. Coach Education

In Laois we put a lot of emphasis on coach education and over the last number of years Laois GAA have been up there as one of the counties that has the highest number of coaches who have achieved, foundation level and Award 1 and Award 2 accreditation this is down to the hard work of our GDA team who are running these courses and are also out in the clubs delivering the new TURAS program which had been compiled by Leinster GAA under the guidance of one of our own Laois Men Michael Dempsey. Through our TURAS program we have engaged with over 310 coaches in Laois through regional workshops and club visits. This figure does not include formal coach education e.g. Foundation and Award 1.

I would also like to thank Donal Brennan who has coordinated the current Award 2 accreditation course and I wish the 12 participants well in their future coaching roles as this course nears its end and hopefully we will see some of them take up coaching roles at development squad level which will hopefully lead them on to Minor, U20 and ultimately Senior at either club or county level.

6. Development Squad/Talent Academy

I would firstly like to thank the continued support and sponsorship of People First Credit Union in Portlaoise of our development squads, People First Credit Union continue to be a very loyal and supportive Sponsor and we in Laois GAA are very lucky to have them on board and we look forward to a continued successful partnership with them.

As always, a huge amount of work is going in to our development squads and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteer coaches very much for their hard work and dedication to their role as mentors to our developing players. These coaches have roles that reach further than just coaching them in the skills of Hurling and Football they play a huge part in the development of these players both as men and as athletes. Sometimes we have success at these grades in National Competitions and sometimes we don't but that should not define these players our goal is to develop these players and give them the full skill set that they will need to be able to compete and win at senior level.

This year we have taken a slightly different approach and direction in relation to our development squads we have appointed two GDAs to oversee the whole development squad process and to assist and guide the development of squad coaches so as we can deliver a unified and focused approach to the coaching and development of our players and that we have a progression pathway that these players will follow under the guidance of their coaches. Donal Brennan will be overseeing Football Development Squads and Peter Halley will oversee Hurling Development Squads and the two of them together will be responsible for the needs and requirements of our development squad players and coaches.

We also hope that this new approach which will be in place for 2019 will be as much coach focused as it is player focused and when a coach comes in at U13 level that we give him the support and education that he may need as a coach and offer him a development pathway also so as he can ultimately develop and become our U17, U20 or senior coach in the future.

Education is a huge part of our development squad players lives now and we welcome the support of the LOETB not only as sponsors of our Centre of Excellence but also in their commitment to helping with the education needs of our players.

Peter Halley with the help of Colm Begley has started up an Academy Squad Functional Movement Program and Testing, this is to introduce our young academy players to the world of strength and conditioning but without the heavy weights, this program is as much about educating the young players on proper techniques and also accessing their functional movement so as when they advance to the next level of strength and conditioning that they will be fully equipped to do it properly.

To Date:

- 1. Programming:** To date we have completed four weeks of A Functional Program in Holy Family National School.
- 2. Testing:** Last week we completed 20-meter speed testing, Counter Movement Testing, Squat, Hinge, Press Up, Inverted Row, Planks. We have compiled the results on each player and we are building up a valuable player profile through this testing. In mid-December we plan to retest the movement element of the program.
- 3. Going Forward:** Our second block of coaching is starting this evening Tuesday 6th November (see attached) in O Moore Park Gym where we will introduce players to the gym for the first time. In December we will retest

and give out a new program for the Christmas Holidays. Over the next while we will plan a GAA 15 Warm Up workshop for our squad coaches for field activity in February.

As you can see our GDA's are doing valuable work in the development of our players in conjunction with our coaches.

I would like to finish off my report on a high this year and celebrate the success of our U15 Hurling development squad on their success in the Arrabawn Tournament a very prestigious tournament for development squad hurlers at this level.

I would like to express our thanks and gratitude to the Management Team and the players on this super success and hopefully we will see this success come to fruition at Minor level over the next few years.

Also, in relation to this Tournament I would like to thank Tom Brennan of Eirgen for his kind sponsorship for this team.

7. Other Projects

In John Horans acceptance speech as our new Uachtarán Cumann Lúthchleas Gael he pledged a review of all development squad activity in the country he has put a committee together to consult with the stake holders of this matter i.e. The County Boards, the GDA's the Mentors and Coaches the Coaching Officers, the Parents and the players and this committee is being lead once again by a Laois Man Michael Dempsey.

A delegation from this committee met with Laois officials and stake holders about three weeks ago in a meeting that was chaired by Brian Cuthbert and it was a very



informative meeting which also challenged our thinking on how developments squads should be run. The results of this consultation process should be available early in the New Year and they may come with recommendations, so we will wait and see what comes of this process.

Review Committee:

Michael Dempsey (Chairman, Laois)

Jenny Duffy (Secretary, Cork)

Jeffrey Lynskey (Galway)

Jason Sherlock (Dublin)

Shane Flanagan (Leinster GAA, Kildare)

Dr. Eugene Young (Ulster GAA, Derry)

Ray O'Brien (Third Level, Kerry)

Garrett Coyle (Ulster Post-Primary Schools, Monaghan)

Brian Cuthbert (Cork)

Fergal O'Donnell (Roscommon) Jamesie O'Connor (Clare)

Thanks

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has helped me during the year, I would also like to thank the clubs for their continued support of myself and our GDA's and I would like to wish all of our players in every age group from Nursery to Adult in both Football and Hurling every success in the coming year and I hope it's as enjoyable year in 2019 as it was in 2018. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish Eddie Brennan and John Sugrue the very best of luck for the season that lies ahead.

Mise Sa Spórt

Fearghal Ó Beirn

Coaching Officer Laois GAA

Coiste Peil Report 2018

Firstly, I want to to acknowledge the efforts of the the management teams this year and to the managers John Sugrue, Billy O'Loughlan and Donnacha Phelan. The successful divisional competition was put forward by John Sugrue and I would like to thank him for his efforts in developing this competition for the coming years. We set a target at the beginning of the year to be playing Division 3 football in 2019. To not only get out of division 4, but to win the title and to reach a Leinster final was great progress and we are looking forward to further progress this coming season. To the U20 management, I suppose we will look back at the Kildare game as one we should have won, but it also shows that we are more than capable of competing at the highest level. The minors had a great start but unfortunately petered out as the year progressed. But the major positive we take from last season is that we are developing a strong group of players for the future. I would like to wish all management teams and players well in 2019.

Secondly, I would like to acknowledge the clubs that attended the football board meetings this year and thank them for their support. The development of GAA in Laois depends on their continual support and we look forward to working closely with them in the coming year. As discussed at our recent Football Board meeting, we want to impress on clubs the importance of putting people forward for training to officiate our games. The challenge to fulfill fixtures in

2019 will be impossible unless this initiative is successfully. It is not sustainable unless all clubs put forward referees for training.

I would sincerely like to thank all the sponsors who have helped Laois GAA in any way this year. I want to take this opportunity to welcome all our new sponsors who came on board this year, especially to the LOETB, the sponsors of the Centre of Excellence. We are looking forward to building a mutually beneficial relationship over the next number of years. We are looking forward to announcing some very exciting new sponsorship relationships over the coming months.

To the executive committee and the Football Board for their support over the last year, I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you.

Finally to the Laois fans for their undying support throughout the year, especially to those who made the trip to London. It was a great weekend and we hope to see you on the road again this year.

Is mise le meas,

Laurence Phelan
Coiste Peil

Children's Officer Report 2018

This year we completed a significant rise in Garda Vetting applications. We also completed a higher number of Code of Behaviour courses. The need for all coaches to have completed vetting and Code of Behaviour training has shown in the increase in applications for both courses. This is a positive action and one that needs to continue in 2019.

In 2018 we had our first audit of clubs for compliance in meeting our legal requirements. While the number of audits returned was disappointing the quality of audit was positive. In 2019 I would expect greater compliance in completing this audit as it is the responsibility of each adult club to complete this work.

Throughout 2018, a constant issue that arose was "Do Gardaí need to be vetted?" The answer to this question is YES. All persons who work for the GAA where young people (under 18 years of age) are involved need to be vetted without exception.

I remind those who choose our coaches that work with children in our Clubs / County that our Code highlights three mandatory requirements before coaches commence their work with children;

1. They must have attended the Gaelic Games Child Safeguarding Workshop,
2. They must be satisfactorily vetted through the National Vetting Bureau,
3. They must possess a minimum coaching qualification received from one of the Gaelic Games Associations.

In 2017 we agreed a protocol with the Catholic Primary Schools Association (CPSMA) for coaches from our clubs to attend and assist schools with Gaelic Games Coaching during the school year. What is required here is for all coaches to provide / show a copy of their vetting disclosure and acceptance letter and sign a self-declaration form to the school. In Laois, going forward we will be requesting the school to confirm that they have received this prior to payments been made to the club / coach. This protects the coach, School, Students and Club.

I recommend that clubs begin this process now with AGM and the appointment of coaches for 2019. I feel it is important that we begin this process as soon as possible and begin with Referee's in January 2019. Therefore for a referee to be appointed to referee a game in 2018 they need to be E-Vetted and be able to provide a copy of their copy of their vetting disclosure and acceptance letter before their first match.

For Cúl Camps in 2019 all our coaches will be required to provide a copy of their vetting disclosure and acceptance letter with their application. Any coach who does not provide this will not be accepted for a coaching role.

An issue that arose several times in 2018 was the behavior of club officials during matches and training sessions. I would like to take this opportunity to remind all clubs of the need for all club officials to behave in a manner that does not bring your club, into disrepute.

Seamus Lahort
Children's Officer

Health & Wellbeing Report 2018

2018 Committee Members:

Tom Jones (Chairperson), Leona Conroy (Secretary)
Fergal Byron, Ciara Conroy, Jennifer Fitzpatrick, Danny Gorman, PJ Kelly,
Grainne McCann, Seamus Lahart, Peter O'Neill

Laois GAA is committed to promoting health and wellbeing within our membership, our clubs and our communities. We aim to achieve this through the provision of information, initiatives, and campaigns to promote health and wellness within our clubs. With a strong focus on broadening the traditional boundaries of a GAA club our goal is to turn our clubs into “hubs for health”. The County Health & Wellbeing committee is chaired by Tom Jones and the purpose of the committee is to:-

- Promote positive health and wellbeing amongst all clubs within Laois to their members and the wider community;
- Ensure that supports, programmes, partnerships, training & resources are available;
- Support, implement and monitor GAA policies, and
- Be a signposting tool for members and local communities

Each club must appoint a Healthy Club Officer who will help to make his/her club a healthier place for everyone to enjoy. Officers are appointed rather than elected and will be supported in their work by their Club Executive and their County Health & Wellbeing Committee. However, everyone

has a role to play in supporting a Healthy Club, from players and coaches to parents and volunteers.

2018 ACHIEVEMENTS:

Eircode Mapping Survey – Defibrillators:

The Committee carried out a survey of all clubs to ascertain what clubs have defibrillators in place and where these were located. This information along with the Eircode of the clubs was documented and passed to the Emergency Services. 90% of clubs have a defibrillator within their club premises and the committee intend to encourage all clubs to place these defibrillators outside their clubhouses so as to make them accessible to the local community. Following on our survey a number of other counties are carrying out a similar exercise.

O'Moore Park - No Smoking Initiative:

Following on from Clonad GAA's Smoke Free initiative in January 2017, Laois GAA has completely banned smoking in the stand at of O'Moore Park. In 2019 the Committee plan t to run a campaign to have all Laois GAA club's smoke free by 2020.

Re-Launch of Laois GAA's County Critical Incident Response Plan: Laois GAA formally re-launched its Critical Incident Response Plan on 10/10/18. A template of this is available on the Laois GAA website. In recent years the GAA has seen an increase in the number of critical incidents and having a CI Response Plan in place will help you, as a club, be more prepared to deal effectively with such an incident. In 2019 we will be recommending that all clubs to adopt/update their own respective CI Plan.

Laois CONNECTS 'S'Porting the Litting Things':

As part of Laois Connects Mental Health Week in October, Laois GAA in partnership with Laois Sports Partnership and the HSE organised a workshop on World Mental Health Day called 'S'Porting the Little Things'. All clubs were invited to attend. The event took place in Leinster Council Offices with guest speakers that included Cathal McCarron (Tyrone Footballer), Mark Keane (Former Limerick Hurler) and our very own Padraig Bannon (O'Dempsey's Club). The speakers shared their inspirational stories and adversities and how they have overcome them. MC on the night was Steven Miller of Laois Today and he did a great job chairing of the evening's proceedings. Other speakers on the night included Josephine Rigney, Suicide Prevention Officer for Laois/Offaly. Josephine spoke about the #littletthings campaign which is a positive mental health and wellbeing campaign. The #littletthings campaign highlights the importance of protecting and nurturing one's mental health and Tom Jones encouraged all clubs to link

these 9 key messages back into their clubs to promote and protect wellness amongst their members and their communities.

Wellness Information Boards:

This was one of the successful projects undertaken by our Committee this year. This idea stemmed from supporting clubs and their members within the county so as to be able to identify appropriate services and supports available both at local and national level. Each club was supplied with an aluminium Wellness Board to be erected in a visible place within club grounds where members, supporters and family have easy access to it.

Supporting GAA's Healthy Club Project Initiative: Annanough GAA was selected in 2018 to participate in Phase 3 of the GAA's Health Club Project. The GAA Healthy Club project commenced in 2013 with just 16 clubs participating, four from each province. It is run in partnership with Healthy Ireland, the HSE, and the National Office for Suicide Prevention, and is proudly supported by Irish Life. The Health & Wellbeing Committee will support Annonough GAA on their journey over the next 18 months. Phase 2 saw Clonad GAA successfully participate in the project and be awarded Healthy Club status. Phase 3 currently engages 150 clubs and will run until November 2019. Phase 4 will open to new interested clubs in January 2020 and training is currently available to any clubs interested in getting involved. Contact us for further details at chair.hwc.laois@gaa.ie or visit www.gaa.ie/community for more information on the Healthy Club project.

Safe Talk & Training:

A number of clubs (Annanough, Clonad, O'Dempseys) successfully delivered Safe Talk training within their respective clubs. All clubs can avail of this FREE training at any stage by contacting the HSE directly to organise a relevant date. Safe Talk Training involves learning the first steps in recognizing persons with thoughts of suicide and connects them with suicide helping resources. In 2019 we plan to hold training sessions for all appointed Club Healthy Club Officers throughout the county.

PLANS FOR 2019

- All clubs to appoint a Healthy Club Officer
- All Healthy Club Officers to receive Healthy Club Officer training.
- Deliver SafeTALK training to appointed Healthy Club Officers
- Deliver Critical Incident & Gambling Awareness Training & Workshops to clubs
- Ensure each club adopts a Critical Incident Response Plan
- Support Phase 3 Healthy Club Annanough as part of the Healthy Club Project Initiative. Actively encourage and target clubs in each region to participate in next phase in 2020.
- We will also pinpoint several events throughout 2019 where we will work with Clubs in rolling out wellbeing initiatives throughout the county

In order to implement these plans we would encourage all clubs, if they haven't already done so, appoint a dedicated Healthy Club Officer along with an active health and wellbeing sub-committee. This will be the direct link to our County Health & Wellbeing Committee who will support and assist your club in driving these initiatives. We can assure you that you will get the full support of the Laois Health and Wellbeing Committee.

For the first time ever the GAA have included in their Strategic Plan (2018-2021) a commitment to expand and build the healthy club model across the association. This will bring about greater awareness at club and county level and encourage other clubs to implement and promote HC initiatives within their own clubs. Laois GAA's Health & Wellbeing Committee has made a commitment for fulfil their role in bringing this goal into fruition.

We look forward to actively engaging with clubs within the county in 2019 in the promotion of these initiatives and to continue to work in partnership with other support services in the delivery of wellness programmes and awareness training.

Mise le meas,

Thomas Mac Seoin:

Chairperson

Laois GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee

Leona Ni Chonrai:

Secretary

Laois GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee

Coiste Iomana Laoise Report 2018

Minor

I want to thank the entire panel and management for their honesty and commitment in representing Laois in 2018. With a young team and the first time for minor hurling to be at u17 level we held a good account of ourselves. It puts us in a good position for 2019 with a group of lads right up to the age, and the year gone by will stand to them. We played Wexford, Dublin and Kilkenny in our group stages of the Leinster championship, and even though we got no wins, we made a very good account of ourselves. We gave all three teams a good game and were unlucky not to get more. We played Offaly in a Leinster quarter final which saw the end of our championship. Our Minor management also looked after our U16 panel and I would like to congratulate them on winning the Celtic Challenge beating Antrim in the final that was played in Tullamore. I also would like to congratulate our U15 Panel and management on winning the Arrabawn Shield. Between our U15 and U16 panels, it make a great foundation for hurling in Laois.

Minor Management 2019

Manager: Enda Lyons,
Selectors: Sean Conroy, Jimmy Walsh,
Coaches: Gary Moore, JJ McHugh,
Strength & Conditioning Coach:
Dermot McGill,
Physio: Miriam Harrison Clinic,
Secretary: To be finalised.

UNDER 21

Under 21 Hurling can be very unfair at times with players tied up with Senior panels and College hurling. It can be difficult to make good preparations for this competition as it's challenging to get all the panel together. From 2019 with the age changing from 21 to 20 it will help with very little overflow from the senior team. I would like to thank the senior management for looking after this group in 2018. Unfortunately our championship failed in the first round against Dublin in O'Moore Park. With the age of this competition changing to U20 this should suit us with the group of lads coming through. With a separate management team from our seniors it should work well and I would like to wish them best of luck.

U20 Management 2019

Manager: David Cuddy
Selectors: Derek Delaney, Enda Meagher, Chris Murray & Brendan Lowery
Strength & Conditioning Coach:
Michael Boyhan
Physio: Karen Roe
Secretary: Ann Barry

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Limerick	5	5	0	0	8-114	1-77	58	10
Galway	5	4	0	1	7-95	4-79	25	8
Offaly	5	2	0	3	5-88	7-95	-13	4
Dublin	5	2	0	3	5-92	4-110	-15	4
Antrim	5	1	0	4	5-88	6-108	-23	2
Laois	5	1	0	4	1-95	9-103	-32	2

Senior Hurling

I would like to sincerely thank our Senior County Hurling panellists for their commitment, dedication and loyalty while playing Hurling for Laois this year. The time, commitment and sacrifices required to play Senior Inter County Hurling is extremely high and each player committed fully to the task.

Our players had prepared throughout the winter in the cold, dark, wet nights and were very focused for the National Hurling League Campaign. This began with our first match against Limerick in Gaelic Grounds on 28th January, 2018. Unfortunately the result did not go in our favour on the day however there was belief and determination from the players coming off the field following the display and the knowledge of what was needed to improve and work on for the next game.

Following the Limerick game we then met with Galway in O'Moore Park and once again as previous years Laois Hurlers matched up very well with the outgoing All Ireland Champions and gave a very good competitive performance. The controversial sending off of James Ryan just before

half time in the game was a turning point in the game for us. The players put in a fine display but Galway just pulled away in the last quarter.

Our next game was a meeting with Antrim at home in Portlaoise which resulted in our first win in the League Competition. Following this we had losses to both Offaly and Dublin teams.

Disappointingly the final result would be a Relegation Playoff against Antrim away on the 18th March for Laois Hurling to remain in the 1B Division for 2019. The Management and Players journeyed to Dunloy on St Patricks day to fulfil the fixture in Cuchilainn's GAA Grounds Dunloy the following day. A bitterly cold and snow covered country with high winds made this a very tight match. Laois had the lead of 5 points at half time and finished out winners with a 2 point lead at the final whistle.

Overall the National Hurling League was not the result we had envisaged but the focus coming off the competition was the McDonagh Cup Competition beginning in early May.

In the opening game of the New Joe McDonagh Competition our first match

Team	P	W	D	L	+/-	Pts.
1 Carlow	5	4	0	1	20	8
2 Westmeath	5	4	0	1	15	8
3 Kerry	5	3	0	2	8	6
4 Laois	5	2	0	3	-4	4
5 Antrim	5	2	0	3	14	4
6 Meath	5	0	0	5	-53	0

was in O 'Moore Park against Westmeath. The game was evenly matched with players performing very well. Laois fought hard to stay in front of Westmeath and went in at the break with 3 point lead. However the second half structure seemed to go against Laois and resulted in a surprising loss on the day by 3 points.

Going into our second match away to Kerry the players had just one week to refocus on the game ahead. The opening minutes of a Kerry goal and the loss of Leigh Bergin due to injury after just 10 minutes of the game was a concern to the Management. Also the loss of another player whom received a red card left Laois trailing by 3-1 at half time. The extra Kerry man in the second half left us with an uphill struggle. The final whistle resulted in our second loss in a row and in our first 2 matches of the Competition.

Our next game six days later was away to Antrim in Dunloy. From our previous meeting in the NHL we knew this would be a very hard fought win for the team. Luckily with 14 man team Laois came out the winners with a 1 point win on the day. This was our first win of the competition.

A much needed 2 week break was to follow before our game against Carlow at

home in O 'Moore Park. Like the previous game this match was tightly contested. The break ended with 1-9 apiece at half time. However the final result ended in a loss for Laois and the hope of reaching the first ever McDonagh Cup Final was fading.

In our last match against Meath we needed a win to stay in the McDonagh Cup in 2019 and avoid a Christy Ring relegation Playoff. Laois proved too strong for the home side and played with the determination and skill we knew they had. The win means that Laois finish 4th in the table and avoided the playoff against the Christy Ring winners.

Overall it was not the year we had envisaged for Laois Hurling in 2018. The results were not what we hoped for and the overall results in all competitions were disappointing.

I wish to thank the Management for their efforts during the year. To the backroom team of Ann Barry, John Kealy, Brian O Sullivan, Jack Harding, David O Brien, Pat Delaney, Alison Holmes and Sharon McDonald for the time, commitment and hard work they give to Laois Hurling and for their help at every game and training sessions. To our County board Secretary

Niall Handy and his Administrator Tomás Moore for all their help throughout the year. To our Caretaker Willie Stackpool and Seamus in Heywood, to our Catering - Bosco Ramsbottom and staff thank you all for your support during the year.

A new management team have been appointed for the coming year. I wish to thank the review committee of Eamonn Jackman, Niall Rigney and Declan Conroy for steering the process and for their professionalism throughout.

Senior Management 2019

Manager: Eddie Brennan
Selectors: Fran Dowling & Tommy Fitzgerald
Coach: Niall Corcoran
Strength & Conditioning: Dave Moriarty
Nutritionist: Arthur Dunne
Physio: Alison Holmes
Secretary: John Kealy, Ann Barry, Stats: Brian O Sullivan, Jack Harding and David O Brien,
Kit Man: Pat Delaney,
Doctor: To be finalised.

We have a tough challenge ahead coming off the back of 2018 but with the right guidance and coaching and the belief from our Senior Players I am confident that Laois Hurling will progress well in 2019. I wish them all the very best of luck in the year ahead.

I urge all Laois Hurling supporters to get behind all our teams and come out

and support them in their upcoming Competitions.

CLUB

Congratulations to all clubs for competing in all our competitions from Juvenile to Adult and keeping them to a very high standard of hurling. congratulations to all our championship and league winners and best of luck to all our adult teams in their Leinster championships.

Thanks to our referees, umpires and linesmen that officiated our games without your help there would be no games. Can I ask all clubs to help us recruit new referees, with the amount of games every year it's getting harder to full fill all fixtures.

Congratulations to our Poc Fada winners Enda Rowland (Senior) and Ian Shanahan (U16).

I would like to congratulate all Hurling award winners for 2018.

Thanks to the County hurling steering group John Kealy (Secretary) Adrian Fitzpatrick, Justin Kavanagh, Brendan Connolly and Richard Kennedy.

Best of luck to all clubs in 2019, and thanks for your support.

Tomas O Cleirigh,

Coiste Iomana Chairperson.

Laois Handball Report 2018

40 x 20 Alley Championships

In the adult 40x20 Alley Leinster Championships Ray Fogarty from the Cullohill club registered the first provincial success of 2018 for the county winning the Master B singles final defeating David Redmond Wexford. Ray then defeated Tony O'Connor of Down in the semi final. At the All Ireland finals weekend in Kingscourt Cavan Ray came up against JP O'Connor from Limerick who proved a step too far and Ray had to settle for the runner up medal.

Niamh Dunne Cullohill competed in Ladies Intermediate and enjoyed provincial success over Hannah Dagg of Kildare before losing out in the semi final to Megan McCann of Armagh.

Other Laois Players to earn runner up medals in provincial finals included Paddy Donovan at Golden Master A, Eimear Delaney Cullohill at Ladies Junior C, Eimear Dunphy & Louise Walsh Cullohill at Ladies Junior B Doubles and Joe Brennan & James Doyle St Brigid's at Golden Master B doubles.

In the Juvenile championships Aoife Brophy & Lauren McGuigan Cullohill claimed provincial success at U16 doubles over Sonta Jackson & Aine Duggan Kilkenny thus reaching the All Ireland semi final where they were defeated by Chloe Philpott & Amber Nolan of Clare. Thomas & Padraig Walsh Cullohill also claimed provincial gold at U17 doubles before los-

ing out to Mayo in the All Ireland semi final. Other players to achieve provincial runner up medals included Brian Brennan, St Brigid's. Orla Brophy, Eadaoin Whyte & Aoife Kirby, Caoimhe Doheny & Lisa Kirby & Emma Delaney All Cullohill

One Wall Irish Nationals Weekend

In the Irish One Wall Nationals held in Breaffy House Niamh Dunne competed in the Ladies Open where she defeated Megan McCann Armagh before falling to Martina McMahon of Limerick in the semi-final. Paddy Donovan claimed gold in the Golden Master A competition defeating Niall Kerr of Tyrone in the final.

One Wall Championships

In the Leinster Wall Ball Championships Una Brophy Cullohill won the Girls U15 while Aoife Brophy Cullohill was runner up in the Girls U17. Paddy Donovan St Brigid's claimed the Master title defeating Kevin Brennan of Clough/Ballacolla in an all Laois final.

In the All Ireland series Una Brophy Cullohill was defeated in the semi final by Clodagh Munroe of Tyrone while Paddy was defeated in the final By Dominick Lynch of Kerry.

Niamh Dunne Cullohill also competed in Ladies Open defeating Maeve McElduff

Tyrone in the semi final before losing out to Martina McMahon Limerick in the final.

Feile 2018

Handball Feile for 2018 was held in Galway venues and both Cullohill and Clough/Ballacolla sent teams to compete in both 40x20 and Wall Ball.

Cullohill claimed gold in the 40x20 Division 4 final defeating Claregalway of Galway in the final, while the girls team won the plate competition in Division 1 defeating St Joseph's of Wexford.

Clough/Ballacolla had fantastic success winning the Boys Wall Ball division 1 title defeating Mountbellew/Moylough of Galway in the final.

World Handball Championships

Paddy Donovan travelled to Minnesota USA to compete in the World Championships. Paddy claimed the silver medal in the Golden Master a Wall Ball competition losing out to William Coello of Ecuador in the final. This loss didn't seem to affect Paddy as he went on to claim gold in the same competition in the 40x20 defeating Tomas Donegan of Limerick in the final.

60x30 Alley Championships

A small contingent of players continue to represent the county in the traditional 60x30 game. Niamh Dunne claimed Leinster runner up medals in both Ladies

Open and Ladies Intermediate while Paddy Donovan also claimed the runner up medal in Golden Master A. Una Brophy played excellent handball to reach the U15 provincial decider but unfortunately her Wexford opponent proved too strong.

Lauren McGuigan & Aoife Brophy also competed in the All Ireland semi final of the U17 championship but lost out to Mayo.

Laois Handball Officers 2018

Chairman:

Eamonn Doheny, *Cullobhill*

Secretary Joint:

Patsy Dowling, *St Brigid's*
Sean Dunphy, *Cullobhill*

Treasurer:

Eddie Dunne, *Cullobhill*

The AGM for the 2018/19 year took place on 6th September in the Midlands Park Hotel. We have increased participation with 59 schools now taking part in Cumann na mBunscol Laoise activities. Maryborough NS, Clonenagh NS and Wolfhill NS have all come on board for this school year. Our numbers will grow again next year with Portarlington Boys NS coming into Laois in September 2019. Kevin Gorman, principal in Newtown NS and a member of Portlaoise GAA Club, will step into the Chairperson's Role in September 2019. Martin Carroll, teacher in Clough NS and a member of St Fintan's Mountrath GAA Club, will serve as secretary for the next two school years.

Football Leagues

Our Football Leagues recently concluded with two days of Finals in O' Moore Park. We introduced a new format to our leagues which saw the introduction of Shields and Plates across many divisions. Over half the schools who competed in our football leagues got through to a Final. This is far above the national average.

Our thanks to the clubs of Laois for the continued goodwill they show towards Cumann na mBunscol Laoise. Particular thanks to Portlaoise GAA Club for allowing us access to their Grounds in Rathleague for our Quarter/Semi-Finals.

- The full list of winners for 2018 are on the final page of this report.

Hurling and Camogie Leagues

The 2018 hurling and camogie leagues were a big success as we piloted our new format. Our Finals were run over three days in May and all our Finals were played as stand-alone games in O' Moore Park. The average winning/losing deficit in our finals was cut in half and we had a number of exciting and closely contested games, including three that went to extra-time.

- The full list of winners for 2018 are on the final page of this report.

Our 2019 Hurling Leagues will kick-off in March and will run along a similar format to our football leagues. A number of schools from traditional-football areas have entered teams and this year we will again see our highest number of entries.

Table Quiz

Our annual Table Quiz took place in the Holy Family Senior School last March. We thank Sean Mullaney (former principal of Paddock NS) for his continued role as quizmaster on the night. Ballinakill NS were winners in 2018 just edging out The Heath NS.

Handball and Rounders

Our GAA Handball Blitzes were held in Cullohill Handball Hall in January. The number of schools participating has dipped in recent years and we have taken steps to redress this moving forward.

We recently held our One-Wall Participation Blitz in Clough/Ballacolla Handball Club, Ballacolla.

Interest was high and at the time of writing this, six new schools had registered interest to take part.

In January, we will again run our U11s and U13s Singles and Doubles competitions for boys and girls.

Successful players will be selected to represent Cumann na mBunscol Laoise at Provincial Level next March.

Our Rounders blitzes continue to grow from strength to strength with over half of our schools now competing.

The blitzes take place over 4 days in June in Mountmellick, The Heath and Emo.

INTO Mini-7s Skills Days

We organized INTO Skills Days for Football and Hurling/Camogie last April. With new changes at National Level, we now send pupils from 5th Class forward to play mini-games at All-Ireland Hurling and Football Finals and Semi-Finals.

Well done to our 4 boys and 3 girls who represented their families, their schools, clubs and county with distinction.

Representative Panels, Games and Blitzes

Following on from our Trial in 2016/17, last year we ran Development Panels for all 4 codes. In total, over 130 6th class pupils took part in trials, trainings, mini-games and blitzes.

The hurling and football panels received an excellent introduction to Strength and Conditioning training and the quality of the sessions thereafter were hugely encouraging.

Members of our panels took part in mini-games during all of the Laois Senior Football Championship games including two trips to Croke Park where 10 boys and 10 girls got the opportunity to step out on the hallowed turf. We also had a representative game at half-time of the thrilling Laois vs Wexford Leinster LGFA semi-final. This is a huge undertaking for our organisation and the costs associated with organizing tickets, buses, jerseys etc were significant. We undertook some fundraising and this covered just under 35% of total costs.

Moving forward, we have liaised closely with the Laois GDAs and have put together our most comprehensive programme to date. There will now be a clear link between our panels and the Setanta and O' Moore Óg summer programme that will now start in June before the primary school year ends. We expect that this link will see greater engagement with the Laois GAA programmes. With the changes at Minor Grade, we will now see younger secondary school students on County Minor Panels and Development

Squads. Both ourselves and the GDAs believe that linking up in this way will greatly benefit our county Development Panels.

Trials for our hurling and football panels are ongoing and we will organize same for the girls in the Spring.

This year, we intend to extend the programme and hope to have nearly 200 pupils on our final panels.

3rd / 4th Class Blitzes

We intend to revive our 3rd and 4th class blitzes next Spring. Again, we have sat down with the Laois GDAs and have agreed a schedule of blitzes for hurling and football that will be open to all schools in the county. Schools will have the option of entering school teams or of sending players forward to make composite teams. The aim of these blitzes will be to improve participation and engagement with our Gaelic Games.

The timing of these blitzes should coincide with juvenile clubs getting back to the field and hopefully this will help with club membership.

Our Relationship with Laois GAA

We would like to place on record our appreciation for the positive working relationship we enjoy with Laois GAA. Sadly, this is not replicated across all counties and is something we do not take for granted.

We vehemently believe that playing our Finals in O'Moore Park is a wonder-

ful opportunity for the pupils in our Primary School and we are most appreciative for this continued privilege. Moreover, we believe the LOETB Centre of Excellence will prove an invaluable asset for the development of our Gaelic Games. We have spoken to Laois Chairman Peter O' Neill and assured him that we will offer our full support to all fundraising initiatives that help maintain this wonderful facility.

We are working more closely than ever with our County Secretary and the Laois GDAs and we believe this close relationship will strengthen the quality of opportunities Laois as a county can provide for our future players.

Thanks to the referees in Laois who continue to support us and without whom, we could not offer so many competitions.

Finally, a huge thank you to all the clubs in Laois for their continued support.

The vast of our matches take place in club grounds and we are most-appreciative of this access. Over the last 12 months, we have used a number of clubs as neutral venues for our Playoff Games. Thanks to Portlaoise, Clonad, The Heath and Park-Ratheniska GAA Clubs for this unwavering support.

We wish all clubs in Laois the very best of luck for the 2019 sporting year.

Shane Ó Meachair,

*Cathaoirleach
Cumann na mBunscol Laoise*

2018 FINALS RESULTS

2018 Hurling Leagues:

Roinn 1 Championship: Clough NS defeated Cullohill NS
Roinn 1 Shield: Camross NS defeated Abbeyleix NS
Roinn 2 Championship: Paddock NS defeated Ballinakill NS
Roinn 2 Shield: Killanure NS defeated
Roinn 2 Plate: Clonaslee NS defeated Raheen NS
Roinn 3 Championship: The Heath NS defeated Ballyadams NS
Roinn 3 Shield: Scoil Brhíde Knockmay defeated Timahoe NS
Roinn 3 Plate: Mountmellick BNS defeated St Stradbally NS
Roinn 4 Championship: Ballacolla NS defeated Clonaghadoo NS
Roinn 4 Shield: Ballyroan NS defeated Shanahoe NS
Roinn 5 'B' Final: Abbeyleix NS defeated Camross NS

2018 Camogie Leagues:

Roinn 1: Cullohill NS defeated Castletown PS
Roinn 2: Abbeyleix NS defeated Paddock NS
Roinn 3: Holy Family NS defeated Killadooley NS
Roinn 4: Ratheniska NS defeated Ballyroan NS
Roinn 5: Rosenallis NS defeated Stradbally NS
Roinn 6: Killanure NS defeated Timahoe NS
Roinn 7: Killenard NS defeated Mountmellick GNS
Roinn 8 'B' Final: Abbeyleix NS defeated Portarlinton GNS

2018 Boys Football Leagues:

Roinn 1 Championship: Ballyadams NS defeated Killeshin NS
Roinn 1 Shield: Abbeyleix NS defeated Holy Family NS
Roinn 2 Championship: Clonaghadoo NS defeated The Heath NS
Roinn 2 Shield: Scoil Bhríde Knockmay defeated Ratheniska NS
Roinn 3 Championship: Durrow NS defeated Cullohill NS
Roinn 3 Shield: Timahoe NS defeated Derrylamogue NS
Roinn 4 Championship: Arles NS defeated Mayo NS
Roinn 4 Shield: The Swan NS defeated Barrowhouse NS
Roinn 5 Championship: Rushall NS defeated Portlaoise ETNS

Roinn 5 Shield: Killanure NS defeated Killadooley NS
Roinn 5 Plate: Clonenagh NS defeated Castletown PS
Roinn 6 'B' Final: Killenard NS defeated Timahoe NS

2018 Girls Football Leagues:

Roinn 1 Championship: Holy Family NS defeated Ratheniska NS
Roinn 1 Shield: Stradbally NS defeated Graiguecullen NS
Roinn 2 Championship: Derrylamogue NS defeated Ballyadams NS
Roinn 2 Shield: The Rock NS defeated Timahoe NS
Roinn 3 Championship: Mountrath GNS defeated Clonaghadoo NS
Roinn 3 Shield: Castletown PS defeated Paddock NS
Roinn 4 Championship: Killeen NS defeated Barrowhouse NS
Roinn 4 Shield: Durrow NS defeated Knock NS
Roinn 5 'B' Final: Timahoe NS defeated The Rock NS

Laois Membership Registration Report 2018

Club	Registered	Full	Youth	Honorary	Social	Adult	U21	Minor	Juvenile
Abbeyleix St Lazarians	375	125	218	8	24	82	30	54	69
Annanough	149	55	91	0	3	30	10	25	33
Arles/Kilcruise	118	64	54	0	0	38	9	8	17
Arles/Killeen	176	87	89	0	0	50	2	6	9
Ballinakill	216	103	113	0	0	65	17	32	43
Ballyfin	329	121	165	0	43	53	18	63	74
Ballylinan	212	78	107	0	27	32	17	6	12
Ballypickas	195	93	97	3	2	59	10	23	27
Ballyroan Abbey	439	219	218	0	2	104	64	66	73
Barrowhouse	363	232	120	7	4	40	8	24	33
Borris In Ossory	86	72	5	9	0	43	9	5	0
Borris in Ossory Kilcotton	154	34	116	0	0	0	0	23	35
Camross	316	177	122	13	4	75	20	27	42
Castletown	327	170	157	0	0	66	22	23	36
Clonad	274	104	144	0	26	60	16	51	56
Clonaslee St Manmans	266	130	130	5	1	71	9	45	43
Clough-Ballacolla	204	105	99	0	0	68	16	29	54
Colt/St Fintan's	142	84	32	8	18	41	5	10	10
Courtwood	192	94	96	2	0	53	10	46	55
Crettyard	206	59	101	0	46	30	6	11	22
Emo	258	230	28	0	0	50	16	27	13
Errill	95	90	0	0	5	52	10	0	0
Graiguecullen	311	151	122	24	14	63	20	31	38
Kilcavan	340	136	184	3	17	52	10	58	58
Kilcotton	90	83	0	7	0	48	7	0	0
Killeshin	153	116	33	0	4	36	17	27	25
Kyle	66	52	5	0	9	32	2	4	2
Mountmellick	289	148	128	11	2	82	25	26	41
O'Dempseys	373	169	200	0	4	69	18	33	54
Park Ratheniska	356	151	204	1	0	41	29	45	50
Park Ratheniska-Timahoe	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Portarlington	472	164	268	40	0	22	17	49	48
Portlaoise	736	416	313	2	5	131	35	114	145
Rathdowney	171	171	0	0	0	38	21	0	0
Rathdowney Errill	160	0	160	0	0	0	0	48	50
Rosenallis	376	149	227	0	0	0	0	0	0
Shanahoe	115	96	18	1	0	1	0	3	2
Slieve Bloom	143	93	49	1	0	44	12	20	13
Slieve Margy	7	5	2	0	0	1	2	40	28
Spink	209	58	142	7	2	42	7	53	66
St Fintan's Mountrath	181	48	93	7	33	8	3	6	9
St Joseph's	379	175	185	1	18	67	35	72	61
Stradbally	231	121	100	10	0	45	14	9	9
The Harps	215	71	127	15	2	37	13	47	52
The Heath	307	132	175	0	0	66	6	48	52
The Rock	235	137	94	0	4	64	14	31	31
Timahoe	296	97	188	0	11	1	0	0	0
Trumera	97	47	49	0	1	26	2	6	9
Totals	11400	5520	5368	185	331	2178	633	1374	1599

Irish Cultural Officer Report

A chairde,

Ba mhór an onóir dom bheith tofa mar Oifigeach Cultúr & Gaeilge Laoise ag an Crinniú Chinn Bhliana anuraidh.

As Oifigeach Cultúr & Gaeilge I chair the Scór Committee and as Scór overlaps each year I was taking over an already well oiled machine. The highlights of 2018 were: 150 Primary school children taking part in Scór na bPáistí in Mountmellick on April 20th, Borris in Ossory/Kilcotton winning the All Ireland Ghrúpa Cheol in Scór na nÓg. Camross Tráth na gCeist team represented Laois in (Senior) Scór All Ireland and Portlaoise Tráth na gCeist team represented our County in Scór na nÓg. I would like to thank the Committee which worked so well with me organising these competitions at County level and adjudicating on the awarding of the Gaeltacht Scholarships: Michael Martin (Runai), Christine Kealy (PRO), Paddy Connolly, John Paul Nevin, Monica Middleton, Donal Deegan, Julia Stapleton agus Siobhan Byron. Donal Deegan and myself recently attended the launch of Leinster Scór at Áras Laighean. In September I circulated two copies of the new Scór guide/booklet to all clubs and I hope you will make good use of them, and

have your club represented in at least a few competition this year.

At National level CLG has recently appointed it's first full time Oifigeach na Gaeilge and I wish Jamie Ó Tuama well in his new post. This bodes well for the future as a three year plan has been set in train, bilingual signage is being distributed to all clubs and a set of videos has been made "Buail Buille don Ghaeilge".

Perseverance is key and I hope you can bear with me further to try to promote usage of our native language in the day to day business of your club. I am available to help your Club's Officers to make some little changes in using the "Cúpla Focal" should you wish. For your upcoming AGM you might title your notice of meeting as "Fógra Oifigiúil", give your Agenda the title "Clár", refer to your Chairperson as "Cathaoirleach" - which is very useful to rule out the use of Chairperson where your Cathaoirleach is a woman and refer to your Secretary as "An Rúnaí" or "Rúnaí an Cumann". Thank you to my fellow County Board Officers, Officers of the clubs of Laois agus an foireann san Oifig.

Monica Bn Uí Dhubhshláine

Referee Administrator Report

The 2018 referee panel for Laois GAA lists a total of 46 referees on the panel. 23 Football only, 23 Hurling only and 3 certified to referee both Hurling and Football. The Referee Administration Committee are responsible for the Administration and Development of Refereeing in the County, including the recruitment, training, assessment and classification of referees.

During 2018, we facilitated the Referees In-Service Training Course and Fitness Tests ran in conjunction with Comhairle Laighean. It is compulsory that all referees attend these courses on a yearly basis to remain listed as certified referees and to enable them to officiate at our games. The Referees Administration Committee also hosted training for Newly Recruited Referees in 2018. Referee Assessors travelled county wide to assess our panel of referees and we thank them for their time and dedication to the education of our panel.

Whilst it may appear to an untrained eye that a total of 46 referees is considerably high, there is a major shortage of referees here in Laois and it's a growing concern. We cannot help but link the torrent of negative verbal abuse towards referees, linesmen, umpires and fourth officials from players, team mentors, supporters and club officials towards these officials as a link to the shortcoming in recruitment of new referees. Laois GAA run in excess of 1900 games across the county at Juvenile and Senior level in any given GAA Calendar year, without our referees and their officials none of these games would be possible. We

are well served by the body of people who are willing to step up and offer themselves as Referees and Match Officials. We ask the wider GAA community to be mindful of attitudes towards our refereeing officials. The shortage will only worsen within our county if these attitudes are not addressed.

As has been the case for the past number of years, Laois GAA and the Referee Administration Committee are appealing for clubs to put forward potential referees for the 2019 season.

The Referee Administration Committee for 2018 included: Tomas Moore (Secretary), Tom Clear (Coiste Iomána Rep), Laurence Phelan (Coiste Peil Rep) and Referee Representatives Arthur O'Connor, Maurice Deegan, Alan Doheny, Anthony Stapleton and Eddie Kinsella. I wish to thank all members of the committee for their continued support throughout the year, in particular Tomas in the Laois GAA Offices who, as always, carried out immeasurable work for this particular committee and Laois GAA as a whole.

We wish to congratulate our new referees recruited this year, a small total of 5, but we hope they stay committed to the cause. Congratulations to Maurice Deegan, Seamus Mulhare and John O'Brien who represent the county at national level, while Tomás Moore joins the National Support Panel for 2019 also.

Le Meas,

Dónall Ó Gormáin

For and on behalf of Referees Committee

Ainmniúcháin (Nominations)

Cathaoirleach (Chairperson):

Peter O'Neill (Outgoing), Brian Allen.

Leas Cathaoirleach (Vice Chairperson):

Tom Clear (Outgoing).

Cisteoir (Treasurer):

Martin Byrne (Outgoing).

Leas Cisteoir (Asst. Treasurer):

Kieran Leavy (Outgoing).

Ard Comhairle (Central Council Delegate):

Gerry Kavanagh (Outgoing), Brian Allen, Kieran Leavy.

Comhairle Laighean (Leinster Council Delegate) (2):

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

Oifigeach Oiliúna (Coaching Officer):

Fergal Byron (Outgoing).

Oifigeach Cultir agus Gaeilge (Cultural and Irish Officer):

Monica Delaney (Outgoing).

Oifigeach Caidrimh Poiblí (P.R.O.):

Pat O'Sullivan (Outgoing).

Congress Delegates (5):

Cathaoirleach agus Runaí automatically attend; Brian Allen, Martin Byrne, Tom Clear, Monica Delaney, Tom Jones, PJ Kelly, Kieran Leavy, Paschal McEvoy, Pat O'Sullivan.

Leinster Convention Delegates (5):

Brian Allen, Tom Clear, Monica Delaney, Gerry Kavanagh, PJ Kelly, Kieran Leavy, Pat O'Sullivan.

Na Rúin (Motions)

1. That the following be included in Laois GAA Byelaws

- A. In accordance with Rule 3.2, a Club shall affiliate annually with the County Committee on a standard affiliation form, which shall include the names of the Club Executive Committee, the Club colours and alternative colours and shall confirm that it has adopted the appropriate form of the Official Club Constitution and Rules. The closing date for submission of affiliation is the 7th. January in any year.

CLG Laoise

- B. In accordance with Rule 3.2, before a Club may take part in any competition, affiliation fee of €20 shall be paid for the year to the County Committee. Entry fee for Championships shall be €20 for each adult team and €8 for each under-age team. The closing date for entries to all competitions, with exception of development competitions, shall be the 7th. January in any year.

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