



Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Naomh Sailbheastair



St. Sylvester's G.A.A. Club

2 Church Road, Malahide Co Dublin

November 2014

Juvenile Boys Update 2014

Nursery/Academy

A key priority within the Juvenile section was to further improve the quality of the experience young kids enjoyed when attending this weekly event. Rod Fitzpatrick assumed leadership for the re-launch of our academy in September.

Progress to date has been very positive with more than 40 mentors now actively engaged on a weekly basis providing enhanced coaching to attendees. Support from the ladies section has also been very strong; particularly encouraging has been the engagement of a number of members of the ladies senior teams.

The Executive are thanked for the strong financial support the Nursery enjoyed in procuring additional equipment and coaching resources.

Attendance levels have increased in 2015, with numbers in excess of 200 at weekly sessions.

Plans are being explored to reduce the number of instances whereby the Academy cannot proceed due to poor weather conditions or risks to damage on main pitches.

Winter Training Facilities.

The Ball Wall continues to provide a key location for winter training facilities for our younger teams, key challenge remains one of demand exceeding supply of slots (particularly from 7pm to 8pm).

Ladies and Girls teams continue to be prioritised one evening per week.

Thankfully the Executive resolved a legacy financial issue with the Hockey Club which has improved the access to all-weather training for a number of our younger teams and a number of the girls teams.

The upgrade of the lighting arrangements and installation of additional lights at Broomfield are also a welcome development. This has provided much better additional facilities for a number of the older teams.

Key challenges remain within our club of providing enhanced winter training facilities to enable teams to undertake effective training programmes off-season.

Football Performance

Overall a hugely successful season for Footballers with key honours won in all competitive age groups -

U12 "A" team promoted to Division 2

U12 'B' Football promoted to Division 7

U13 'A' team won Division 1 League

U14 'A' team finished top of Division 2

U14 'B' team in League Final for Division 8 to be played

U15 'A' team won "A" Dublin Championship

U15 "B" team won Division 6 league and narrowly lose C Shield Final

U16 "A" team finish top of Division 2 with league final to be played

Hurling Performance

U11 team won the 'B' final of the Seamus Carton tournament

U14 team reached Final of Division 3 Feile final narrowly losing by one point

U16 team won 'B' Shield in their final game as juveniles.

Whilst success is welcomed at all levels, priority needs to remain one of developing young people for adult games and indeed adult life.

Coaching

Key focus has been on improving the standards of coaching within the section. In support of this we undertook a number of activities including -

- New Juvenile Coaching Policy was developed by the Coaching Committee and launched in September, with great support from all age groups – this involved a significant financial investment on behalf of the Executive securing access to top class training resources and material.
- Two key guest speakers kindly accepted invitations to address large audiences of mentors, Mikey Whelan and Jim Galvin.
- Coaching committee developed a recommended coaching plan for each age group based upon the GAA Player Pathway programme and OTu Coaching Model. Engagement programme has commenced with each age group to agree coaching plans for Football squads in 2015, including key skills focus. Similar plans are underway for all hurling squads and we have also committed to support the ladies/girls section with this activity.

We now have in excess of 80 adult mentors actively involved in coaching young teams within this section of our club – many of whom are new to St Sylvester's and indeed the Malahide area.

A number of programmes were also taken during the year on various topics such as First Aid training, coaching training awards and compulsory Child Protection Awareness training.

A number of teams are now exploring leading edge physical development programmes such as Functional Movement Screening. External expertise has been sourced to provide the necessary advice and training.

Fund-Raising and Sponsorship

The Juvenile section has enjoyed enormous support over the course of the year with significant number of sponsors supporting our club and individual teams.

Key highlights included –

- Leadership role in Strictly Come Dancing Event in June.
- Joe Duffy Motor Group secured as main Sponsor for all CC2 Boys Football and Hurling
- 2015 Calendar which is currently on sale from Team Mentors
- Numerous team based sponsorships in support of individual age groups

Discipline

Unfortunately a number of incidents over the course of the year have resulted in disciplinary action being taken against St Sylvester's for "Bringing the Association into Disrepute". The most significant disciplinary actions were actually based upon the behaviour of adults at Juvenile games.

Attention has been drawn to mentors within all age groups within the section of the need to comply with the GAA Respect initiative and this will remain a key focus in 2015.

Thanks

We have a huge number of people to thank for their contribution to the development of our children over the course of the year – it is impossible to name them all individually.

Many thanks on behalf of all our kids - please help us all remain focused on those that are at the centre of our association – THE PLAYERS and THE VOLUNTEERS

Individual Age Group Updates.

U8 Football and Hurling

We have played three teams in each code to-date (7 aside) but next year 2015 we are only going to have Two Hurling Teams and Three Football Teams.

We currently have 33 kids playing football and 24 playing hurling with 6 mentors (hopefully some more coming on board in new year).

We have Five coaches(Donal Hayes, Alan Morris, Derek Morris, Graham Morris & Aidan O'Flionn for our Hurling team. Since these lads have taken over Hurling, we have seen a huge improvement in their skills. We also have two parents with a hurling background who help out on Saturday mornings for Hurling matches.

Over the year we have lost 3 Footballers and 2 Dual players to Soccer and other sports. We also have some lads that play both Soccer (Sunday) and Gaelic Football on Saturday. We currently train two nights a week Tuesday (Hurling) & Wednesday (Football) and this seems to have made a big difference with regards to skills and also keeping lads who don't play Hurling interested.

We will discuss amongst hurling coaches if we are ready for Indoor Hurling Tournament in Gormanstown in Spring 2015.

U9 Football and Hurling

Total active panel of 36 players – with an additional 4 irregular attendees.

Fielding 4 Football & 3 Hurling (9 players per team)

Total of 8 mentors for both football & hurling – (2 per team i.e. 9 players)

Panel size has remained constant throughout the year - lost 2 and gained 2... The lost players were due to emigration and we gained 2 from soccer

Completed 40 matches across hurling & football - Kids have really come on this year – Won more matches than lost in both hurling & football and playing competitively across all grades. Highlight of year was winning a Cup in Blitz organised by Kilmacud Crokes for A standard teams.

We hosted a 4 club football blitz in Broomfield (N. Mearnog , K Crokes, St. Pats Donabate and ourselves) and also a 4 club Hurling blitz (Whitehall, Skerries, Fingallians and ourselves) again won most matches across all grades.

Key challenges during the year have been/ are being addressed via Juvenile committee initiatives

Great job done by Juvenile section this year with fundraising, speakers to coaches ... really improving standards and facilities within the club.

U10 Football and Hurling Update for 2014

Currently have a panel of around 44 kids.

Total of 10 coaches for Football and hurling, Podge Bannon and Shay Keogh are the lead football mentors with Colm De Burca and Dan McDonnell as the lead hurling Mentors.

We have brought in around 8 new kids, mostly through word of mouth.

We currently have 3 football teams but may return to 4 after Christmas, we have 2 hurling teams

We have another successful year in football, our "C" team lost only once this year, our "B" team once again won all their matches and our "A"s had 2 narrow defeats in 2014.

Our Hurlers had a mixed year we have a very strong "B" team but our "A" team have struggled but are improving. The winter training in the Ball Wall is unsuitable for hurling and Dan and Colm are hoping for a floodlit section of a pitch for next year.

A highlight for us this year is the attendance at training, it is very rare a player misses a session also the improved skills of some of our "weaker" players. We all work extremely well as a team and have created a family atmosphere within our group that we hope will continue into 2015, also white washing Vincent's was nice.

Key issues in 2015; Increasing numbers in hurling, soccer clashing in September 2015.

U11 Football and Hurling Update for 2014

2014 was a very good year for our U/11 hurlers playing in a two team All Dublin Group. Our panel has remained at approx. 22 and our key challenge has been to maintain these numbers and ideally recruit additional hurlers.

Performances and skills improved as the year went on, and a particular highlight was winning the B final of the Seamus Carton tournament on 11th October in St. Maur's club. The winning run continued up to the end of the year and it is the intention of the mentors to keep this momentum going.

The U11 Footballers have progressed well this year fielding 3 teams in an All Dublin Group. There are over 50 players on the football panel and we consistently have up to 45 players training. The size of the squad has increased throughout the year, due in no small measure to Anthony Keogh who has worked hard this year with Panner and the schools to encourage players from Pope John Pauls and Oliver Plunketts schools' teams to play with the club.

The first string team continued to have very positive results on the field while the 2nd and third string teams have been competitive in all their matches this year.

A key challenge for next season is to provide a competitive division 1 U-12 team and to develop players to strengthen and augment the squad if some players chose other codes instead of GAA.

Our focus and effort will continue to be on developing and improving our 2nd and 3rd string teams to ensure that we have 2 strong panels to enter 15 a-side football at U 13 level in 2016. It is critical we maintain the playing numbers to field two 15 a side teams as this is the best way to ensure that all kids are actively playing matches every week.

The U11s continue to be supported by a group of 10 mentors working across the hurling and football teams and it has been a very enjoyable year for all involved.

U12 Football and Hurling Update for 2014.

Size of player panel - Football currently 37, Hurling currently 16

5 Football mentors - 2 football teams

3 Hurling mentors - 1 hurling team

Panel averaged 30 players during 2014 season with at least 25/26 each week turning out. Soccer conflicts impacted a lot. The panel is now up to 38 at the end of the year with several new recruits in recent weeks. We are continuing with two teams for 2015 but are conscious that our numbers are borderline for two teams next year (we are moving from 13/11 a side to 15 a side).

We started the year with 20 of the above playing hurling but we have had several drop offs due to other commitments (soccer mainly) and lack of commitment. The leavers were stronger hurlers than some of the remaining panel and this has impacted the competitiveness of the team. Still some fine hurlers in the making in the team so would not be acceptable if these lads don't have a hurling option.

U12 Football Performance

"A" team assigned to Div 3 following grading leagues at start of 2014. Promoted to Div 2. Finished second playing 9 games and winning 8, losing only to eventual winners Naomh Olafs on first day of season. The "A" team performed very well in the division winning most games comfortably and averaging 30 points a game. Quality of football has improved significantly and should be very competitive in Div 2. Removal of soccer conflict with later game times next year will assist greatly in fielding settled team.

"B" team assigned to Div 8 following grading leagues at start of 2014. Promoted to Div 7. Finished second playing 9 games and winning 7. Last game was league decider in Oct last against St Brigids. Real mix in this group but there was a lot of progress in the year. Winning games and challenging for Div honours maintained interest for kids. Some of the stronger "B" players will be needed to move up top "A" panel with 15 a side next year and this will impact competitiveness but Div 7 about right for them.

U12 Hurling Performance

"A" team assigned to Div 3 following grading leagues at start of 2014. Finished last in Division but were competitive in a few games in a division that had Ballinteer and Commercial's "A" panels. Getting the hurling panel out training has been a real challenge and priority is to get back some of kids who have given up. Will need support next year from age group below and recruitment to keep going and start winning games.

In June we travelled to the Ardara tournament which proved to be a huge success with all bar 1 player going to Donegal (and great parent support in Donegal with both parents going in a lot of cases). The "A" team after defeating Naomh Chonail in a very competitive opening game, were then narrowly beaten by a strong Bellaghy side that went on to win the tournament. Syls went on to beat Ardara in a Shield final. The "B" team beat St Pats of Donabate in the B Final. Syls Alex Devitt came away with the 'player of the "B" tournament' award.

Hurlers went to Tipp in March last year playing challenge game against Cloughjordan and going to Dublin v Tipp in Semple Stadium for League game. No problem getting numbers for trips.

In September, "A" team won Seamus Reilly U12 tournament in Dunshaughlin

Fund raising for Ardara also very successful with table quiz and disco run.

Key challenges during the year included

- Player numbers

- Getting parents to confirm Y/N on a timely basis
- Training slots and pitch availability
- All Dublin league is challenging with tight panels when you are relying on soccer games to finish up and kids to be deposited where you need them
- Developing effective training programs

U13 Football and Hurling

Size of player panels are - Football 50 and Hurling 26

Number of mentors are 6 for Football (Niall Guiden, Paul Curran, Pat Hoyne, Eoin Fraquarson, Des Stone and Ernie Brenner) and 3 for Hurling (Pat Hoyne, Eoin Fraquarson and Ernie Brenner).

Total of 3 Football teams and 1 hurling team. Footballers compete in Division 1, 6 and 8, Hurlers in Division 2.

Panel size has decreased slightly over the year as players went to secondary schools outside the area.

Great performances at all levels at all codes. Footballers won Division 1, Hurlers won PJ Troy

During the year we had an overnight trip to Carlingford, number of matches in both codes down the country

Key challenges for next year are maintaining panel numbers and competitiveness, Feile year

We did enjoy huge support from parents throughout the year.

U14 Hurlers

Coach Paudi Duffy

Mentors Dave Shalloe, Eugene Larkin, Niall Jennings & Brendan Gleason.

Started the year with a panel of 21 have 19 now. Two players just decided they wanted to focus on other sports and probably felt they were not going to get great game time.

The year itself was a tough one with only one victory in the league Div 2 campaign. Given that we played quite a few matches during the summer, we struggled to field our strongest team on most occasions and this did not help our cause. We were supported by our colleagues on the U13s and on one occasion we had nine u13's out of 15 players. We performed very well in the Division 3 Feile, reaching the final and losing by a solitary point to a fine St Brigids team

The challenge throughout the year has consistently been to field our strongest team. There has been steady improvement in performance but we need some additional players, we have been approached by Finians in Swords to see if we would take 2 or 3 of their players for a couple of years as they can't field. They are their better players and if they proceed it should strengthen the squad without impacting too much on our own panel as it stands.

Paudi has finished with the team after 4 years and we owe him significant gratitude given he has no kids and the amount of time and effort he has put in. We are working to put a new structure in place for next year but this is conditional on having more than one coach in place. This should be sorted in the next week or so.

Under 14 Football

Total number of players approximately 44. A number of players have trained recently for the first time and are in the process of making a final decision re: joining or not. It is probable that we will have these players for next year. Panel size has increased mainly due to players joining from soccer teams. We currently have 7 Football mentors for two teams and would welcome additional support from within the club.

"A" team finished top of division 2 on 21 points tied with St Maurs which was a fantastic achievement. Unfortunately they lost the playoff semi-final by the narrowest of margins (1 point). We are still hopeful that we may be playing division 1 football next year however and this will be decided in January 2015.

"B" team finished 4th in Division 8 to secure a top 4 playoff. That semi-final against Trinity Gaels was drawn and in the replay last Saturday 23rd Nov the lads put in a superb performance to win by 2 points. The final against Kilmacud

Crokes to follow and every chance of success if the lads can put in a similar performance as they did in the semi-final and replay.

Both teams competed in Feile this year. Neither team came away with any honours but both teams proudly represented the club, gave everything they had on the day and enjoyed the experience greatly.

Away trip to Salthill planned for 28th/29th November. Matches arranged for "A" and "B" teams.

Great progress made by both teams this year and good possibility of promotion for both still to be decided. Either way a great group of players and we are confident of further improvement and success at under 15 next year.

U15 Football

Total panel of 35 players which is a significant reduction on previous years – main challenge has been move to Sunday games which meant many kids has to choose between GAA, Soccer and Rugby.

The under 15 footballers started off the year in February and because of the poor weather at the start of the year our preparations weren't up to the levels we would have liked. Early on in the year as a management team we knew it was going to be difficult to field 30 players every week across 2 teams, so we decided that we would make sure the B team got as much help as possible with numbers, this involved going out to A games with only the bare 15 at times and also relying on help from the under 14s. As a consequence the A team struggling at times and we lost a couple of games that under normal circumstances we felt we would have won, however our B team were blazing a trail through the league and ended up winning the league with a bit to spare.

Although it was great for our B team to lift some silverware we felt, and have always tried to keep our aims on the bigger picture which for us is to develop as many players as possible to go on and represent the club at adult level. This involves giving game time to as many players as possible at whatever level we can, it involves a lot of cooperation from kids and parents alike and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the kids and their parents for giving us their unwavering support since the day we started with this group and I hope it continues into the future.

As the summer approached we found ourselves in a situation with the A team where we needed to win our last few games to maintain our division 1 status for the following year and although we had targeted the championship as our main aim this year we hadn't intended on cutting our league position so fine, however this gave us the ideal preparation going into the start of the championship. We set out a fairly intense training program for the lads in the summer and to a man they all stepped up and put in a phenomenal effort to reach an extremely high level of performance which they maintained through the whole championship culminating in us winning the first under 15 A championship for Syls in 25 years.

We feel our decision to keep both teams together as one panel from the age of 8 was a huge factor in our year of success and this is borne out by the fact that from our panel that toggged out on the day of the final there is no less than 12 players that have had sustained periods developing their talents in the B team over the years. All that is left for me to do is to say a huge thank you and well done to the under 15 management team of Paul Reinhardt, Paddy Miskelly, John Crosse, Declan Lynch and Ciaran O'Brien for all the time and effort they have put in not only this year but over many years thanks very much, yours in sport.

Brian Barnes, syls abu.

U16 Football

Mentors Declan Barnes, Sean Curley, Rod Fitzpatrick & Panner Mc Carthy.

Panel of 18 Players plus 4 Under 15's when available.

Under 16 A Championship : Beaten in the first round by Ballymun Kickhams. Reached the Shield Final but lost to St Brigids by a point.

Under 16 League Division 2 - Played 14 games won 13 and lost 1. Beat N Barrog in the semi final and drew with Ballymun Kickhams in the League Final last Saturday. The replay is this Saturday at 2.30 in Ballymun.

The squad did 8 weeks of Athletic Development Training with Aido Mahon over the winter. "B" team completed the tough season where we always struggled with numbers. Good support was shown by a large number of the U15 team who enjoyed playing the with lads from the older group.

U16 Hurling

Mentors ; John Drumm , Chris Kennedy , Martin Meaney , Anthony Cooney.

2014 was a good year for the under 16 hurlers. Playing in division 2, we competed very well all year . Hampered by the perennial issue of lack of playing numbers, we could not field on one occasion and for quite a number of games we had to call on Dave Shalloe's squad to supplement our numbers with Brian Murray and Gavin Hydes. Thank you to both lads for playing for us when required and often at short notice.

In the league we finished in the top 4 playoff which was our target from the start of the campaign.

In the championship we were beaten by the eventual winners, Lucan Sarsfields, in the first round. Again we only had the bare 15 (and two of them were carrying injuries) but played gallantly for the hour losing in the end by 5 points.

We then turned our attention to the shield competition which we eventually won by beating a very strong Fingallians side by 6 points in what was a terrific performance by our lads.

Now it's on to minor hurling with a very strong first year minor hurling group. In order to develop this squad so as they will be ready for minor but also to make the transition to adult hurling we have booked two hurling tournaments for them to compete in. These tournaments are scheduled for late February and middle of April. One in Kilkenny and the other in Waterford.

Finally, we would like to thank all of the parents of the lads for their terrific support throughout the year once again. Looking forward to the new year already .