

**Cumann Lúthchleas Gael - Coiste Átha Cliath**

**Comhdháil Bhliantúil**

**Páirc Parnell, Dé Luain 14ú Nollaig 2015 ar 7.00 i.n.**

**An Clár**

1. Minutes of 2014 Convention.
2. Adoption of Standing Orders.
3. Auditor's Report and Financial Statement.
4. Secretary's Report.
5. Appointment of Tellers.
6. Election of Officers.
7. Fixture Planning & Competitions Control Committee Reports.
8. Coiste Éisteachta Report.
9. Commercial & Marketing Report
10. Coaching & Games Development Reports
11. Health & Wellbeing Report
12. Appointment of Auditor.
13. Motions.
14. Appointment of Delegates to Leinster Convention.
15. Appointment of Delegates to Congress.

**Standing Orders for Convention**

- A. The Proposer of a Resolution, or Amendment thereto, may speak for 5 minutes but no longer.
- B. A Delegate speaking to a Resolution, or amendment, shall not exceed 3 minutes.
- C. The Proposer of a Resolution, or Amendment, may speak a second time for 5 minutes before a vote is taken, but no other Delegate may speak a second time to any Resolution or Amendment.
- D. The Chairman shall, at any time he considers a matter has been sufficiently discussed, call on the Proposer to reply, after which a vote will be taken.
- E. A Delegate may, with the consent of the Chairman, move "that the question be now put" after which, when the Proposer has spoken, a vote must be taken.

## AINMNIUCHÁIN

### *Cathaoirleach*

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

### *Leas-Chathaoirleach*

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

### *Cisteoir*

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

### *Leas-Rúnaí/Cisteoir*

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

### *Oifigeach Forbartha*

Dómhnall Ó hIcádha (Na Fianna) **Outgoing**

### *Oifigeach Oiliúna*

Gearóid Ó Liatháin (Uí Duibhir)

### *Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí*

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

### *Oifigeach Leanaí*

Eibhlín Uí Bhroin (Dúthamlacht) **Outgoing**

### *Oifigeach na Gaeilge*

Bairbre Uí Néill (Cáisleán Cnucha) **Outgoing**

### *Árd Chomhairle*

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

### *Comhairle Laighean*

Gearóid Ó hArrachtáin (Naomh Mearnóg) **Outgoing**  
Seán Ó hAonasa (Cuala)  
Mícheál Ó Briain (Naomh Jude)  
Seán Mac Niocláis (Gaeil Naomh Shéamais)

## Tuarascáil An Rúnaí

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

### **Inter-County - Senior Football**

What an incredible year for our senior footballers and management – capturing the Grand Slam of titles – O’Byrne Cup, National League Division 1, Leinster and All-Ireland champions.

This time last year we were still licking our wounds after our All-Ireland semi-final exit, but as the American novelist, Truman Capote, remarked “Failure is the condiment that gives success its flavour”. The team management went away to plan and plot for 2015, tweaked the system and the results are there to see in the collection of silverware.

Dublin used the early season games in the O’Byrne Cup intelligently to road-test some emerging players. It was a competition that culminated in great excitement with the hard-fought victories in the semi-final over Meath in Navan and the final victory (after extra-time) over Kildare in Newbridge.

These games drew huge crowds to both Páirc Tailteann and St Conleth’s Park highlighting the attraction of watching this Dublin football team and their style of play.

While the National Football League was a bit of a slow-burner, Dublin’s display against Mayo in Castlebar in round 5 sent out a signal of intent. In the modern era of blanket defences, parked buses, sweepers, double-sweepers etc. the League proved to be a great academy of learning for this team.

The League concluded in historic fashion as, for the first time in history, Dublin won three in-a-row Division 1 titles when overcoming Cork. Jim Gavin's men won in impressive pillar to post fashion when they started in fifth gear and never looked like surrendering their early advantage.

The Dubs gave arguably their most ruthless display of their league campaign before turning their gaze to their Leinster SFC opener. We continued our dominance of the Leinster SFC when making it five provincial titles in succession. A two-goal blast early in the second half broke Westmeath's resilience after the midlanders' defensive game-plan had frustrated Dublin in the opening half.

Following victory over Fermanagh and some epic action against Mayo, the Dubs had reached All-Ireland Final Sunday. To cap off the year, Dublin defeated Kerry in the All-Ireland decider in a heroically brave showing on a tricky afternoon for football . . . three All-Irelands, five Leinsters, three National Leagues in recent times .... a remarkable haul from a remarkable bunch of players.

On an individual basis Dublin enjoyed a clean sweep in the Footballer of the Year nominations - Bernard Brogan, Philly McMahon and Jack McCaffrey - with Jack edging out his team-mates in the players' vote.

While in the All Stars we broke through the 100-mark when seven Dublin players were honoured - Rory O'Carroll, Philly McMahon, Cian O'Sullivan, Jack McCaffrey, Brian Fenton, Ciarán Kilkenny and Bernard Brogan.

Of course, you could argue 'the ball was throw-in' very early in the summer ahead of any potential Dublin v Kerry clash. In a pre-championship preview, legendary Kerry footballer, Darragh Ó Sé, as good as placed a target on the back of one of our most outstanding footballers, Diarmuid Connolly. In my opinion, some of the content was mean-spirited and the choice of language was somewhat inflammatory.

On the subject of the characterisation of our senior footballers, it is strange how, in many quarters, they are depicted as a team that are successful due to their "pace and power". Is there not several players on the current Dublin team that are as gifted as any footballer in their position of this generation and a few who must rank among the all-time great Dublin footballers?

## **Senior Hurling**

It ultimately proved a frustrating year for the Dublin senior hurling team in 2015 although many of their key objectives were realised. With their Division 1 status in the National League retained and having reached the All-Ireland quarter-finals, there were positives to derive from the year nonetheless.

However, the disappointment was acute given their 2-21 to 1-19 defeat to Waterford on July 26<sup>th</sup> in Thurles. While this ended their championship ambitions, it was a contest they could have gone our way but for some lapses from Dublin in the second-half.

The contest was effectively settled early in the second-half as Waterford tagged on 1-4 without reply. Although Mark Schutte offered hope with a superb goal midway through the half, their opponents pulled away with Dublin's misery compounded by the late dismissal of Liam Rushe.

Dublin had arrived at the lasteighth with confidence restored thanks to a Paul Ryan-inspired showing against Limerick in the qualifiers. The Ballyboden St Enda's clubman excelled in Semple Stadium with his tally of twelve points that included six scores from play. This helped Dublin to a deserved, albeit narrow, 1-17 to 1-16 victory with David O'Callaghan landing a crucial goal in the second-half.

That Dublin eked out the win was partly down to the excellence of Ryan and Rushe. However, Limerick did not help their cause as they hit numerous wides in the opening half despite building up a lead of eight points.

The qualifiers offered a degree of salvation to the Dublin team after the defeat they received at the hands of Galway in their Leinster quarter-final replay in Tullamore.

The initial fixture in Croke Park ended in a 0-20 to 1-17 stalemate. This was a match that Dublin could have won given the control they exerted for the large part but they were caught at the finish by Aidan Harte's levelling score.

David Treacy struck eleven points for Dublin with his Cuala clubmate Mark Schutte excelling in attack but some profligacy in the closing stages undermined their general enterprising play.

Regrettably, from a Dublin perspective, the replay was effectively over after ten minutes as we conceded three goals to Cathal Mannion and with two missed penalties in the half, the Dubs lost by 5-19 to 1-18.

That defeat led Dublin down the path of the qualifiers and needing a decent start in Portlaoise to banish the demons from the Galway defeat. They duly delivered with two Mark Schutte goals leading them to a 4-17 to 0-19 success, a win that proved the foundation for their victory over Limerick a week later.

The season began with optimism after the appointment of Ger Cunningham as manager and after beating DIT, Antrim and Laois on consecutive weeks, they narrowly fell to Galway by 1-22 to 1-20 in the Walsh Cup Final.

A difficult league campaign in Division 1A was anticipated but Dublin were boosted by an excellent start that prompted successive wins against Tipperary and Kilkenny before they lost two games on the bounce to Cork and Clare.

Their league ambitions were restored, however, on March 22<sup>nd</sup> as Galway were defeated more comprehensively than the 0-26 to 2-14 scoreline would suggest, as Mark Schutte and Danny Sutcliffe shone in attack.

Schutte was once again to the fore in Croke Park as Dublin defeated Limerick by 1-25 to 0-16 in the quarter-final. However, despite early goals from Schutte and O'Callaghan - that left Dublin twelve points clear after 19 minutes in their semi-final against Cork - the Rebel County finished strongly to claim a 1-27 to 2-23 victory.

Sé Boland and Gearóid Ó Rianin decided not to continue as selectors for 2016 due to work commitments and I thank them for their time-consuming commitment during the year. Liam Breathnach and Patsy Morrissey have been appointed by the County Committee as replacement selectors and they are looking forward to the challenges ahead.

## **U21 Football**

Dublin's attempts to register back-to-back football All-Ireland titles at the under-21 grade ended in disappointment despite the Dubs winning the Leinster crown for the second successive year.

A narrow 0-14 to 0-12 defeat to Tipperary in Tullamore proved Dublin's downfall as the Munster champions finished in the ascendancy before succumbing to Tyrone in the All-Ireland final later that month.

A talented panel was assembled by manager Dessie Farrell with the squad augmented by the likes of Eoin Murchan, Aaron Byrne, Andrew Foley and Colm Basquel, players that had played a pivotal role in Dublin's Leinster MFC success the previous year.

Dublin started their provincial campaign with a hard-earned 2-21 to 2-10 victory over Laois in Portlaoise on March 4<sup>th</sup> with the Dubs finishing strongly to secure the 11-point win. It appeared that Dublin would enjoy a relatively straightforward progression when Killian O'Gara's 11<sup>th</sup> minute goal propelled his side into a 1-6 to 0-2 lead.

However, the hosts fought back well and two goals reduced Dublin's advantage to 1-11 to 2-5 by the interval. Laois continued to impress after the break, landing four great points by Evin O'Carroll, Tom Shiel and Paul Kingston. However, then they hit three very bad wides which allowed the champions to recover and Dublin hit back with a succession of points by the excellent Conor McHugh, O'Gara, and a late goal by midfielder Shane Carthy, gave the scoreboard a one-sided appearance.

Dublin's next assignment arrived a fortnight later as they overcame a terrible start to eventually prevail by 2-15 to 3-7 against Longford in Navan. Larry Moran gave the midlanders the perfect start with a goal inside 90 seconds and although O'Gara found the net for Dublin on eight minutes, Longford struck again with another goal from Liam Connerton. Three successive points from Conor McHugh had Dublin level and they shot into the lead with a Basquel goal on 22 minutes.

Longford restarted the second half in similar fashion to the first with another goal from Connerton but another three points from McHugh kept Dublin well in contention. They

eventually regained the lead through the influential Eric Lowndes before pulling away to claim a five-point win thanks to a late flurry of points by the impressive Niall Scully.

Dublin's reward was a final berth against near neighbours, Kildare, in Páirc Tailteann once again on April 2, with 2-2 from Cormac Costello helping the holders to prevail by 3-10 to 1-12.

Goals by Costello and Basquel inched Dublin 2-5 to 1-6 ahead at the break. But the excellence of Neil Flynn, who accrued 11 points over the hour, kept Kildare in touch prior to Costello completing his brace on 48 minutes with McHugh kicking three late points to ensure Dublin's provincial title defence.

Unfortunately, Dublin were unable to add national glory to their Leinster title as they fell to Tipperary in their All-Ireland semi-final in O'Connor Park on April 18<sup>th</sup> with injury-time points by Steven O'Brien and Kevin O'Halloran handing Tipperary victory.

Dublin led by 0-7 to 0-3 at the break thanks largely to four points from Conor McHugh but Tipperary assumed control in the second-half and despite Costello and David Campbell kicking late scores to level matters, Tipperary closed out the deal in compelling fashion.

### **U21 Hurling**

It proved a truncated season for Dublin's under-21 hurlers as they exited the Leinster U21 Hurling Championship at the first hurdle following a narrow 4-12 to 2-16 reverse at the hands of Kilkenny last June.

The disappointment of that loss was compounded by the excellent display that Dublin produced on the night in Parnell Park with some defensive errors ultimately undermining their provincial and national ambitions.

Manager Joe Fortune had assembled a talented and hard-working panel over the spring and there was plenty of encouragement derived from the manner of Dublin's preparations ahead of the Kilkenny match.



Given that Dublin had contested the corresponding All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship three years previously, there was no lack of confidence within the panel that another prolonged campaign could be expected.

The minor captain back in 2012, Cian O'Callaghan, was selected as captain once again with Paul Winters from St Brigid's his vice-captain. However, many of the more talented hurlers from that 2012 minor team were unavailable for selection to Fortune, due to their involvement on the Dublin senior football panel.

Despite that, Dublin were still able to put together an enterprising unit and with the wind at their backs, they started brightly against the Cats with Paul Winters landing an excellent point from distance to open the scoring. That positivity was reflected in Cuala's Seán Treacy adding a sharply taken goal in the fourth minute.

However, a lack of tightness in defence allowed Kilkenny to seize the initiative through Chris Bolger's excellent goal but Treacy helped regain momentum to Dublin's challenge with two sublime points. Despite enjoying a healthy degree of possession, however, Dublin would have been disappointed to lead by just 1-8 to 1-6 at the break.

Kilkenny restored parity within two minutes of the restart following successive scores by Mark Mansfield and Ciarán Martin but Dublin fought back impressively with O'Callaghan giving a superb display at full-back. They restored a three-point lead thanks to successive efforts by Fiontan McGibb, Winters and the increasingly influential Cian Boland.

When Boland added an excellent second goal in the 42nd minute, it appeared that the hosts had done enough. However, Kilkenny remained in contention through goals by James Maher and Ciarán Ryan while in between those concessions, Dublin's Seán Brennan had a penalty opportunity saved by Darren Brennan.

Dublin bounced back well on each occasion, playing the more compelling hurling and after Ryan's strike, Boland and Oisín O'Rorke quickly added points to make it 2-16 to 3-10.

But this three-point cushion was reduced by scores from Liam Hickey and Bolger as Kilkenny finished stronger. They landed the knock-out blow in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute as

Mansfield's point attempt dropped short, deceiving Brennan and landing in the net with Dublin lacking sufficient time to force extra-time.

### **Minor Football**

A talented Dublin minor football team produced some impressive displays before succumbing to Kildare in their Leinster Minor Football Championship semi-final in Croke Park on June 28<sup>th</sup>.

Hopes were high within the county that Dublin could register back-to-back provincial titles, especially after Paddy Christie's outfit has tasted success in claiming the Leinster Minor Football League back in March with a win in the final against Kildare in Hawkfield.

The Dubs started their provincial campaign on April 18<sup>th</sup> with two second-half goals by Aaron Elliott seeing Dublin home against Offaly by 2-11 to 1-9 in Parnell Park. The Dubs struggled in the opening-half against a strong Offaly side that enjoyed an early two-point lead thanks to two fine scores by Dylan Hyland.

The hosts replied through Callum Pearson and Shane Howard. However, some poor shot selection undermined their play with the visitors enjoying a deserved 0-5 to 0-4 interval advantage, following a brace of points by Ciarán Maher.

Elliott's first goal in the 42nd minute looked to have handed his side a decisive lead but Offaly replied in kind through Jordan Hayes ten minutes later.

However, a John Kindlon point inched the Dubs ahead and after Elliot's second goal, the hosts secured their win through late points by Keating and the excellent Kevin Callaghan. Dublin eventually defeated Wexford by 3-8 to 0-11 in their provincial quarter-final in Enniscorthy on May 16<sup>th</sup> in a see-saw battle.

Dublin struggled after an initially promising opening in which Tom Fox opened the scoring before Dillon Keating added a third minute goal. Mikey Dwyer shone for the hosts and his three points allowed Wexford to level matters, with Keating and Fox replying for Dublin to ensure a 0-7 to 1-4 interval stalemate.

With the breeze at their backs, the hosts took the lead through Dwyer's 36th minute point but a brace of Paddy Small frees kept Dublin in touch. Wexford nerves led to some poor wides after the break and Dublin took full advantage through goals by substitute John Kindlon and Keating to secure a nervy win.

With key attackers Kevin Callaghan and Barra McGarry once again absent through injury, as well as the likes of Stephen Smith and Oisín Kelly also injured, Dublin's Leinster minor football dream perished in late June as they fell to Kildare by 3-16 to 3-13.

It started well for Dublin with goals from Fox and Shane Howard, following good work by Cormac Howley, helped Paddy Christie's side to a 2-2 to 0-4 advantage by the 17th minute.

In fact, the Dubs should have held a stronger lead but some wayward shooting let them down. Before the interval Kildare had taken control with Matthew Kelly's 26th minute thunderbolt bring the sides level, 2-4 to 1-7, but the Lilies soared into a 2-11 to 2-5 half-time lead courtesy of Rory Feely's controversial 30th minute penalty.

Twelve minutes into the second half Jimmy Hyland's goal left Dublin with a mountain to climb as Kildare moved 3-14 to 2-8 clear.

Dublin battled to the finish with both Cormac Howley and Kevin Kindlon kicking a brace of scores. But the goal they needed did not come until three minutes into added time when Paddy Small emphatically converted a penalty following a foul on Donal McIlghorm.

### **Minor Hurling**

It was a story of what might have been for Dublin's minor hurling team with their season coming to an unfortunate end as they were beaten by Tipperary by 2-17 to 1-15 in their All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship semi-final in Croke Park on August 16<sup>th</sup>.

Manager Johnny McGuirk entered the campaign with a large degree of confidence despite the relatively youthful and inexperienced squad at his disposal.

McGuirk's faith was vindicated as Dublin produced a dominant second-half display to deservedly overcome Offaly by 2-17 to 0-13 in their Leinster MHC opener at Parnell Park on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

The hosts led 0-8 to 0-7 at the break and controlled the second half with late goals from Eoghan Dunne and Gavin King sealing their place in the semi-finals.

A dominant third quarter helped Dublin comfortably account for Westmeath by 1-17 to 1-8 in their Leinster championship semi-final in Cusack Park, Mullingar. The visitors looked in difficulty at the interval as they led by just two points, having played with the benefit of a strong breeze in the opening half.

However, they assumed complete control upon the restart as they conceded just four points, while at the opposite end their marksmanship improved, with Donal Burke's 45th-minute goal effectively settling the tie.

Central to Dublin's dominance was the influence that their half-back line exerted on the match, with Eoin Foley and Paddy Smyth being hugely influential.

However, Dublin's momentum was punctured to a degree as Kilkenny struck four late points to defeat Dublin by 1-17 to 1-15 in the Leinster MHC Final at Croke Park on July 5<sup>th</sup>. The Dubs looked well primed to dethrone them as they went two points clear through an excellent score by substitute Alex Considine in the 57th minute. But Kilkenny responded admirably, with late scores by substitutes Conor Hennessy and Edmund Delaney sealing the victory.

Despite trailing by 1-7 to 0-8 at the break, Considine struck for a superb individual goal within a minute of the restart to revive Dublin's fortunes and although the Cats replied, the excellence of Matthew Oliver from frees continued to keep Kilkenny at arm's length.

Dublin looked to have given themselves a sufficient cushion through Oliver and Considine but Kilkenny concluded in fine style as they levelled the contest before their telling late scores secured the win.

Oliver was once again to the fore as Dublin bounced back from their Kilkenny defeat to overcome Antrim by 2-22 to 2-11 in their All-Ireland quarter-final in Breffni Park on July 25<sup>th</sup>. The Na Fianna player struck 0-11 over the hour for a Dublin team that netted through Eoghan Conroy and Fergal Whitely.

Dublin's reward was a semi-final clash with Tipperary in mid-August but the concession of two goals inside 18 minutes undermined their challenge as they fell by five points. Once again, there was a large dependence on Oliver for scores as he struck ten points over the duration, with Whitely netting in the first-half to ensure parity by the break (1-9 to 2-6).

Despite taking the lead with Ciarán Dowling, a bright light at wing-forward, Dublin suffered in the final quarter with the Munster champions hitting some fine points from distance to complete a deserved win.

However, with many of the panel eligible again next year, the experiences should stand to them as Dublin look forward to 2016 with optimism.

### **Fingal Hurling**

Fingal entered the Kehoe Cup and gave an impressive display against Wicklow in the opening round. However, comprehensive defeats followed against Maynooth University and Kildare. The team had high hopes of getting promotion to Division 2B of the League but a one-point defeat to Tyrone - and draws with Louth and Monaghan - ended that ambition.

However, it was with optimism that Fingal approached their opening game in the Nicky Rackard Cup played in Swords. Unfortunately Roscommon, who ultimately won the competition, were outstanding on the day and were comfortable winners by 3-12 to 0-9. A second round victory over Louth set up a repeat of the 2014 Final against Tyrone.

Unfortunately, the outcome was the same as the previous year with Tyrone advancing by four points. My thanks to Michael Kennedy and his management team and Liaison Officer, Colm Crowley, for their dedication and commitment to the Fingal team. A special words of thanks to the clubs that hosted games and training, particularly Fingallians.

## Results

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

### Allianz Hurling League

15/02/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 20	Tipperary	0 - 14
22/02/2015	Kilkenny	Dublin	0 - 25	Kilkenny	3 - 11
07/03/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 20	Cork	0 - 34
14/03/2015	Ennis	Dublin	2 - 20	Clare	2 - 22
22/03/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 26	Galway	2 - 14
28/03/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 25	Limerick	0 - 16
19/04/2015	Kilkenny	Dublin	2 - 23	Cork	1 - 27

### Leinster Senior Hurling Championship

31/05/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 20	Galway	1 - 17
06/06/2015	Tullamore	Dublin	1 - 18	Galway	5 - 19

### All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship

04/07/2015	Portlaoise	Dublin	4 - 17	Laois	0 - 19
11/07/2015	Thurles	Dublin	1 - 17	Limerick	1 - 16
26/07/2015	Thurles	Dublin	1 - 18	Waterford	2 - 21

### Walsh Cup Senior Hurling

20/01/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	4 - 20	DIT	1 - 12
25/01/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 28	Antrim	2 - 12
01/02/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 18	Laois	1 - 11
07/02/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 20	Galway	1 - 22

### Allianz Football League

01/02/2015	Cork	Dublin	0 - 16	Cork	1 - 15
07/02/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 10	Donegal	0 - 11
01/03/2015	Killarney	Dublin	1 - 10	Kerry	0 - 15
07/03/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 9	Tyrone	0 - 12

14/03/2015	Castlebar	Dublin	2 - 18	Mayo	0 - 10
28/03/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 8	Derry	0 - 4
05/04/2015	Clones	Dublin	1 - 22	Monaghan	1 - 11
12/04/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 17	Monaghan	0 - 16
26/04/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 21	Cork	2 - 7

### **Leinster Senior Football Championship**

31/05/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	4 - 25	Longford	0 - 10
28/06/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	5 - 18	Kildare	0 - 14
12/07/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 13	Westmeath	0 - 6

### **All-Ireland Senior Football Championship**

02/08/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 23	Fermanagh	2 - 15
30/08/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	2 - 12	Mayo	1 - 15
05/09/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	3 - 15	Mayo	1 - 14
20/09/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	0 - 12	Kerry	0 - 9

### **O'Byrne Cup Senior Football**

04/01/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	1 - 12	Maynooth U.	1 - 5
07/01/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	0 - 17	Offaly	0 - 13
11/01/2015	Portarlinton	Dublin	1 - 12	Laois	1 - 11
18/01/2015	Navan	Dublin	1 - 15	Meath	1 - 13
25/01/2015	Newbridge	Dublin	0 - 24	Kildare	0 - 19 AET

### **Leinster U21 Hurling Championship**

02/06/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 16	Kilkenny	4 - 12
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### **Leinster U21 Football Championship**

04/03/2015	Portlaoise	Dublin	2 - 21	Laois	2 - 10
18/03/2015	Navan	Dublin	2 - 15	Longford	3 - 7
02/04/2015	Navan	Dublin	3 - 10	Kildare	1 - 12

### **All-Ireland U21 Football Championship**

18/04/2015	Tullamore	Dublin	0 - 12	Tipperary	0 - 14
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### **Leinster Minor Hurling Championship**

25/04/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 17	Offaly	0 - 13
20/06/2015	Mullingar	Dublin	1 - 17	Westmeath	1 - 8
05/07/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 15	Kilkenny	1 - 17

### **All-Ireland Minor Hurling Championship**

25/07/2015	Cavan	Dublin	2 - 22	Antrim	2 - 11
16/08/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	1 - 15	Tipperary	2 - 17

### **Leinster Minor Football Championship**

18/04/2015	Parnell Park	Dublin	2 - 11	Offaly	1 - 9
16/05/2015	Enniscorthy	Dublin	3 - 8	Wexford	0 - 11
28/06/2015	Croke Park	Dublin	3 - 13	Kildare	3 - 16

### **Allianz Hurling League**

15/02/2015	Enniskillen	Fingal	3 - 13	Fermanagh	1 - 16
22/02/2015	St. David's	Fingal	1 - 15	Tyrone	1 - 16
08/03/2015	Rush	Fingal	1 - 11	Roscommon	3 - 24
22/03/2015	Kilbarrack	Fingal	2 - 17	Louth	3 - 14
28/03/2015	Inniskeen	Fingal	2 - 12	Monaghan	0 - 18

### **Nicky Rackard Cup**

02/05/2015	Swords	Fingal	0 - 9	Roscommon	3 - 12
09/05/2015	Dundalk	Fingal	1 - 21	Louth	2 - 8
16/05/2015	Swords	Fingal	0 - 20	Tyrone	1 - 21

### **Kehoe Cup Senior Hurling**

18/01/2015	Rathdrum	Fingal	0 - 12	Wicklow	0 - 12
25/01/2015	Swords	Fingal	0 - 6	Maynooth Univ	1 - 17
01/02/2015	Blanchardstown IT	Fingal	0 - 8	Kildare	5 - 27



## **Spawell**

The Strategy for Dublin GAA 2011-2017 contained an objective to develop a new stadium which would bridge the gap between the capacity of Croke Park and Parnell Park. The Committee had identified the need for a 25,000 spectator stadium. The 35 acre Spawell site in south Dublin, located just off the Tallaght junction on the M50, was identified as far back as 2010 as a potential site for this facility. As a consequence of the financial crisis, the loans associated with this site came under the control of NAMA and it became obvious that the site would be sold to recover these loans. The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee had been tracking this site and had engaged with NAMA and their appointed receivers. The Committee carried out an outline feasibility study of the site which confirmed its suitability for the 25,000 spectator stadium, together with 4 additional full size pitches and other support facilities.

While the statutory planning process was always going to present a challenge, this site appeared to score particularly well with regard to the critical large venue issue of transportation, given its proximity to the M50. Furthermore, it was concluded that the site could double up as an alternative Centre of Excellence as well as an overflow cluster facility for neighbouring clubs. From a development perspective, the lands could be conveniently developed on a phased basis as funds became available, with the stadium as the last piece of the jigsaw.

KPMG carried out financial modelling and the Committee engaged with Croke Park with regard to funding assistance. The Committee also engaged with NAMA in an effort to acquire the site by negotiation. In the event, NAMA decided on sale by public tender and Savills were appointed as agents. Given the key strategic importance of the site, Croke Park supported the Board in making a strong bid. In particular, a case was made for favourable consideration under the Community Development remit within NAMA's terms of reference.

In June, it became clear that our bid was unsuccessful and we had come second to a speculative investment fund which had submitted a slightly higher bid. The Committee was bitterly disappointed with the outcome, particularly because no credit was given to the community aspect of our offer. I publically expressed our frustration at the waste of so much voluntary effort over the years and the national media picked up on the theme.

NAMA's response was that they were not the seller, rather it was a (NAMA-appointed) receiver who was obliged to accept the highest price. This piece of subterfuge allowed NAMA to slip the noose and ignore a central piece of their mandate which is to 'contribute to the social and economic development of the State' as required under Clause 2 (viii) of the NAMA Act, 2009. Indeed, shortly after the establishment of NAMA, I expressed the view in my 2009 Secretary's Report that the inclusion of the Community Development provision within its terms of reference represented a huge opportunity for the Association to acquire much needed playing facilities.

I am aware that many clubs have engaged with NAMA to no avail. In fact, I am not aware of any of our clubs benefiting from this provision to date. By pushing for maximum commercial returns alone, NAMA appears to be working against the interests of our members, the very ones who have already paid dearly for the write-downs on development loans transferred to it. It is well beyond time that NAMA is required to put a line entitled 'Social Capital' on its balance sheet and to be held to account in this regard.

### **Which is more important: U21 or Sigerson?**

The recently reactivated debate about the future of the under-21 football championship – specifically its discontinuation as Árd Stiúrthóir Páraic Duffy proposes – has got me thinking.

You are an elite young player, just turned 20, and hoping to stake a claim sooner or later for inclusion on your county's senior football squad. You have an either/or choice: play for your county at U21 level, or play for your college in the Sigerson Cup ... but you can't do both.

My suspicion is that a majority – not all but still a strong majority – would opt for U21. Now conduct a straw poll of GAA supporters in your county. What matches are you more interested in attending – your nearest university or college in the higher education championship, or your own county in U21 combat?

The answer to this conundrum is far less a suspicion – it's an undeniable fact, just look at the attendances. Far more Gaelic football supporters have a deep attachment to U21 than to the Sigerson Cup. True, it's not that you get bumper crowds at all midweek U21 clashes in February and March; but as the competition progresses and a county gets on a roll, you are talking about thousands.

I can clearly remember Dublin's last two All-Ireland U21 successes – in 2012 and 2014 – not just for the triumphant outcomes but for the match-day atmosphere in Tullamore. We had very decent support for the Dubs on each occasion, only to be outnumbered several times over by our Roscommon counterparts.

That was a measure of what this competition can mean. Yes, its role is primarily developmental - to prepare and road-test promising young players for the potential quantum leap into senior county action. But the importance of that function cannot be glossed over. Westmeath are frequently cited but it's a valid argument: would they have won their first Leinster senior title in 2004 without the invaluable bridge of their only All-Ireland U21 success, five years earlier?

For managers also, it is part of their learning curve. Our own Jim Gavin 'cut his teeth' very successfully first as a coach and eventually as U21 manager.

The Sigerson Cup is a wonderful competition in its own right and, in a Utopian world, could continue long into the future alongside the U21 championship. But the GAA fixtures calendar, with its crazily congested spring months, is anything but perfect. If something has to give (and evidently a pre-Christmas Sigerson switch is probably not feasible) my argument is that the U21 inter-county grade is more deserving of preservation, with the Sigerson played in a more condensed period early in new year.

### **Football Reform: Time for a Conference Call**

With every passing year we get a growing chorus of discontent over the senior football championship format. Hurling is a different conundrum entirely, with far less counties involved in the top tier and, maybe as a consequence, less angst over the system.

It's fair to say that, 15 seasons after the back door's introduction to football, many people have grown a little weary of the qualifiers. Perhaps it's because the system has facilitated the strong more than the weak ... there is far less chance of a 'springer' making it all the way to the All-Ireland semi-finals, let alone beyond.

However, before we tear up the script without pausing to consider the consequences, we should ask ourselves what is the qualifier system designed for? Does it secure a second

chance for all counties? Yes. Does it help to ensure that the cream rises to the top? Obviously yes, considering how Tyrone, Kerry and Cork have all taken the scenic route to Sam Maguire at a time when they were perennial challengers.

Yet that, in itself, is not necessarily a bad thing: the very nature of competitive sport is that the best should win out, most of the time ... and besides, the last five All-Ireland champions (ourselves on three occasions) have blazed a trail through the front door.

For all that, I perceive a definite need to shake up our flagship inter-county competition while ensuring that the vast majority of our playing membership - at club level - aren't left kicking their championship boots in frustration until the autumn.

My starting point would be a redrawing of the provincial boundaries to give us four conferences of eight counties. Obviously some counties on the periphery of a province would have to move. These details would obviously require some negotiation, not to mention broad agreement but, at least, it would set every provincial council on an even footing. Should we then run off these conferences on an open draw basis (winners advancing, losers detouring to the qualifiers) or consider Champions League-style groups? My preference would be for the status quo, as the latter could produce too many dead rubbers.

Either way, fixtures could be streamlined to run off our conferences in a less lopsided and more speedy fashion ... and, crucially, every county that keeps on winning would be faced with the same number of fences to reach the All-Ireland.

But what will this do for the weaker counties? Good question. But so long as the vast majority of those counties - and their players - are opposed to entering a 'B' championship, there is little point foisting one upon them.

### **Disciplinary Issues**

Are the GAA's disciplinary bodies reacting too much to what's shown on TV in highlights programmes, in particular?

For some reason – possibly because the ‘Sunday Game’ goes on for so long on a Sunday night - the flesh is picked off disciplinary bones until the bone itself is being chewed on.

Nobody is condoning ill-discipline but there's now a view among a lot of GAA people that TV re-runs, whether during 'live' or 'highlights' programmes set the agenda for games which have already been regulated by no fewer than seven officials.

Newspapers then pick up on it and suddenly even trivial things become an issue. Again, nobody is condoning wrongdoing but it's not good for the disciplinary system if there's a perception that TV and the extended media is setting the agenda, simply as part of entertainment.

How many times have we seen disciplinary action taken against a player, whose case wasn't highlighted on TV? Rarely, if ever. However, we have seen plenty of example of borderline cases being dissected frame-by-frame on television, followed by a case taken by CCCC. That's particularly the case later in the championships when TV has so much time to dwell on a few games.

Compare it with soccer and rugby coverage. Yes, incidents are reviewed if it's warranted in soccer and rugby but not to anything like the same degree as in football and hurling. The GAA has no control over television or the rest of the media but it can control its own disciplinary affairs and not be dictated to by a TV programme trying to fill out time.

If the offence warrants it – take whatever tough action is required, but don't always respond to incidents shown in slow motion, which can distort reality. In others words, be strong when we have to, not when others tell us we have to.

### **Bah Humbug!**

It would appear Charles Dickens' Ebenezer Scrooge has taken up residence off Jones Road this festive season! Following our superb All-Ireland success this September the Dublin County Board contacted Croke Park looking for an additional grant from the proceeds of the Semi-Final Replay against Mayo towards the financing of a team holiday for the players this December. After a year, when once again, the Dublin footballers proved to be the most successful in the country and attracted the largest crowds to headquarters, we were promised the princely sum of €15,000. Maybe we can be thankful for small mercies as that was a 50 per cent increase on what we were originally granted. However, the increase was short-lived as the CCCC recouped that exact amount within 48 hours following the Donnybrook in

Boson! We don't feel we have a sense of entitlement but we think that after a campaign that included a near full-house (81,897) for our All-Ireland SFC semi-final replay against Mayo, the purse strings could have been loosened a little bit at least.

We also know that Dublin's commercial value to the central coffers exceeds any other county by a stretch. In recent years, counties involved in an All-Ireland Final Replay have received additional holiday grants of €50,000 and the receipts from the Semi-Final Replay would, I estimate, be comparable. Perhaps the reason for the reduction is that our opponents were having, what you might term 'industrial relations issues' regarding their players/management interface at the end of this summer, that Croke Park were not prepared to grant us any more finances.

The Croke Park stadium is practically debt free, a superb achievement for the Association. But it has to be asked - was the main driving force in achieving this not off the backs of players who have made such huge sacrifices and brought so much joy to the masses? Surely then they should be rewarded at season's end with a bit more Christmas cheer, rather than a bit of 'Christmas Carol'?

### **Social Media**

In the past I have written about the dangers of the misuse of Twitter and its role in the race to the bottom. Unfortunately I have to revisit the subject. This summer, Meath goalkeeper, Paddy O'Rourke, was subjected to vile and sickening abuse via Twitter. Some of the content included threats of physical violence. At the time there were calls from some quarters that the Gardaí should be called in to investigate the matter and I'd echo that stance. I have read some disgraceful abuse also of some of our own players in the aftermath of championship games, some of which, I believe, is heading down the road of incitement to hatred and must be silenced.

### **Time to help the Referee**

I've used this forum previously to highlight the growing pressures placed on our referees. The speed of the modern game in both football and hurling makes it increasingly difficult for the referee to be in the most advantageous position to pass instant judgement on key decisions, such as penalty calls or disciplinary flashpoints.

Coupled with this you have media coverage like never before, with multiple camera angles and slowed-down replays leading to forensic analysis of those decisions - be it on 'live' TV within minutes of the incident happening, or more especially on 'The Sunday Game' that night.

Sometimes, it's hard to escape the impression of a referee (who is human and fallible, like the rest of us) being hung out to dry by technology. Well, why not let that same technology come to his aid?

In my 2013 report, I suggested that it might be worth experimenting with two referees in the early-season competitions such as the O'Byrne and Walsh Cups in Leinster and the McKenna Cup, etc, elsewhere. I have seen nothing to alter my stance since then - surely four eyes would be better than two?

But why not go a step further and introduce a television match official, or TMO? Yes, I appreciate this would pose huge logistical - and perhaps financial - headaches for our association. And it could potentially spawn too many stoppages and prove a turn-off for supporters and some other unforeseen problems might also emerge.

But we'll never know without trying and, who knows, the positives could far outweigh the negatives. So why not, purely on an experimental basis for televised league matches, introduce a TMO? Confine his sphere of responsibility to specific calls such as penalties (e.g. was it a foul and, if so, was it committed inside or outside the large parallelogram?); disciplinary flashpoints (e.g. deciding on yellow, black or red cards) and the eligibility of goals (e.g. did the ball or sliotar cross the line before it was cleared?).

We already have Hawk-Eye to adjudicate on points and, notwithstanding one early awful glitch affecting the Limerick minor hurlers, it has been a major success. It meant there could be no caveats hanging over the drawn All-Ireland hurling final of 2014, after John O'Dwyer's late attempted winner for Tipperary was shown to be wide.

Meanwhile, during the recent Rugby World Cup, we could all see how the TMO - once properly utilised - can clear up confusion and greatly reduce the potential for incorrect

decisions deciding the outcome of major sporting contests. And ultimately, isn't that what we all want?

### **The rebirth of International Rules?**

Let me start with a confession ... over the last decade, I haven't exactly professed undying love for International Rules. As recently as two years ago, I was fully convinced that this sporting marriage between Gaelic football and Aussie Rules had no future and writing in my 2013 report, I said: "Is it worth watching? At present, I believe the answer is no. Are people watching it? Based on the crowds Down Under in 2011 and this year's 28,525 at Croke Park, the public have switched off. Whisper it softly ... is it time to put International Rules out of its misery?"

Well, credit where credit is due. Belatedly, doubtless in the realisation that the game was up otherwise, the AFL has treated the concept seriously over the past two series. Stronger selections has enabled them to claim home victory last year, and then threaten a pretty spectacular comeback in Croke Park on November 21<sup>st</sup>.

The attendance of 38,386 was far healthier than 2013, while still a long way off the high water mark of 2006, when 82,127 turned up for the second test in Croke Park - that infamously ugly clash that almost finished the series for good.

Now, for all the suggestions that the sulphur of violence puts bums on seats, no one wants a return to that '06 nadir. That version of International Rules has no future and the sporting manner in which this year's test was played reinforces the belief that neither association has any interest in promoting it either.

However, it shouldn't be forgotten that the full-house crowd of '06 was for a second test. The public's curiosity had been piqued by the first match in Galway that year and, inevitably, by the full week of media debate that followed, aided by some controversial subplots which, of course, always help to sell tickets.

For the past two years we've been confined to one test ... the sceptics might claim that's one game too many but, in truth, for the series to thrive and not merely survive, there must be a return to the two-test format.



Imagine the build-up to a second deciding match this year, with just four points separating the two countries? Far easier to sell tickets then than in the vacuum of a week before. For now, the Cormac McAnallen Cup is back in Ireland and I must congratulate our own Bernard Brogan, as captain, Rory O'Carroll, Philly McMahon, Jack McCaffrey and Diarmuid Connolly for helping to make that happen.

### **Sponsorship**

Our sponsorship portfolio continues to develop and the outstanding performance from our teams make us an attractive marketing platform for brands and organisations. Our thanks to AIG CEO - Declan O'Rourke - and all of his colleagues for their sponsorship. In addition to the commitment and support that AIG bring to Dublin GAA, they have again continued in the spirit of innovation through new campaigns and initiatives, including the Super 11's Hurling game in Fenway Park, Boston.

I would like to welcome new partners Britvic and Bavaria, and to our many other partners, we are most grateful for your valued contribution and continued support. Our playing gear sponsorship is currently up for renewal and our thanks to Tony Towell and his team in O'Neill's for their support over the years. We value our partnerships with the corporate sector and look forward to another year working to our mutual benefit.

In July, Tomás Quinn, Commercial and Marketing Manager, arranged a commercial partners breakfast in Croke Park. The event was a huge success and included a Q & A with Jim Gavin & Ger Cunningham, as well as a guided tour of the stadium and dressing rooms joined by current Dublin players. I wish to thank Tomás for his outstanding work in the area of sponsorship and marketing.

### **Local Authorities – Development Plans**

The four Dublin Councils – Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and South Dublin County Council are currently engaged in the review of their existing Development Plans and the making of new Development Plans for the areas of the county under their jurisdiction. The Review/Plan making process which covers a period of approximately two years is at a different stage within each of the four Councils. There are several consultation stages in the process where submissions/observations are invited from members of the public on issues which may

concern them in the formulation of the new Development Plans. Dublin GAA has been actively engaged in these stages of the process where they have arisen within the different Planning Authorities.

### **Dublin City Council.**

The Draft Dublin City Development Plan 2016 - 2022 was published in October of this year. The consultation period on the Draft Development Plan terminates on Friday, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2015. We are currently engaged in the preparation of a submission on the Draft Development Plan which is to be lodged by that date.

### **Fingal County Council.**

The Draft Fingal Development Plan 2017 - 2023 is currently being made by Fingal County Council. Prior to the commencement of the making of the Development Plan by the Council, it engaged in what is described as the Pre-Draft Development Plan consultation process, whereby it invites submissions/observations are invited on strategic issues which the public consider should be covered in the new Development Plan.

In May 2015 Dublin GAA made two submissions to the Council for consideration in the making of the new Plan. The first submission focused on the general issues which concerned Dublin with regard to the provision of facilities etc. within the Fingal area while the second was primarily concerned with the provision of playing facilities in Tyrrelstown, Hollywoodwrath and the Hollystown area of Dublin 15.

The first submission highlighted a number of issues: -

- It opened by focusing on the key role of the clubs in Fingal as providers of physical recreational activity for boys and girls from the ages of 4 or 5 to adulthood. The availability of well designed, accessible, high quality, well maintained active recreational facilities, both outdoor and indoor, was identified as being critical to enable these clubs to accommodate the needs of their members and become viable and vital sporting organizations enhancing the lives of their host communities. The Council was seen as having a very important role as the primary provider of such facilities and that where they exist they should be protected, retained and enhanced

and where they are proposed they should be developed to the highest standards attainable.

- At a general level, it was requested that where the Council is making key investment decisions on recreational infrastructure be it the rehabilitation/ regeneration of existing facilities, or the development of new facilities, there is a need that should be acknowledged in the new Development Plan to engage at an early stage with the interested stakeholders such as the GAA in Fingal. Engagement in joint ventures with local clubs was identified as a mechanism for achieving additional investment in such resources.
- With regard to the hierarchy of public open spaces within Fingal, it was submitted that ‘kickabout areas’ be developed in small parks as multi-functional all-weather facilities, suitable in their design and layout for Gaelic games. Stakeholders such as Dublin GAA or local GAA clubs should be engaged at an early stage in the design process.
- In the higher order parks, well designed floodlit, flexible high quality multi-functional facilities should be provided as integral elements of their sports infrastructure. Financing their provision through public/private partnership schemes with clubs or sporting organisations should be investigated. Stakeholders should be engaged at an early stage in the design process re: - location of pitches/ goalposts/ball catch nets/hurling walls etc.
- Parks should be accessible through cycle and pedestrian networks in their host areas. Adequate car parking should be provided e.g. 15 spaces per pitch plus overflow parking. Overspill facilities should be provided as in Malahide Castle with provision also for bus parking.
- On the use of the land, it was submitted that where institutional land is in use for sporting or recreational purposes, there should be a general presumption against the development of these lands except in exceptional circumstances. A minimum default

provision e.g. 25% of the overall area to be retained as open space should be specified in the Plan.

- Engagement between schools and sports clubs/organisations in their host community should be encouraged, to enable the provision of all-weather floodlit playing facilities to be available for school/community use.
- All-weather floodlit playing/training facilities are essentially to alleviate pressure on Council playing pitches and to allow clubs train. In the higher order parks, these facilities should form an integral part of the stock of sports facilities. When their provision is being considered, consultation with prospective stakeholders e.g. the clubs likely to be using them, should be encouraged at the pre-design stage to ensure the design of essential training/practice facilities in terms of their area, design and layout are adequate for training/practice for Gaelic games.
- Increased levels of playing activity because of the growth of engagement by boys and especially girls and the growth in the number of competitions raised issues re: the adequacy and capacity of the available pitches/ancillary facilities. It was emphasised that the Development Plan should have more precise commitments on behalf of the Council with regard to the renewal of existing pitches, the quality of their drainage and other pitch features and their overall maintenance.
- Where rehabilitation programmes for the regeneration of existing facilities are being embarked upon, the Plan should include specific provision for engagement at the commencement stage of the process with the local stakeholders e.g. local G.A.A. clubs in the formulation of these programmes to ensure that the needs of these stakeholders as the end users are accommodated in any such programme.
- Development Contribution Schemes made by the Council should in addition to providing for the development of new facilities provide for the renovation/upgrading of existing facilities.

- The second submission focused exclusively on the Tyrrelstown, Hollywoodwrath and Hollystown area of Fingal. It described the formation of the Tyrrelstown GAA by Coiste Átha Cliath in 2009, its development in the interim and the major problem challenging its consolidation and future growth i.e. the deficit in the stock of playing pitches in the area. This also presents a problem for the promotion of Gaelic Games in local schools. Dublin GAA have identified the need in the area for an area of c.6-7 acres in the locality suitable for the development of a playing field for adult games with ancillary facilities at a location accessible to local members. We requested therefore the inclusion in the new Draft Plan of an Objective committing the Council to facilitate the provision of a new GAA sport facility in Hollystown, Hollywoodwrath and Tyrrelstown.

#### **Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.**

In the case of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, the making of the new Development Plan is at a very advanced stage. The Proposed Amendments to the Draft Development Plan are currently on public display until Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2015.

We are currently reviewing those Amendments with a view to making a submission on them prior to the deadline. During the display of the Draft Development Plan earlier this year, Dublin GAA made a submission on it for consideration by the Council.

- The policy declaration to promote the provision/management of high quality sporting/recreational infrastructure throughout the county and to ensure that adequate playing fields are established in new development areas was welcomed as was the policy to protect existing sports facilities within established built-up areas.
- Where land is required to be dedicated as open space within development schemes, we supported the application of a standard for the provision of public open space within residential development on a per capita basis, with the inclusion of a minimum default provision with regard to the percentage of the area of any particular development site.
- The increase in the number of competitions and participants, and the extension of the playing season has raised issues re: the adequacy/capacity of existing pitches and

ancillary facilities to sustain the growing level of demand. To optimise the use of these pitches and the new pitches to be developed in the future, it was requested that more precise commitments be made in the Plan by the Council in relation to the renewal of existing pitches and the development of new playing facilities in terms of the quality of drainage etc. and their overall maintenance. Local clubs, as stakeholders, should be engaged with at an early stage in the formulation of these programmes. The upgrading of existing ancillary facilities e.g. dressing rooms to an appropriate size to accommodate G.A.A. panels and support teams should be one of the key objectives of any such rehabilitation programmes.

- There is a need for the development of all-weather playing facilities to address the playing/training needs of clubs especially because the use of Council pitches for training purposes is generally forbidden, especially in wintertime. They should be part of the inventory of sports facilities within any district or regional park. The provision of smaller scale all-weather practice facilities within residential areas should also be considered. Where such development proposals are under consideration, consultation was requested with the proposed stakeholders at the pre-design stage to ensure that in terms of their area, design and layout, they are adequate for their intended use.

The Draft Development Plan included a number of Specific Local Objectives (S.L.O.s) which related to the progression of an existing Masterplan for an existing Council park and the making of new Masterplans for two new parks.

S.L.O.23 relates to the progression of the Masterplan for Marley Park. The formation of a cooperative partnership with local stakeholders including any G.A.A. clubs using the facilities was submitted that to realise one of the objectives of the Masterplan re: the provision of quality recreational facilities. S.L.O. 36 and S.L.O. 38 related to the making of Masterplans for Fernhill Gardens and Jamestown Park. It was advocated that prior to the making of the Draft Masterplans, stakeholders such as the G.A.A. should be engaged in the making of the Draft. They would facilitate an informed assessment of the recreational needs of the community, who would be vested with ownership of the Plans.

- Support of the engagement of schools and sports clubs/organisations in cooperative ventures should be explicitly stated in the Plan to enable the provision on a partnership basis of, for example, all-weather floodlit facilities which would be available for school and community use.
- With regard to the Draft Development Plan's recommended standards for the provision of parking associated with playing pitches, it was recommended that provision be made for overspill parking above the Council's stated standards and for bus and bicycle parking.
- The Draft Development Plan provides, where institutional lands are being developed, for a minimum area of open space amounting to 25% of the total site area or a population based provision based on occupancy. Coiste Átha Cliath advocated the adoption in the Plan of a general presumption against the development of institutional lands which are in sporting/recreational use except in very limited circumstances.

### **South Dublin County Council.**

In South Dublin, the consultation period for the Draft Development Plan ended on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2015. The Chief Executive's Report on the submissions made during that period will be presented to the Elected Members this month who will then have twelve weeks to consider the Draft Plan and the Report. If the Councillors then propose Amendments to the Draft Development Plan, they will go on public display for a further period.

A submission was made by Dublin GAA on the Draft Development Plan in late September.

- A key strategic development objective for Dublin is the provision of a mid-sized stadium (capacity 25,000) with potential site options under consideration in South Dublin. It was requested that 'stadium' should be defined in the Development Plan and covered as a separate land use in the Plan's land use zoning matrix to avoid the zoning regime to be adopted in the Development Plan presenting any material obstacles to the realisation of the stadium project.
- A comprehensive study is proposed during the lifetime of the Plan to identify future needs for sports/leisure development. The related 'Action' statement should be

amended to include a reference to engagement with the relevant stakeholders e.g. Dublin GAA and local clubs to ensure that their existing and future needs are identified re: upgrading of existing facilities and provision of additional new facilities.

- Management Plans are proposed to maximise the use of leisure/amenity resources in the Council area. The related objective should be amended to refer to the engagement of stakeholders at an early stage in the process. There also should be a commitment to engage with stakeholders such as Dublin GAA and local GAA clubs as part of the stated plan to reclaim parks disproportionately affected by anti-social behaviour and vandalism.
- The Objective in the Draft Development Plan to retain and enhance established recreational uses should be more assertive in relation to the protection and enhancement of existing sporting facilities in established built up areas.
- On the provision of land dedicated to public open space, the related standards for application within residential development should be modified to a requirement based on the number of persons/bedspaces within development schemes with a default provision re: a percentage of the area of the development site. For development on institutional lands, the minimum requirement re: the provision of public open space should be 25% or a population based criterion, whichever is greater.
- The need for the optimisation of the use of existing playing facilities and the upgrading of ancillary facilities and engagement with stakeholders in rehabilitation programmes as provided for in the submissions on the other Draft Development Plans was repeated.
- Likewise with the development of all-weather playing/training facilities and the development/shared usage of School facilities – the submission re-echoed many of the ideas presented on the other Draft Development Plans. Similarly in relation to parking and protection of playing facilities on institutional lands, these were covered in the same way.
- Within the framework at local planning level being presented in the South Dublin County Council Draft Development Plan, Masterplans were identified as having a key



role. We asked for a consultation process to precede the making of those Plans to allow the engagement of stakeholders in the making of the Draft. This would facilitate a realistic appraisal of the recreational needs of the community; ensure that the facilities proposed met the recreational needs of the community and would vest them and stakeholders with ownership of the Plan.

### **Club Championships**

Cuala won the Dublin Senior Hurling Championship by defeating St. Jude's 3-14 to 0-13 - twenty-one years after their last success in 1994. Cuala were the better team on the day and it was particularly disappointing for St. Jude's as this was the second year in a row that they were defeated in the final. Cuala progressed through Leinster with exciting wins over Coolderry and Clara. In the Leinster Final Oulart-The Ballagh with wind advantage led by 1-7 to 0-2 at half-time but the concession of a second goal midway through the second half realistically ended Cuala's prospects despite the best efforts of David Treacy.

Ballyboden St. Enda's were surprise winners of the Senior Football Championship for the first time since 2009 defeating the holders St. Vincent's in the final. Victories over St. Patrick's from Louth and St. Loman's from Westmeath set up a Leinster Final meeting against Portlaoise in Tullamore. In a highly entertaining game the outcome was in the balance until an Aran Waters point in the 60<sup>th</sup> minute sealed Ballyboden St. Enda's first Leinster title. This is the fourth consecutive year that a Dublin Club has won the Leinster Club Championship following wins by Ballymun Kickhams in 2012 and St. Vincent's in 2013 and 2015.

St. Oliver Plunkett's Eoghan Ruadh and Cuala won the Senior 'B' Hurling and Senior 'B' Football Championships respectively. Congratulations also to Castleknock, who were founded in 1998, who won the Adult Football League Division 2 and are now promoted to Division 1 for 2016.

### **Format of Club Senior Championships**

The format of our club senior football championship is an issue that I have raised in the past in my Convention reports and it's one that needs to be both revisited and acted upon. The format in place for the senior football championship dictates that all first-round losers compete in a 'B' championship.

However, the time has surely arrived for a proper senior 'A' and, if required, a senior 'B' football championship. There are simply too many clubs in our championship currently as clubs seem intent on maintaining their status as 'senior' when, in fact, their needs and those of their players might be better served in a second tier competition where they could be more competitive and have a realistic chance of honours and, therefore, promotion. Frankly, there are plenty of clubs currently participating in the 'A' championship, which are out of their depth. I suggest that the senior 'A' championship be limited to 16 teams and to appease clubs who still wished to be considered 'senior', a proper 'B' championship with another 16 clubs competing, or more if desired.

We have the farcical situation that only 6 clubs considered themselves capable of contesting the U21 'A' football championship but we have 32 clubs deluding themselves that they should be in the senior 'A' championship. It is time for the CCC to come up with innovative proposals to resolve this situation as, in my opinion, the solution remains with that committee.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

The County Health and Wellbeing Committee have been very active during the past year and launched their website during the summer [www.dublingaa.ie/health-wellness](http://www.dublingaa.ie/health-wellness) The website is a source of information for clubs and individuals containing important contacts and health and wellbeing information and resources. A number of high profile initiatives were also undertaken during the year.

Dublin GAA is committed to promoting health and wellbeing within our membership, our clubs, and our communities. We aim to achieve this through the provision of information, initiatives, and campaigns to promote physical and mental health and wellbeing. Our sincere thanks to Chairperson, Clare O'Sullivan and the committee members, Stephen Maguire, Michael O'Toole, Geraldine McTavish and Aileen Byrne for their excellent work in this area. This is a service for all the clubs and these volunteers are selfless and their immense contribution is done quietly and confidentially.

### **Easter 1916 Centenary Publication**

If any one building is synonymous with the 1916 Rising it is the GPO – the General Post Office on O'Connell Street, or Sackville Street as it was then, was the headquarters and the

epicentre of the Rising in Dublin and indeed the entire country. Patrick Pearse stood outside the GPO to read the Proclamation at noon on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1916, and thereafter the city was convulsed by fighting for six days with the country's principal street and the GPO itself eventually engulfed by fire, leaving the once great Sackville Street almost unrecognisable.

Who were the men and women who took over the GPO with Pearse and Connolly on Easter Monday 1916. Now thanks to Jimmy Wren from O'Tooles, we definitively know the 498 men and 74 women involved, their names and details, their backgrounds and even what happened to them after the Rising. Harry Boland, as Chairman of the Dublin County Board was the most senior GAA Official in the GPO. Also present was a member of Confederates Hurling Club, Seán T. O'Kelly, who later became President of Ireland.

The County Committee is delighted to financially support the publication of *The GPO Garrison Easter Week 1916: a biographical dictionary* by Jimmy Wren to mark the centenary of the 1916 Rising and I hope that it will be widely read and referenced for years to come.

### **GAA National Club Draw 2016**

The GAA National Club Draw is now an annual event following its success over the past two years, in which over €4.5 million has been raised by clubs. The sole purpose of the GAA National Club Draw is to assist clubs in their drive to raise much needed funds to aid in the development and the promotion of our games.

This is an opportunity for clubs to earn €20,000 by selling their full allocation of 2,000 tickets. Each club retains all the proceeds and the prizes are provided by Croke Park. In the past two years, Dublin clubs have sold tickets to the value of €419,840. The next draw will take place on March 11<sup>th</sup> 2016 and sincere thanks to Finbarr O'Mahony for co-ordinating the distribution and reconciliation of ticket sales.

### **Club Leadership Development Programme**

The Club Leadership Development Programme will give the principal officers in each club an opportunity to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles in a confident and competent manner. During 2016, it is proposed to deliver this programme to all clubs.

The principal officers will have the opportunity to attend an induction module to introduce them to their role as a Club Officer. In addition, specific modules have been prepared for the specific roles of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer.

### **Club Planning Programme**

All GAA clubs should plan ahead for the future. Clubs need to plan for their long-term viability in order to sustain what they already have and to grow. A club plan is a document that is designed to give the club direction in the short to medium term and takes into account the internal strengths and weaknesses, the external opportunities and threats, and details strategies to address or build on these.

The GAA Club Planning Programme provides clubs with a structured approach to developing a plan. The main part of the programme is the club planning workshop, where all of the club's members are invited to attend a facilitated workshop to discuss all aspects of club activity. There is a club plan template that can be downloaded from the GAA website.

### **Club AGMs**

The AGM is the most important meeting of the year in any club. This meeting should take place before the end of November (Rule 8.3 Club Constitution) so that it has taken place before the County Convention.

Annually, I receive emails and phone calls from clubs enquiring about the procedures to be followed and the eligibility of members to contest various positions. In brief, club members are entitled to receive at least 28 days notice of the meeting and, at the same time, be advised that they may submit nominations for election to the Executive Committee and motions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting. The agenda, reports and nominations for election to the Executive Committee must be circulated ten days in advance of the meeting. Only full members, whose membership fees are paid before 31<sup>st</sup> March (or earlier if stated in the individual Club Constitution) can vote at the Annual General Meeting and be eligible for election to the Executive Committee.

### **Club Constitution**

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

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

### **All Ticket Matches**

This year we were involved in all-ticket games commencing with the Spring Series and concluding on 20<sup>th</sup> September with the All-Ireland Senior Football Final. The demand for tickets during the summer months places a heavy burden on the staff, particularly when games are scheduled for consecutive weeks. The end of August and the beginning of September was a particularly difficult period as we had unprecedented demand for the All-Ireland Football Semi-Final and Replay against Mayo and the Final against Kerry. We also had the Hurling final to cater for. The collection and reconciliation of payments are also very time-consuming. The co-operation of all the clubs was appreciated, especially the individual club co-ordinators who have the unenviable task of satisfying their members' requests. A special word of thanks to Fiona Waters for her exemplary commitment and assistance for the duration of the ticket season.

### **Paula Lee**

I wish to pay tribute to Paula Lee who retires shortly after distinguished and loyal service to Dublin GAA. Her 41 years career commenced in the offices in North Great Georges Street and continued in both Abbey Street and Belvedere Place before finally settling in Parnell Park in 1995.

Paula has witnessed many changes in the Association in Dublin over the years and was a great mentor to me when I got the position of County Secretary. I will be forever grateful to her for her sound advice, insights and good sense. Her excellent organisational skills and knowledge of the workings of the Clubs and County Board was a huge asset. She had a key role within the Office and was the friendly voice of Dublin GAA all year round with the possible exception of September!

Paula came in contact with a huge number of people across all clubs and was instrumental in helping them with their enquiries. We will miss her calmness, restraint, accountability and, especially her sense of humour, and on behalf of all the clubs and staff, I wish her health and happiness in her retirement.

### **Garda Vetting**

Garda vetting, which is the pre-checking of an applicant's background for criminal convictions or prosecutions, continued during the year as we continue to promote best practice in the recruitment and selection of persons to work with children in the GAA. Eight thousand applications have been vetted and I want to acknowledge the excellent help and co-operation we received from all the clubs.

### **Schools**

Children these days spend much of their time watching television and playing video games. Their diet is anything but healthy. Child obesity has become an increasingly serious problem inevitably entailing serious health hazards. Recent studies indicate that one in four children attending primary-school in Ireland are either overweight or obese. For children, sport is not only a way of exercising and developing new group skills. It is also recreational and teaches teamwork. The physical exercise involved in doing sport has a beneficial effect on young people's physical health. A sedentary life and obesity often cause high blood pressure and diabetes, which ultimately increase the health care expenditure of the Government in the future.

While great work is done by our clubs in promoting our games, the lack of qualified PE teachers in our primary schools is also a significant problem. In order to improve the state of health and physical condition of children of school age, PE in primary schools should be made compulsory.

I would like to put on the record the County Board's appreciation to all the teachers who continue to contribute so much to the development of Gaelic Games at both primary and secondary schools level. In the current economic climate and with the cuts in education, teachers - now more than ever - need our support to help them promote our games. At secondary level, they have the added pressure of trying to combine and manage academic pressures with sporting life.

## **Press and Communications**

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

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

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

## **Referees**

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

For the past number of years, Dublin referees have been poorly represented at inter-county level. Coiste na Réiteoirí are currently developing a plan where young referees will be identified and mentored through an intensive mentoring programme and, if suitable, would in a number of years be fast-tracked to the provincial and national panels.

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

### **Friends of Dublin Hurling**

The Friends of Dublin Hurling continue with their excellent work including arranging transport for supporters to games around the country. The annual Awards evening was held in the Red Cow Hotel in November and, at this function, the Friends of Dublin Hurling recognise the achievements of our hurlers. Mark Schutte won the ‘Senior Hurler of the Year Award’, Cian O’Callaghan won the ‘Young Hurler of the Year’ and Norman Allen received the ‘Hall of Fame Award’.

In addition, the work being done by clubs for the development of hurling in Dublin is recognised through the ‘Club of the Year’ awards at Senior (Cuala) and Juvenile (Lucan Sarsfields) and also the School of the Year (Scoil Mhuire, Marino). I wish to acknowledge the commitment of Michael O’Grady and Tom O’Donnell and their committee to the promotion of hurling in the county.

### **Players Injury Scheme**

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

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

Risk is an inherent factor in sport, as in life. When members voluntarily take part in club activities, they accept the risks that such participation may bring. The Injury Scheme does not seek to compensate fully for injury but to supplement other schemes such as Personal Accident or Health Insurance. The Scheme only provides cover for unrecoverable losses up to the limit specified under the scheme. Ultimately, the responsibility to ensure that adequate cover is in place lies with the individual member, commensurate with his/her specific needs.

Notification of an injury must be communicated to Willis within 60 days of the injury. The completed accident form must be submitted to the County Secretary for authentication and



association with the relevant referee's report. It is vital that each claim is assessed by the Club Secretary to eliminate fraudulent applications. The majority of claims are processed within a period of four weeks and, generally, delays only occur when insufficient details are provided with the application.

## **Grounds**

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

The majority of championship games were played post our involvement in the All-Ireland championships and our county grounds were in excellent condition throughout, considering the volume of activity. I am indebted to our grounds-man, Noel Brady, for his efforts. Everyone wants to have the pitch in pristine condition for their game but no natural playing surface can cope with this schedule without damage to the pitch. Accordingly, at certain times of the year, it is necessary to close Parnell Park in particular. While it is understandable that the majority of clubs wish to play important games in Parnell Park, it is not possible to host all adult finals there, although every effort is made to host juvenile finals. I wish to thank Luke Lawlor and Paddy O'Toole for their work in O'Toole Park.

Attendances at the majority of championship games in Parnell Park were extremely disappointing during the year. The County Board and clubs both need to look at ways of promoting the games, both to club members and members of the public, through publicity in the club, around the local community, as well as media outlets like local newspapers and radio stations.

A special word of thanks to Patsy Kiernan for his attention to Parnell Park. His willingness to cater for the games programme, training sessions and all committee meetings are very much appreciated. Patsy also arranges a Coffee Morning in aid of St. Francis Hospice and a Mass for Deceased Members in Parnell Park annually. A sum of €18,000 was collected and donated to St. Francis Hospice this year.

The numerous games programmes staged in Parnell Park entail a significant amount of time for the essential preparation and planning. This involves communicating with all the statutory agencies to ensure the safety of all our patrons. I am also indebted to the very small team of regular stewards for their assistance, their attention to their different duties and their courtesy to our patrons, all of which adds to the presentation of our games. I would appeal to clubs to provide additional stewards for Parnell Park and to co-operate with requests from stewards.

### **Alfie Byrne Park**

Alfie Byrne Park is a full-sized, floodlit all-weather facility situated beside Clontarf Dart Station. The facility opened in September 2010 and Dublin County Board, in partnership with Dublin City Council, have full access to the facility. Over 12 clubs use the facility regularly along with both primary and second-level schools. In addition to this, many of our Inter County Teams and Development Squads have used the facility for training and matches. It has been an invaluable asset to clubs, schools and county teams, particularly during inclement weather when grass pitches are often unavailable.

### **Cuimhne na Marbh**

Sadly, during the past year, a number of our colleagues were called to their eternal reward. I know I will be excused if I refer to a number of people that I knew personally – Roisín Mhic Aogáin (Kilmore), Paddy Carroll, Maurice Cassidy (Naomh Barróg), John Fagan, Bill Cashman, Frank O'Shea (Erins Isle), Fred Carey (Stars of Erin), Coman Cotter (Raheny), Anthony Ennis (Garristown), Martin Leonard (St. Maur's), Declan O'Brien (Fingal Ravens), John Mulholland (Round Towers, Clondalkin), Garrett Weldon (St. Mary's) and Paddy Barrett (Ballyboughal), To all our members who suffered bereavements, I want to convey my sincere sympathy.

On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2014 we heard the sad news that our Chairman, Andy Kettle, had died having being re-elected for the fifth consecutive year on the previous evening at Convention. Andy made an immense contribution to the Association over the course of his life, to his Club, Fingal Ravens, to the Dublin County Committee and also to the Central Council of the GAA as a member of their Management Committee.

As a leading administrator, he ensured that the Association continued to grow and develop in our county and his dedication, enthusiasm and integrity ensured that Dublin GAA prospered during his reign.

Andy always had the well-being and core principles of the GAA, and Dublin GAA in particular, at heart. He did whatever he could through the power of his warm personality, intelligence and common sense to safeguard the best interests of players, officials, club members and supporters.

The sudden death of Dave Billings, St. Vincent's and UCD, in April came as a great shock. Dave represented Dublin at all grades in both codes and won All-Ireland Football medals in 1974 with Dublin and in 1976 with St. Vincent's. He was involved in the management of county senior teams on two occasions. He represented his club at Dublin County Committee and livened up numerous meetings. I can still see him looking up at the top table with his mischievous grin, after having hopped a ball or two!

In his role as UCD GAA Executive, Dave made an invaluable contribution to the lives of the young people as a mentor and advisor and was immersed in the running of all the University's sides at all levels and grades.

John (Dom) Browne died suddenly in Parnell Park during the All-Ireland U21 Football Final between Tipperary and Tyrone. From Dundrum in Co. Tipperary, Dom was one of the most loyal and passionate supporters of Tipperary football. He was Life President of Kickhams GAA Club and won an All-Ireland Minor Hurling medal with Tipperary in 1952.

Jim Murphy was President of O'Toole's and was immersed in every aspect of the club giving outstanding service during his life-time. Jim was instrumental in the decision to relocate the club from Seville Place to Ayrfield in 1990. Following meetings with Dublin Corporation (as it was known at the time), a site off the Malahide Road was acquired and Jim, as Treasurer, had accumulated sufficient funds for the purchase of the lands. As a mentor, he had a positive influence on so many young people. He was a friendly face in Parnell Park and Croke Park for over 20 years where he co-ordinated the sale of match programmes raising much needed funds for the development of O'Toole's facilities.

Colm O’Flanagan gave outstanding service to both Parnell Park and Croke Park. He was a regular, committed steward in Parnell Park since the redevelopment of our grounds.

I also wish to remember two young players, Eoghan Culligan (Ballyboden St. Enda’s) and Govan Jolliffe Byrne (Naomh Mearnóg), who both died following accidents in Berkeley, California and Tanzania. Their tragic deaths are a reminder to us all of the fragility of life.

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

### **Buíochas**

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

Thanks also to Mick Seavers and Jim Roche for their help and assistance and their willingness to attend fixtures or meetings, as required. I would like to pay a personal word of thanks to all the office staff - for their continued support and loyalty. The work of Strategic Programme Manager, Kevin O’Shaughnessy, and Gerard O’Connor, Games Manager, and their team is appreciated as they face the challenges of increasing our participation rates and establishing new clubs.

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

I wish to thank Gerry Harrington and Noel Murphy for representing us diligently during the year at Leinster Council. It is important to have individuals of experience on these provincial committees. Noel has completed the maximum term of five years on the Provincial Council and he was a great agitator for Dublin at all meetings in Leinster.

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

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

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

Bairbre Uí Néil and her loyal band of co-workers deserve a special mention for their promotion of the Scór competitions and the Irish Language. Thanks to their efforts and commitment the All-Ireland Scór Finals were successfully staged in Dublin during the year.

I must again express appreciation on behalf of all involved in our game for the commitment of time and expertise by the many voluntary administrators at club and county level. Our games cannot function without them.

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

**Seán Mac Coisdealbha**

**Rúnaí**