



CONNACHT
GAA

Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Comhairle Connacht

An Chomhdháil Bhliantúil 2023



An Luain, 15 Eanáir, 2024,
ar a 8.00 a chlog

Ionad Chonnacht CLG,
Cloonacurry, Beacain,
Clar Chlainne Mhuiris,
Co Maigheo.

MAYO – Allianz Football League Division 1 Champions



2 April 2023; The Mayo players celebrate with the cup after the Allianz Football League Division 1 Final match between Galway and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile





Comhdháil Connacht CLG

Ionad Chonnacht CLG,
Cloonacurry, Beacain,
Clar Chlainne Mhuiris,
Co. Maigheo.
3 Eanáir, 2024

A chara,
Tionólfar an Chomhdáil Bhliantúil don Comhairle Connachta Cumann Lúthchleas Gael ar **An Luain, 15 Eanáir, 2024, ar a 8.00 a chlog**, san **Ionad Chonnacht CLG, Cloonacurry, Beacain, Clar Chlainne Mhuiris, Co Maigheo**.

An Clár

	<i>Time</i>
1. Meal	6:30 pm
2. Address of Welcome	8:00 pm
3. Miontuairiscí Comhdáil 2022	8:05 pm
4. Adoption of Standing Orders	8:09 p.m.
5. Óraid an Uachtarán	8:10 pm
6. Tuarascáil an Rúnaí	8:25 pm
7. Tuarascáil an Cisteoir	8:45 pm
8. Tuarascáil ó na Coistí Éagsúla	8:55 pm
9. Tógadh an Uachtarán, Leas-Uachtarán, Cisteoir, Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí	9:00 pm
10. Aon ghnó eile.	9.:30 pm
11. Críoch	9:40 pm

Ainmniúcháin

Uachtarán:	Uinsionn Ó Nearaigh (Maigheo)
Leas-Uachtarán:	Tomás Ó Ceallaigh (Gaillimh)
Iar-Uachtarán:	Seán Ó Murchu (Sligeach)
Cisteoir:	Antoine Ó Flathertaigh (Ros Comáin)
Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí:	A. Ó Loinn (Ros Comáin)



Connacht GAA Council Publication



PADDY LIFTS DIV 1 CUP ALOFT



2 April 2023: Mayo captain Paddy Durcan lifts the cup after his side's victory in the Allianz Football League Division 1 Final match between Galway and Mayo at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile

Comhairle Chonnacht Cumann Lúthchleas Gael Bun Órdaithe (Standing Orders)

IN ORDER that the proceedings of the Convention are carried out without delay, the following Standing Orders will be observed:

1. The Proposer of a resolution or an Amendment thereto may speak for 5 minutes, but not more than 5 minutes.
2. A Delegate speaking to a Resolution or an Amendment thereto may speak for 5 minutes but not more than 5 minutes.
3. The Proposer of a resolution or an Amendment may speak a second time for 3 minutes before a vote is taken, but no other Delegate may speak a second time to the same Resolution or Amendment.
4. The Chairman may at any time he considers a matter has been sufficiently discussed call on the Proposer for a reply, and when that has been given a vote must be taken.
5. A Delegate may, with the consent of the Chairman, move "that the question be now put" after which, when the Proposer has spoken, a vote must be taken
6. Standing Orders shall not be suspended for the purpose of considering any matter not on the Agenda, except by the consent of the majority equal to two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote.





Contents

Minutes of An Chomhdháil Bhliantuil 2022	6
Tuarisc an Rúnaí 2023	11
Planning & Physical Development Committee 2023	29
Provincial Coiste Iomána Report 2023	34
Coaching and Games Development Report 2023	35
Connacht PRO Report 2023	39
PR & Media Report 2023	42
Biodiversity & Sustainability Report 2023	43
Tuarascáil Coiste Éisteachta Connacht CLG 2023	48
Provincial Coiste Iomána Report 2021	49
Post-Primary Schools Report 2022/'23	49
Tuarisc an Rúnaí Cumann na mBunscol Chonnacht	50
Comhairle Ardoideachais Connacht Annual Report 2023	51
Tuarisc Coiste Scór Chonnacht 2023	53
Coiste na Reiteoiri Report 2023	54
Connacht Health and Wellbeing and GAA for All Committee Report 2021	56
(A) Connacht Health & Wellbeing Report 2023	56
(B) Connacht GAA for All Report 2023	56
(1) Galway GAA Games for All Report	57
(2) Leitrim GAA Games for All Report	57
(3) Mayo GAA Games for All Report	58
(4) Roscommon GAA Games for All Report	59
(5) Sligo G.A.A. Games for All Report	60
Connacht GAA Rounders Report 2023	62
Ballaghaderreen GAA Inclusion Day	63
Fixture Analyst Report 2023	70
Féile na nGael and Féile Peil Report 2023	75
County Analysis 2023	76
2024 Connacht GAA Inter-County Fixtures	76
2023 Connacht GAA Inter-County Results	77
2024 Connacht GAA Club Fixtures	78
2023 Connacht GAA Club Results	79
Bye-Laws 2022	80





Comhairle Cuige Chonnacht CLG

Minutes of An Chomhdháil Bhliantuil 2022

Connacht GAA Centre, Monday 15th January, 2023

SEÁN Ó MURCHU, Uachtarán, presided at An Comhairle Bliantuil held in Microsoft Teams on Monday, 16th January, 2022 - the following members were present: *Uinsíonn Ó Nearaigh* (Leas-Uachtarán); *Antoine Ó Flatherta* (Cisteoir), *S. S. Ó hAllmhurain* (Oifigeach Caidreamh Poibli); *P. Ó Fitchellaigh* (Liatroim), *P. Mac Lanncaidh*, *D. Ó Geannain* (Sligeach), *S. Ó hOibicin*, *P. Ó Cuinneain* (Maigheo), *S. Ó Cearthaigh*, *A. Ó Loinn* (Ros Comáin), *T. Ó Ceallaigh*, *C. De Brun* (Gaillimh), *Aodh Ó Rodain* (Scoileanna Dara Leibheil); *Pádraig Mac Dorcaidh* (Triu Leibheil); *Gearoid Ó Gara* (Cumann na mBunscol); *Cathal De Creig* (PGDM); *Adrian Hasaid* (Operations Manager); *Kurt Reinhardt* (Facilities Manager), agus an Rúnaí *Seán Ó Pronntaigh*. Fritheadh leithsceil *O. S. Ó Muilbhgh* (Liatroim); *Mairtin Ó Dubhthaigh* (Reiteoiri); *Brian Ó Mangain* (Communications); *Diane Ni Duinneacha* (Coiste Scór).

Officers and members of the various county committees were represented as follows:



Gaillimh: Seámas Ó Grada, Micheal De Burca, Maire Ni Breithuin, Pádraig Ó Ceallaigh, Micheal Mac Oireachtaigh, Maitiu Mac Giolla Rua, Pol Beiliu (Leithsceil).



Liatroim: Eanna Mac Stin, Deaglan Ó Buchain, Martin Mac Gabhann, Seán Mac Ualraic, Martin Mac Cartain (Leithsceil).



Sligeach: S. Ó Cearuil, Deirdre Mac Guiteagan..



Maigheo: Seámas Ó Tuthaigh, Ronan Ó Ciarain, Pádraig Mac Níochlas, Con Ó Muineachain, Liam Mofaid, Valarie Ni Murchu (Leithsceil).



Ros Comáin: Brian Ó Cearuil, Balaire Ni Muiri, Seán O Concubhair, Daithi Ó Concubhair, Seámas Ó Nuinseann.

Other attendees:

Iar-Uachtarán: **Lorcan Ó Cuinn**
Auditor: **Ciaran Loftus**
Accountant: **Micheal Mac Aodha**

Welcome to Delegates

PRO: Comhairle Chonnacht, *S. S. Ó hAllmhurain*, welcomed Uachtarán CLG, *Labhras Mac Carthaigh*, and the delegates to the Convention and wished them well in their deliberations.

Standing Orders

Standing Orders were adopted on proposition of *D. Ó Buachain* (Liatroma); seconded by *B. Ó Cearuil* (Ros Comáin).

Minutes

The Minutes of the 2021 Convention were adopted on the proposition of *Maire Ni Breithuigh* (Gaillimh); seconded by *P. Ó Cuinne* (Maigheo).

Óraid an Uachtarán:

Seán Ó Murchu

Cuirim failte romhat trathnona inniu chuig ar gComhdháil Bhliantuil. Is maith an e breathnu siar ar bhliain rathuil agus suil a chaitheamh ar an mbliain ata romhainn.

Guim gach dea-shlainte oraibh go leir chun taitneamh a bhaint as.

Good evening. I am delighted to welcome you all to our annual Convention. I welcome Uachtaráin CLG, **Larry McCarthy**, whom we are delighted to have with us tonight.

While all the counties in Connacht are present, I would like to acknowledge London and New York who are also members and add greatly to our games and activities in the province.

The year gone by gave us reason to be very proud of GAA activity in the province, with twelve teams winning All-Ireland titles across all codes and eight more contesting All-Ireland finals as outlined in Tuarisc an Rúnaí.

We should also consider the work being done here in Began and all the activity on the campus that points the way for the Association in many respects.

Connacht Centre of Excellence

I have stated on many occasions that this Centre is an outstanding facility for the GAA community in Connacht. It is now in full use and the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome is extremely busy, attracting positive media and public attention.





Bookings are now full for the weeks ahead, something the staff are very pleased with.

The Connacht Hurling League and FBD football competitions have proved to be hugely successful in recent weeks and a very enjoyable opening to the season for both players and spectators.

I would encourage all counties and clubs to use the facilities and expertise which is available at the centre. The staff are only too delighted to help and support the units throughout the province.

Competitions

As already stated, twelve teams brought home All-Irelands this year. I congratulate each and every one of them.

Of note was the fact that Galway and Mayo contested the All-Ireland U-17 final and served up a wonderful contest, befitting of the occasion. I congratulate both of them.

This year all competitions, inter-club and inter-county were played to a conclusion and the crowds were back in great numbers.

Tooreen and Easkey reached the All-Ireland Intermediate and Junior Hurling finals this year but unfortunately, after two very good finals, they were unsuccessful . . . nonetheless a great achievement by both.

I congratulate all clubs who won Connacht titles this year.

I believe the Split Season is a success and beneficial to all especially the clubs. There is a call from some quarters to alter it or change it in some way or another but it is my opinion that there should be no change currently until it beds down. There may be minor changes but these can happen later.

In football the introduction of the Tailteann Cup was welcome and proved to be a resounding success thanks in no small way to the counties who embraced it ... these counties deserve great credit. This competition now gives the not-so-experienced counties an attractive and competitive competition that they can genuinely aspire to win.

The fact that the semi-finals and final were afforded prime space in the calendar together with playing in Croke Park has added to the success of the competition.

The tiered format of the Hurling Championship has proved very successful over the years and in time the football championship might evolve in a similar fashion but for now it is in a good place.

I wish to congratulate all counties and clubs who were successful throughout the year and to thank the players, coaches, and officials for their commitment to the Association. I also wish to congratulate all players in all codes who were acknowledged with individual awards, they are detailed in the report of An Rúnaí.

On a personal note, I want to congratulate Sligo U-20 footballers on their first ever win at Connacht level. It was a wonderful occasion and one I was very proud of as President. I also acknowledge Easkey's success in the Junior Club Hurling.

We were delighted to welcome New York and the Galway Development Squad to the Connacht Hurling League. Both teams added greatly to the success of

this competition and we look forward to having them participate every year.

New York also participated in the All-Ireland Junior Football Championship this year. All of this gives an indication of the great work being done Stateside and again on behalf of us all I would like to acknowledge that fact.

UPMC

During the year we welcomed UPMC Institute of Health to the Centre. This partnership will further enhance the campus and will provide a service to the entire community as well as all GAA units in the province.

Coffee Shop

The 1902 Coffee Doc was also opened during the year and has proved to be a wonderful and necessary convenience.

Solar Farm

This year the Centre developed a further area for Solar Panels and obtained a licence to sell power back to the National Grid. This is part of the Biodiversity & Sustainability programme at the centre and is expertly managed by **Kurt Reinhardt**. These developments are a sure sign that the centre is ever evolving and alive with activity on many fronts.

Finance

This year I welcome our Auditor, **Mr Ciaran Loftus**.

The accounts are in a very strong position and a credit to the excellent work of the staff here and the guidance of both **Anthony Flaherty** and **Ciaran**. I sincerely thank you all.

Like all infrastructure projects there are high costs involved in sustaining the property and in maintaining all areas in the condition that patrons and players now expect and demand. This money and the careful use of our resources will be required so that we can continue to promote our games with excellence at every level and in every area.

Age Grades

There has been considerable debate and discussion around the topic of age grades. The Uachtaráin set up a committee to investigate the matter and it found that there are many different views and opinions on the matter. It is widely accepted that there should be decoupling of under-18 players from adult competition. This is to protect the player and to allow for good fixture planning at both underage and senior levels.

While the debate continues and motions may come before Congress, I believe we need to take more time and consider all the implications before we pass any motion at Congress.

At present the sub-committee are proposing a National Policy on club age grades that will be discussed at the January meeting of Ard Chomhairle and I believe this is the better option at present. It is the recommendation of the committee that inter-county competition remain at U- 17 level as U-18





players have multiple teams to play with, ie., schools, colleges, and clubs.

Coaching & Games

Throughout the year The Coaching & Games Committee together with **Cathal Cregg** promoted a Club Development Officer (CDO) for interested clubs in the province. This is a 6-month position mostly filled by third level students on placement from suitable courses. There has been an excellent take-up and should, over a period of time, bring huge benefits to participating clubs. The CDO's will work their placement period and will be managed by the County Games Managers together with the council staff. We see this continuing year-on-year with new students each year which will avoid any employment law issues. If a club hasn't applied this year, it will be open to them in future years. I compliment Cathal and his committee for this outstanding initiative.

In recent years the funding model for Coaching & Games has exercised us all. At a recent meeting with **Shane Flanagan** of the National Coaching & Games Department. the model was outlined in detail and each county has to submit a plan to demonstrate how they intend to use such funding. The plan requires detail and I urge each county to take time in completing same and consult with Cathal and his team prior to submitting so that each of you can extract as much funding as is possible. The make-up of your plan will determine your final allocation therefore it's important to get it right for your needs and maximise the monies for your county.

Games Development and HR

In September, 2022, there was a project team set up to consider the implementation of the recommendations from the Mazar's report. New structures/roles/responsibilities for Games Development from Central Council to province to county have been agreed. The Mazar's report identified many shortcomings in our structures including the proliferation of job titles/roles within the GD and the new structure aims to deliver a more effective response to the needs of Games Development across the 32 counties. As part of the process the group engaged with outside consultants to benchmark the roles in Games Development, and we are now examining the recommendations from a cost perspective and following this there will be engagement at county level.

Integration

A steering group to lead the integration of the three Gaelic Associations under the Chair of **Mary McAleese** was formed in October. The group comprises of the three Uactaráins and Ard Stiurthoirs and is led by **Mark Dorman**. It has begun a wide-ranging consultative process across the memberships to get stakeholders views on planning the integration process. Initially it will hold a series of one-day forums to gather views on how we deliver One Association. It will draw a representative sample from clubs, one clubs, Camogie Association, GAA and LGFA management players, county committees, provincial

councils and others. This will take time as the three organisations are different in so many ways and there is no simple solution but the process has commenced!

GPA Deal/Players Charter

The Player's Charter was agreed and signed off in November and negotiations with the GPA went relatively smoothly this year. The debate about a charter came about some years ago because at the time there were huge inconsistencies around the country in the way inter-county players were being looked after in every aspect - expenses, gear accommodation etc. This situation has improved immeasurably now, with all players being well cared for, so in this respect the charter and the negotiations over the years have been successful. It is important now to note that the charter is a guide and a reference point for players and county boards. It is also important that each county board meet with the players and make local arrangements that suit both parties. Do remember that most of the players are reasonable and when discussions take place, they will understand the financial pressures county boards are under. With this in mind, I believe that counties with excessive travel costs and have not the capability to raise monies, should get a subvention from central funds and I would promote this notion. It is also incumbent on county boards to Audit/Police the expense claims and organise car-pooling/buses at every opportunity. Such an exercise also protects the welfare of the players.

I believe, at this stage, it is time to work in conjunction with the GPA with a view to limit the number of training sessions so as to protect the welfare of the players.

Bursaries

This year we continue to award Bursaries to Third Level students as we consider the importance of these grants to students. Initially the National Finance Committee withdrew the funding but we had decided to fund them from our own resources, but part of this funding was reinstated after appeals from the provinces. These applications will be assessed shortly and the monies distributed.

Sponsors

I wish to thank all our sponsors who contribute handsomely to the centre and help greatly with the smooth running of the Campus.

Staff

I am grateful to the staff at the centre who work tirelessly to support us all. They do so without any complaints and with a smile. This a wonderful place to come to and we greatly appreciate it. The positive attitude displayed by all who work here ensures that it is a splendid place to be and I have no doubt leads to an excellent atmosphere. I thank John Prenty and all of you for this.

I wish to thank all members of the various committees who give of their time selflessly and I especially think of the many stewards who have to and do stand out in all weather conditions. Mile Buíochas.





Retirements

There are a number of people leaving the council this evening. I wish them all well and thank them sincerely for the many years of service to the council.

John-Joe Holleran completes his term on the council as PRO.

John Hopkins departs the scene after eleven years of great service.

Pat Feely and **John Mulvey** finish up as their terms which to an end.

My thanks to all four for their support and the work they have done for the council over many years.

Replacements

Hugh Lynn is being promoted to the position of PRO and **Seamus Nugent** will take his place on the council.

Liam Moffatt will replace **John Hopkins**. While **Martin McGowan** and **Seán McGoldrick** come onto the council for Leitrim.

I welcome you all and look forward to working with you over the coming years.

Sympathy

I extend my sympathy to all members who were bereaved during the year and to those GAA people who lost family members during 2022 and again are noted in the report of An Rúnaí.

Thanks

My thanks to all members of the council for all your support during the year and to the county board officials who give generously of their time. To the staff here at the centre who are excellent to a fault and most helpful at all times. To all the various committees that give of their time unselfishly, Mile Buíochas.

Finally, I wish to thank the President, Ard Stiurthoir, and the various people in Croke Park who encourage me and all of us when it might get a little tough.

To finish, I wish to thank **John Prenty** for his guidance and support at all times.

I wish you all good luck for 2023 and encourage you to stay positive at all times... even when a result may not go your way.

Go raibh maith agaibh go leir.

Tuarascail an Runaí

The Secretary's Report was adopted on the proposition of **Pádraig Ó Fitchellaigh** (Liatroma); seconded by **P. Mac Lanncaidh** (Sligeach). A number of comments were made on the report. The Uachtarán thanked the Rúnaí for his comprehensive report.

Tuarascail an Cisteoir

The Treasurer's Report was presented by **Antaine Ó Flatherta** and was adopted on the proposition of **S. Ó hOibicín** (Maigheo); seconded by **S. Ó Ceartaigh** (Maigheo). Auditor, **Ciaran Ó Lachtuis**, gave a comprehensive presentation of the accounts. The accounts showed an Income of €4,660,203 and an

Expenditure of €3,785,673 with an overall surplus of €874,630 after depreciation is taken into account. He complimented the council on the implementation of the new financial procedures which has proved to be very effective. He thanked all of the county treasurers for their co-operation during the audit

The Uachtarán thanked the Cisteoir and the Auditor for the presentation of the accounts.

Antoine thanked all of his stewards, gatemen, the provincial officers and **Michael McHugh** and Auditor **Ciaran Loftus** for their help during his term of office.

Tuarascail o na fo-choisti

The Uachtarán thanked the various sub-committees for their work during the year and wished them well in the future.

Planning & Development Committee Report adopted on proposition of **D. Ó Geannain** (Sligeach); seconded by **A. Ó Loinn** (Ros Comáin).

Coaching & Games Development Report adopted on proposition of **B. Ó Cearuil** (Ros Comáin); seconded by **P. Ó Cuinneain** (Maigheo).

Cathal Cregg expressed delight that the motion re Go Games had been rescinded and said that an education process on National Policy will be rolled out shortly.

Coiste Comarsaíde Report adopted on proposition of **E. Mac Stin** (Liatroim); seconded by **S. Ó hOibicín** (Maigheo).

Facilities Report adopted on the proposition of **P. Mac Lanncaidh** (Sligeach); seconded by **C. De Brun** (Gaillimh).

Grounds Maintenance Report adopted on the proposition of **L. Mofaid** (Maigheo); seconded by **T. Ó Ceallaigh** (Gaillimh).

Coiste Eisteachta Report adopted on proposition of **E. Mac Stin** (Liatroim); seconded by **P. Ó Cuinneain** (Maigheo). The Rúnaí stressed the need for all county CCC and hearings to have their duties outlined. **D. Ó Buchain** stated that the Press should be included in this process as well.

Coisde Iomana Report adopted on the proposition of **C. De Brun** (Gaillimh); seconded by **L. Mofaid** (Maigheo).

Post Primary Schools Report was adopted on the proposition of **C. Ó Muineachain** (Maigheo); seconded by **M. Mac Aodha** (Maigheo).

Cumann na mBunscol Report was adopted on proposition of **D. Ó Buchain** (Liatroma); seconded by **A. Ó Loinn** (Ros Comáin).

Third Level Report was adopted on proposition of **P. Ó Fitchellaigh** (Liatroim); seconded by **D. Ó Geannain** (Sligeach).

Glacadh leis **Tuarascail ó Coiste Scór** ar mholadh **B. Ó Muiri** (Ros Comáin), **A. Ó Loinn** (Ros Comáin) ag cuidiu leis.

Coiste na Reiteoiri Report was adopted on proposition of **S. Ó Cearuil** (Sligeach); seconded by **L. Mofaid** (Maigheo).

Health & Wellbeing Report was on adopted on proposition of **C. De Brun** (Gaillimh); seconded by **P. Ó Cuinneain** (Maigheo).

Fixtures Analysts Report adopted on proposition of **S. Ó Ceartaigh** (Ros Comáin); seconded by **L. Mofaid** (Maigheo).





Togadh an Uachtarán, Leas-Uachtarán, Cisteoir, Rúnaí

The following Officers were elected;

Uachtaran: **Seán Ó Murchu** (Sligeach)

Proposed, **D. Ó Geannain** (Sligeach)

Seconded, **M. MacGiolla Rua** (Gaillimh)

Leas-Uachtaran: **Uinsionn Ó Nearaigh** (Maigheo)

Proposed: **P. Ó Cuinneain** (Maigheo)

Seconded: **S. Ó Tuthaigh** (Maigheo)

Cisteoir: **Antoine Ó Flathertaigh**

Proposed: **D. Ó Concubhair** (Ros Comáin)

Seconded: **S. Ó Nuinseann** (Ros Comáin).

Oifigeach Caidreamh Poibli: **Aodh Ó Loinn** (Ros Comáin)

Proposed: **Brian Ó Cearuil** (Ros Comáin)

Seconded: **Gearoid Ó Gara** (Cumann na mBunscol)

B. Ó Cearuil said tghat it was a pleasure to propose **A. Ó Loinn** as PRO. He said that Hugh had served in various roles in Ros Comáin including County Development Officer, PRO and recently as Connacht Council Delegate.

Gerry O’Gara outlined the various traits which Hugh had in the GAA and as a teacher in Abbeycarton NS in Elphin a school which also also produced former Council Presidents **Mick Rock** (also PRO), **Dr Mick Loftus** and also **Dr Donal Keenan**. The latter two who had become Uachtaráin Cumann Luthchleas Gael

Aodh Ó Loinn said that it was an honour for himself, his family his club and his county to be elected as PRO of Comhairle Chonnacht. He said that he looked forward to the role and that he will always be the bearer of good news,

Rúnaí: **Seán Ó Pronntaigh** (Maigheo)

Ruin

The following motion was withdrawn:

1: Three parts to this motion - all relating to penalties for infractions against Match Officials.

1. That rule 7.2 (b) Category IV (x) ‘An act by Deed, Word or Gesture of a Racist, Sectarian or Anti-Inclusion/Diversity nature on an opponent or Match Official’ page 131 GAA Official Guide Part 1 be deleted.

Rule 7.2 (b) Category V, page 133 GAA Official Guide Part 1, to be amended to include part (iv) ‘An act by Deed, Word or Gesture of a Racist, Sectarian or Anti-Inclusion/Diversity nature on an opponent or Match Official’

The rest of the rule to remain unchanged.

2. That rule 7.2 (b) Category III part (vii), page 130 GAA Official Guide Part 1, ‘Abusive language towards a Referee, Umpire, Linesman or Sideline Official’ be deleted.

Rule 7.2 (b) Category IV to be amended to include part (xi), page 131 GAA Official Guide Part 1, ‘Abusive language towards a Referee, Umpire, Linesman or Sideline Official’.

The rest of the rule to be unchanged.

3. That rule 7.2 (c) Category IIa part (i), page 135 GAA Official Guide Part 1, ‘Abusive language towards a Referee, Umpire, Linesman or Sideline Official’ be deleted.

Rule 7.2 (c) Category IIIa to be amended to include part (iii), page 136 GAA Official Guide Part 1, ‘Abusive language towards a Referee, Umpire, Linesman or Sideline Official’.

The rest of the rule to be unchanged. (Sligeach)

Aon Gno Eile

Liam Mofaid, a member of the GAA Medical, Scientific & Welfare Committee, addressed the meeting on the issue of the rollout of the Gaelic Games Injury Management System. He asked all counties to ensure that the Senior inter-county hurling and football squad lists be sent to the GAA Finance Department as a matter of urgency by the county secretary and that the lead physio/athletic therapist engages with the GAA Player Welfare Manager in Croke Park a.s.a.p.

Uachtarán CLG, **Labhras Mac Cartaigh**, addressed Convention. He congratulated the council on their work and also for their engagement with New York. He expressed his sympathy with Tooreen and Easkey who had been unlucky in All-Ireland Intermediate and Junior Hurling Finals respectively.

This concluded Convention.

Cathaoirleach.





Tuarisc an Rúnaí 2023

Seán Ó Pronntaigh

AR dtús ba mhaith liom mo fhíor buíochas a ghabhail do gach duine a chabhraigh le gníomhaíochtaí Comhairle Chonnacht i rith na bliana. Bhí bhlain an mhaith againn sa bhlian seo.

Ba mhaith liom freisin comhghairdeas a gabhail do na foirne a bhuaidh craoibh na hEireann i 2023



National titles came to:

- Maigheo:** Allianz League Division 1
- Sligeach:** Allianz League Division 4
- Ros Comain:** Allianz Hurling League Division 3A
- Gaillimh:** Minor Ladies Football All-Ireland
- Maigheo:** U-14 Ladies' Football All-Ireland
- Kilkerrin-Clonberne:** All-Ireland Senior Ladies' Club Football
- University of Galway:** Division 1 Third Level Football League.
- University of Galway:** Division 1 Third Level Hurling League.
- University of Galway:** Freshers' Hurling Championship
- ATU Connemara:** Fergal Maher Cup

Unsuccessful in National Finals were:

- Gaillimh:** Allianz League Division 1
- Tuairin:** Intermediate Hurling Final
- Easkey:** Junior Hurling Final
- Sarsfields, Gaillimh:** All-Ireland Senior Club Camogie Final
- Seán Ó hEslin's, Ballinamore:** All-Ireland Intermediate Ladies' Football Club Final
- Claremorris:** All-Ireland Junior Ladies' Football Club Final
- University of Galway:** Fitzgibbon Cup
- Summerhill College:** Hogan Cup Final
- Presentation College, Athenry:** Croke Cup Final
- ATU Connemara:** Corn Comhairle Ardoideachais

Off the field football All-Stars were won by Roscommon's **Enda Smith**; and in Hurling an All-Star

was received by **Conor Whelan** (Galway).

Ladies' All-Stars were won by **Danielle Caldwell** (Mayo); **Roisín Black** (Galway) was awarded a Camogie All Star.

Dylan Walsh, Rossa Sloyan, Canice Mulligan, Daire O'Boyle, Luke Marren (Sligo) and **Cillian Ó Curraoin** (Galway) were selected on the the EirGrid 20 U-20 Football Team of the Year.

Our Scór Committee had a very successful year, the highlight of which was the three All-Ireland Scór Sinsir titles which came to the province. Particular congratulations must go to the Abbeyknockmoy Club (Gaillimh) who

brought home a double with **Norrie Quinn, Caroline Ward, Madeline Dolan, Olivia McNama** and **Orla Hession** winning the Ballad Group and **Thomas**



Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe of Galway, **Norrie Quinn, Caroline Ward, Madeline Dolan, Olivia McNama** and **Orla Hession** are presented with the cup by Teachtaireacht ó Chathaoirleach Chomhairle na Mumhan Gearóid Ó Riain and Teachtaireacht ó Chathaoirleach Choiste Náisiúnta Scór Tomás Ó Muirí after winning the Bailéad-Ghrúpa category during the Scór Sinsir 2023 All-Ireland Finals at the INEC Arena in Killarney, Kerry. Photo by Eóin Noonan/Sportsfile

2023 All-Star Football recipients.

2023 Hurling/Camogie All-Star recipients



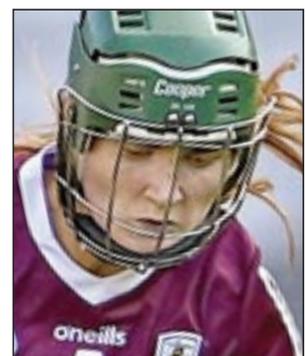
Enda Smith



Danielle Caldwell



Conor Whelan



Roisín Black





Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe of Galway, Thomas Brogan, Kevin Brogan, Emmet Greaney, Emily Greaney and Madeline Dolan are presented with the cup by Teachtaireacht ó Chathaoirleach Chomhairle na Mumhan Gearóid Ó Riain and Teachtaireacht ó Chathaoirleach Choiste Náisiúnta Scór Tomás Ó Muirí after winning the Ceol Uirlise category during the Scór Sinsir 2023 All-Ireland Finals at the INEC Arena in Killarney, Kerry.

Photo by Eóin Noonan/Sportsfile

Brogan, Kevin Brogan, Emmet Greaney, Emily Greaney and again **Madeline Dolan** taking the Ceol Uirlise title. **Sara Keane**, Elphin (Ros Comáin), became the Solo Singing champion.

I wish to compliment the Handball, Ladies Football and Camogie Committees for their continued promotion of Gaelic Games in the Province.

Congratulations also to President's Award winner, **Mary Power**, from the Drumcliffe Rosses Point Club (Sligeach). Congratulations also to **Joan Henchy**, New York GAA, who was honoured with the International Award.

During the year 45 competitive games were hosted by the council at different levels. Following the restrictions imposed in previous years by Covid-19 it

was a pleasure to have patrons attend our games in large numbers from January, 2023. Spectators bring a vibrancy and excitement to our games and we look forward to an increase in spectator numbers again in 2024.

The undoubted highlight of the year for the Council occurred on November 17th with the announcement by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) that Connacht GAA had been awarded the Inspirational Sustainable Energy Community Award. We are very proud of this award that is a huge accolade for the council being the first such award for the GAA nationally.

Thankfully we can say that 2023 was a good year for the association in the province.

Senior Football Championship

The Connacht Senior Football Championship commenced on the first weekend in April with both Leitrim v New York and Sligo v London being scheduled for the same day Saturday, 7th April.

Sligo travelled to Ruislip to play London. A week after their triumph over Wicklow in the Allianz League Division IV Final. A sizeable Sligo support travelled and saw their team take the spoils by 2-20 to 0-12.

Later that evening at Gaelic Park, New York, Leitrim, due mainly to their wastefulness in front of goal, allowed New York grab a late equaliser to bring the game to extra-time for the third time between the same sides. Extra time again failed to separate the sides on a scoreline of 0-15 each. This led to a penalty shootout during which both teams did not display great skill at penalty-taking and New York eventually won on a 2-0 scoreline. This was an historic victory for the New York side by winning their first Connacht Championship game.

In the other quarter-final Roscommon travelled to Hasting's Insurance MacHale Park to play a Mayo side fresh from their Allianz League Division I victory over Galway the previous Sunday. Roscommon took a firm grip on the game



Galway captain Seán Kelly lifts the Nestor Cup.



Matthew Tierney of Galway shoots past Nathan Mullen of Sligo to score his side's second goal during the Connacht GAA Football Senior Championship Final match between Sligo and Galway at Hastings Insurance MacHale Park in Castlebar, Mayo.

Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile





from an early stage and held out for a deserved 2-8 to 0-10 victory.

In the semi-finals Galway travelled to Hyde Park, Roscommon, to play the home side. In recent times our Connacht teams do not seem to have an advantage when playing at home and this game was no different when the Tribesmen had a four-point victory in the Hyde on a 1-13 to 1-9 scoreline.

Sligo entertained New York in Markievicz Park and qualified for the Connacht final with an easy 2-16 to 0-6 scoreline.

The Connacht final, was fixed for Hasting's Insurance MacHale Park. Sligo, following a bright start, were eventually worn down by Galway who regained the Nestor Cup by virtue of a 2-20 to 0-12 scoreline.

The new format for the Sam Maguire and Tailteann Cup threw up an exciting scenario. Of the sixteen counties that qualified for the Sam Maguire Cup this year four were from Connacht. Galway and Sligo qualified due to their participation in the Connacht final, with Mayo and Roscommon qualifying by virtue of their efforts in Division I of the Allianz League. Kerry, Cork, Mayo and Louth were drawn in Group I; Armagh, Galway, Tyrone and Westmeath were in Group II; while Roscommon and Sligo were drawn with Dublin and Kildare in Group III.

Mayo travelled to Killarney to meet Kerry in the first round and after an outstanding display came away with a win on a Mayo 1-19 to Kerry 0-17 scoreline.

In Round II Mayo had a home fixture against Louth and were lucky to hold on for a 1-point victory on a 0-14 to 1-10 scoreline. In the final round Mayo were defeated by Cork at Limerick on a 1-14 to 1-11 scoreline. This loss meant that Mayo was destined to play in a preliminary quarter-final.

In Group II Galway had a home game v Tyrone at Pearse Stadium in Round I and had an important 0-16 to 0-13 victory. In Round II Galway had an easy 0-20 to 0-12 victory over Westmeath in Mullingar. This led to a winner take all contest at Carrick-on-Shannon v Armagh with the prize of a quarter-final place up for grabs. After a ding-dong struggle Galway were defeated by the narrowest of margins on a 0-16 to 1-12 scoreline. Thus, having qualified for the preliminary quarter final route.

In Group III Sligo and Roscommon were paired with Dublin and Kildare. In Round I Kildare travelled to Markievicz Park as favourites against Sligo. After an intriguing game Sligo were unlucky to come away with only a draw, 0-14 each. Roscommon travelled to Croke Park to play the Dubs and after a ding-dong affair the teams could not be separated on a scoreline of Roscommon 0-14 to Dublin 1-11. Round II was an all-Connacht affair at Dr Hyde Park with Roscommon taking the spoils, after a dominant second-half performance by 1-21 to 1-11. In the final round Dublin had an easy 3-23 to 0-8 victory over Sligo at Cavan. This defeat saw Sligo exit from the Sam Maguire Cup after what was a successful championship season.

Roscommon and Kildare met in Round III at Tullamore where the Lily Whites were victorious by the narrowest of margins 1-16 to 1-15. The draw for the preliminary quarter-finals saw Mayo travelling to Pearse Stadium to play Galway, with Roscommon going to Pairc Ui Chaoimh to play Cork. Mayo had a

hard-fought victory over Galway by 1-10 to 0-12 while Roscommon were extremely unlucky to lose by 0-16 to 1-14 to Cork.

In the All-Ireland quarter-finals Mayo exited the championship after being defeated by Dublin 2-17 to 0-11 after a dominant second-half display by the Dubs. Dublin were joined in the semi-finals by Monaghan, Kerry and Derry. Dublin, with a late rally, defeated Monaghan by 1-17 to 0-13; while Derry were narrowly defeated by Kerry in a brilliant game which could have gone any way, by 1-17 to 1-15.

The All-Ireland Final saw familiar foes Kerry and Dublin meet again. After an entertaining game that could have gone to either team Dublin, again, took the Sam Maguire Cup by virtue of a 1-15 to 1-13 victory.

In the Tailteann Cup, Leitrim, London and New York qualified from Connacht. In Group I London travelled to Tullamore and were defeated by 2-14 to 0-11. In Round II they hosted Cavan in Ruislip and were, again, defeated by 0-18 to 2-6 and in the final round at Parnell Park they had a creditable draw with Laois on a 2-14 to 1-17 scoreline that ended their interest in the competition.

In Group IV Leitrim travelled to Corrigan Park to play Antrim in Round I where they were defeated by 3-18 to 2-12. In Round II they played host to Fermanagh in Carrick but were again defeated by 1-19 to 2-7. In the final round Leitrim travelled to Parnell Park to play Wexford and despite an encouraging display, they exited the Tailteann Cup on a 1-16 to 1-12 scoreline.

As per the Tailteann Cup regulations New York were automatically placed in the preliminary quarter-final where they were defeated by Carlow by 0-15 to 0-10 at Dr Cullen Park.

Meath and Down qualified for the Tailteann Cup final which the Meath-men won by 2-13 to 0-14.

We now cast our eyes on the 2024 Connacht Championship. For the first time in a number of years all the Connacht-based team managers remain in situ with a new manager in New York. As is the norm in the new Split Season there will be three championship games in the first weekend of April. Galway travel to London in the championship opener with Mayo travelling to New York and Sligo and Leitrim meeting in the quarter-finals. The semi-final pairings see the winners of Mayo/New York travel to Dr Hyde Park to play Roscommon that could lead to a mouth-watering repeat of last year's quarter-final between Roscommon and Mayo. The other semi-final sees the winners of Sligo and Leitrim meet the winners of Galway and London which, again, could be a repeat of last year's Connacht final. I'm sure that both London and Leitrim have other ideas on that front!

The draw has drawn-up a fascinating season for 2024. I wish all counties well in their endeavours and, hopefully, we can look forward to being greedy and that the Sam Maguire and Tailteann Cups will reside in Connacht in 2024.

U-20 Championship

The U-20 Championship commenced in Tuam on the 4th April where Leitrim, who were denied the services of a senior player, who would have become ineligible to play in SFC v New York if he played U-20





Sligo manager Paul Henry celebrates with the Sligo team after the EirGrid Connacht GAA Football U-20 Championship Final match between Galway and Sligo at Tuam Stadium in Galway. Photo by Ray Ryan/Sportsfile

v Galway. This was unfortunate, not helped by the fact that the interpretation of what was passed at Congress was different to what Ard Chomhairle came up with. Despite a heroic display by Leitrim Galway prevailed on the night on a 2-9 to 0-6 scoreline.

In the quarter-finals reigning champions, Sligo, travelled to Dr Hyde Park and had a fully-deserved 0-15 to 1-8 victory over Roscommon. In the semi-final played at Connacht GAA Centre, Sligo continued their progress by defeating Mayo 0-17 to 1-9 and continued on the road to Tuam whereby a last-minute point saw them retain their U-20 Connacht title by the narrowest of margins, Sligo 0-14 Galway 0-13. Sligo were deserving Connacht champions and the fact that they had no match at home in Sligo all year was remarkable.

In the All-Ireland semi-final, played at Pearse Stadium, Sligo were pitted against a fancied Kerry side and qualified for the All-Ireland U-20 final played at Breffni Park, Cavan, where they came up against a Kildare side that had defeated them in last year's All-Ireland semi-final. Sligo were hampered by injuries to key players and ultimately had to succumb to an excellent Kildare side by 1-17 to 0-12.

The 2024 u-20 championship will be organised on a Round Robin format whereby each county will get at least five games which will help with the development of all teams as they begin their transition to senior.

Minor (U-17) Football Championship

The U-17 Championship was, again, organised in a Round Robin format in 2023. The top team qualified for the final with the 2nd and 3rd placed teams qualifying for the semi-final. The 4th and 5th teams qualified for the Shield final.

Again, as like last year, the format guaranteed each team a minimum of five games in the Connacht Championship.

In Round I Galway defeated Sligo by 1-13 to 1-9 at Markievicz Park; while Mayo travelled to Dr Hyde Park and had a 2-17 to 0-11 victory over Roscommon.

In Round II Leitrim and Sligo had a 1-8 to 0-11 draw at AvantMoney Pairc Sheain. Roscommon and Galway met at Tuam Stadium with Galway taking the honours by 1-13 to 0-8.

In Round II Leitrim were defeated by Roscommon 0-12 to 5-9 with Galway defeating Mayo by the narrowest of margins 1-12 to 1-11 at Castlebar.

Round IV saw Mayo have a 1-17 to 1-3 victory over Leitrim in Carrick; while Sligo were defeated by Roscommon by 0-17 to 0-8 at Markievicz Park.

In Round V Sligo and Mayo had a 1-11 draw; while Galway and Leitrim played out a highly-entertaining game at Tuam whereby the Tribesmen held on to win by 4-8 to 1-13.

At the end of the five rounds Galway had qualified for the final with Mayo and Roscommon meeting in



Sligo captain Canice Mulligan lifts the cup after the EirGrid Connacht GAA Football U-20 Championship Final .





26 May 2023; Mayo players celebrate after the 2023 Electric Ireland Connacht GAA Football Minor Championship Final between Galway and Mayo at Tuam Stadium in Galway. Photo by Ray Ryan/Sportsfile

the semi-final. After a ding-dong affair, in which both teams could have won, Mayo qualified for the final by virtue of a 2-13 to 2-12 victory.

In the final, played at Tuam Stadium Mayo retained the title on a scoreline of Mayo 2-13 Galway 1-10.

In the Shield final Leitrim had an outstanding first-half display and looked all out winners at half time. Sligo, however, had other ideas and completely took over in the second-half and were emphatic victors by 3-14 to 1-12

After the elation in the province in 2022 of having two Connacht u-17 teams in an All-Ireland Final for the first time, the All-Ireland quarter-finals played at Avant Money Phairc Sheain proved to be a major disappointment. Mayo were easily defeated by Monaghan 1-15 to 0-8; while eventual u-17 champions, Derry, had a facile 1-13 to 0-4 victory over Galway.

There is no doubt but that the Round Robin format at this level is here to stay. I wish to compliment the Development CCC for the introduction of three tiers at this level in 2024. After the Round Robin series in Connacht the Connacht finalists will qualify for Tier I All-Ireland Minor Championships. The 3rd and 4th teams will qualify for Tier II championships while the 5th team after the Connacht Round Robin will qualify for Tier III championship. Also London, for the first time, will qualify for Tier III Championship. This will be a huge boost for London whose teams have continued to

develop, helped in no small way with the work of Cathal Cregg and the London Coaching Committee.

FBD Insurance League

The FBD league commenced in the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome on Friday, 6th January, 2023. The first-round and both semi-finals were live-streamed with huge numbers watching the games online. The FBD final was broadcast live by TG4. Thankfully for this year's competition patrons were allowed to attend and the atmosphere inside the dome was exhilarating.

In Round 1, Galway proved too strong for Leitrim and won by 3-21 to 1-13 in an entertaining game. The semi-finals were highly-contested, exciting and high-scoring games.

In the first semi-final Roscommon held on to score a 3-17 to 2-13 win over Sligo; while Mayo had a 2-18 to 3-12 victory over Galway.

A feature of the final between Mayo and Roscommon was the supply of yellow footballs supplied by TG4 that were used as an experiment on the night.

The idea was a novel one and worked to a certain extent but the similarity between the Roscommon jersey and the yellow footballs clashed at times. In future we will be using orange footballs.

Mayo took the FBD title for the first time in a number of years by defeating Roscommon in a hard-fought game by 0-13 to 0-9.



Mayo captain Rio Mortimer lifts the cup after the 2023 Electric Ireland Connacht GAA Football Minor Championship Final





Mayo players before the Connacht FBD League Final match between Mayo and Roscommon at NUI Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome in Bekan. Below, Mayo captain, Stephen Coen, lifts the cup. Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile



In the four games played in the indoor setting a total of 14-116 was scored which was an average of almost 40 points per game.

I wish to thank FBD for their continued support for the games and look forward to the new competition in January that will see London join the five Connacht counties.

The GPA are not fans of the pre-season competitions and have called for their demise. When counties were asked recently for their opinions on those competitions there was overwhelming support for them. An obvious reason why, in my opinion, is that there is a structure to the competition which obviates the necessity of finding challenge games and especially pitches at this time of year.

In tandem with the FBD Football League this year saw the initiation of a Connacht Hurling competition played in the University of Galway

Connacht GAA Airdome. Galway Development Team, Mayo, Sligo, Roscommon and Leitrim were joined by New York and Longford. The competition was organised on a knock-out format with Cup and Shield finals.

In Round I Leitrim defeated Mayo by 4-23 to 1-18; Roscommon defeated Sligo by 0-31 to 2-18; while New York had a 3-30 to 0-16 victory over Longford.

In the semi-finals Roscommon proved to be too strong for Leitrim on a 6-33 to 1-10 scoreline. In the other semi-final Galway had too much firepower for New York and qualified for the final when winning by 0-30 to 0-17.

In the Shield Final there was huge excitement when New York took their first title in Connacht on a 3-29 to Leitrim 1-17 scoreline.

In the Cup final Galway and Roscommon played a very entertaining game with Galway holding on to win by 1-25 to 1-20.

In the coming weeks the competition commences again with the same participants involved.

Club Championships

Unfortunately last year's Connacht Club Football Champions Moycullen (senior), Dunmore (intermediate), and Clifden (junior) failed to progress to the All-Ireland club finals.

The 2023 senior club championship saw new champions being crowned in each county. **Corofin** (Galway), **St Brigid's** (Roscommon), **Ballina Stephenite's** (Mayo), **Mohill** (Leitrim), **Coolera Strandhill** (Sligo), and **Fulham Irish** (London) won their respective County Senior Football Championship.



Corofin captain Dylan McHugh lifts the cup after his side's victory in the Galway Club SFC final match against Moycullen.





Ballina Stephenites players celebrate with the Paddy Moclair Cup after their side's victory in the Mayo County Senior Club Football Championship final.

Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile



St Brigid's players celebrates with the trophy after their side's victory in the Roscommon County Senior Club Football Championship final match between St Brigid's and Boyle at Dr Hyde Park in Roscommon.

Photo by Harry Murphy/Sportsfile

In the Connacht Championship quarter-final Ballina Stephenites had a 3-11 to 0-5 victory over Fulham Irish at Hasting's MacHale Park.

In the other quarter-final Coolera Strandhill travelled to Dr Hyde Park where they were defeated by St Brigid's on a 0-13 to 1-3 scoreline.

In the semi-finals Ballina Stephenites travelled to Pearse Stadium to play the Galway champions, Corofin. Corofin had a well-deserved victory by 0-16 to 0-12.

In the other semi-final at Dr Hyde Park, Mohill put up a fantastic effort before eventually being defeated 1-7 to 0-8 by St Brigid's.

In the AIB Connacht Club Final St Brigid's were always in control and easily defeated Corofin at Dr Hyde Park on a 1-13 to 2-5 scoreline, in an exciting if low scoring game.

St Brigid's now play Munster champions, Castlehaven, in the All-Ireland semi-final. We wish them the best of luck.

At intermediate level **Kilmeena** (Mayo), **Annaduff** (Leitrim), **Castlerea St Kevin's** (Roscommon), **Easkey** (Sligo), and **Monivea Abbey** (Galway) won their respective county championships.

In the quarter-final Kilmeena, by virtue of a strong second-half performance, overcame a young Annaduff side by 4-18 to 0-8 at Hasting's MacHale Park.

In the first semi-final Castlerea travelled to Markievicz Park where they defeated Easkey by 2-6 to 0-9 in a well-contested game.

In the other semi-final Monivea Abbey defeated Kilmeena in a well-contested game by the narrowest of margins 1-8 to 0-10 at Tuam Stadium.

The final was played at Tuam Stadium, which was hosting its final game before being closed for renovations. Castlerea St Kevin's had a good early start and built up an early lead which they managed to hold on to until the end and took the Connacht title on a scoreline of Castlerea St Kevin's 2-4 Monivea Abbey 0-8.

Castlerea have now qualified for the All-Ireland semi-final where they will play the Cork and Munster



Mohill captain Shane Quinn, 6, holds the Fenagh Cup as he celebrates with team-mates after their side's victory in the Leitrim County Senior Club Football Championship final match between Mohill and St Mary's Kiltoghert at Avant Money Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada in Carrick-on-Shannon, Leitrim. Photo by Piaras Ó Midheach/Sportsfile





Lahardane MacHales - Mayo County Junior champions.

champions, Cill na Martra, in the New Year. They are wished the best of luck in their endeavours.

At junior level **St Michael's** (Roscommon), **Menlough** (Galway), **Lahardane MacHales** (Mayo), **Glenfarne Kiltyclogher** (Leitrim), and **Owenmore Gaels** (Sligo) qualified for the Connacht Championships.

Menlough and St Michael's had an entertaining quarter-final encounter in Tuam Stadium before Menlough emerged victorious on a 1-13 to 0-10 scoreline.

In the semi-final Menlough travelled to Hasting's MacHale Park where they met Lahardane MacHales in a fascinating game. Menlough took an early lead but were hauled back by Lahardane MacHales to draw the game. Extra time failed to separate the teams and eventually Lahardane MacHales prevailed on penalties 5-4.

In another entertaining semi-final, which had to be switched to the COE, Owenmore Gaels and Glenfarne Kiltyclogher played a game which was nip-and-tuck right up to the final whistle. Owenmore Gaels, by virtue of a late rally, outscored Glenfarne Kiltyclogher by 0-14 to 1-8 to qualify for the Connacht Final.

The final, which was played at Hasting's MacHale Park, in the fog with orange footballs, was a highly-exciting game after which Lahardane MacHales took the Connacht title on a scoreline of 3-10 to Owenmore Gael's 1-12. They now go on to play Listowel Emmets in the All-Ireland semi-final and are wished well.

In general it is fair to say that this year's Junior Football Championship has restored one's faith in Gaelic football and I wish to congratulate the players and managements on the standard and style of football played throughout the year.



Castlerea St. Kevin's captain Michael Conroy lifts the Gene Byrne Cup to confirm his side as Connacht champions at Tuam Stadium this afternoon.



Owenmore Gaels (Sligo) won the Sligo Junior championship.





St Thomas players celebrate after the Galway County Senior Club Hurling Championship final match between Turloughmore and St Thomas at Pearse Stadium in Galway.
Photo by Ray Ryan/Sportsfile

Hurling Competitions

In Hurling last year's champions, **St Thomas'** were defeated in the All-Ireland senior semi-final by Dunloy. **Tooreen** qualified for the All-Ireland Intermediate Final and were unluckily defeated by Monaleen (Limerick); while **Easkey** also qualified for the All-Ireland junior final where they were defeated by Ballygiblin (Cork). The fact that two club teams from the so-called weaker counties, qualified for All-Ireland finals, which they could have won, was a huge boost for club hurling at junior and intermediate level in the province.

St Thomas' (Galway), Tooreen (Mayo), Four Roads (Roscommon), Easkey (Sligo), and Carrick HC (Leitrim) all retained their respective county titles. Due to a delay in the London Hurling Championship there was no London representation in the Connacht Championship. Ballinderreen won the Galway intermediate and Ballinasloe took the junior title.

In the quarter-final of the intermediate

championship Tooreen, again, overcame Four Roads on a 2-23 to 2-14 scoreline.

Unfortunately, because the London County Final was not completed on time they had no team available to participate in the Connacht championship and consequently Tooreen went straight to the Connacht Final.

In the final Ballinderreen and Tooreen played a hard-fought game. Ballinderreen raced into an early lead before being pegged back by Tooreen. Ballinderreen again came with a late surge but Tooreen held out to take their fourth Connacht title in a row by 0-21 to 0-19.

In the All-Ireland semi-final Tooreen were defeated by Castlelyons (Cork).

At junior level Easkey defeated Carrick HC by 2-20 to 1-8 in the semi-final and qualified for the Connacht final where they had a 1-18 to 2-12 victory over Ballinasloe. Unfortunately, they too, were defeated in the All-Ireland semi-final by Cork and Munster champions St Catherine's.



Tooreen captain Shane Boland accepts the AIB Connacht IHC cup from John Murphy, Connacht GAA chairperson.





Coaching & Games Development

2023 has seen major changes on the Coaching & Games Development field at national, provincial and county level. Following the implementation of the HR Report, that initially focused on our Coaching & Games Development staff, I am pleased that our coaching staff have new contracts, better pay and conditions and access to a pension scheme from the 1st January. However, everything is not as it should be. Following a number of meetings between Provincial Chairs, Secretaries, Provincials Games Managers and National Coaching and Games Development staff, an agreed Reporting Structure from County to Province to National Operations was agreed. Undoubtedly, there has been an improved reporting system within our counties from coaching personnel to the County Games Manager and from the County Games Managers to the Provincial Games Manager; however, from there on, in my opinion, is badly fractured with little or no interaction with the Operations Group who, in reality, are the glue that keeps the whole operation moving smoothly. Hopefully the structure, as already agreed, will be fully initiated and operational early in January. If not I genuinely fear that the issues originally highlighted in the Mazar's Report will be back on the table. I live in HOPE!

Our Coaching & Games Development Committee, under the chairmanship of **Padraic McGourty** and Provincial Games Manager **Cathal Cregg** has overseen and supported a games-based approach in all of our activities around the 12 priority areas. Below is a synopsis of their work in the 12 areas.

> Coach Development

During the year our coach developers have been further refreshed and up-skilled. We have a total of 55 voluntary and full-time staff Coach Developers delivering Introduction to Gaelic Games, Award One, Award Two, Codes of Best Practice,

> Cúl Camps

23,705 children participated in 203 Camps in 186 venues. There are huge advantages in running the camps that obviously has, as its primary focus, the enjoyment of the children. Additionally, the camps gave many young people in Connacht an opportunity to be employed locally during the Summer which has spin off effects for adult club teams from a personal development perspective the young coaches were exposed to coach education, Garda Vetting Clearance, and Child Safeguarding. Hopefully those young coaches will stay involved with their clubs and utilise the experiences they picked up on the camps.

> Nursery Programmes

In our Nursery Programme at least 6,451 children between the ages of 4-7 in clubs participated in the 181 participating clubs with 1,114 volunteer coaches. In the clubs the children are encouraged to develop their basic catching, kicking, throwing striking, and athletic development skills with the emphasis on fun, play and enjoyment.

> Go Games

Almost 20 years ago Go Games were initially developed in national schools and clubs to give

children a "GO". All over Connacht our counties organise a valuable Go Games Programme for U-7, U-9 and U-11-year-old players. The initiative was re-launched again this year with much disappointing commentary on the necessity and value of the initiative and much argument on the whole topic of playing vs. winning. I fail to understand the mentality of some people, many of whom have reared children themselves, *who think winning is everything* and that we will lose players if we do not have competition. Children come to our fields to have fun, play with their friends and get fair play. If children do not get games they will "GO" somewhere else and we must realise that we may not have them when we really need them.

This year our two Go Games Days in Croke Park were held on 14th and 15th August. 50 clubs attended and 60 teams participated. 1,001 children were given a brilliant experience in Croke Park. We cannot underestimate the value of those days in Croke Park. I recently met a child who had played in Croke Park in August who told me that 2023 had been a great year for him, he had gone skiing, had a sun holiday, went to see his favourite team play at home in the premierships but the highlight of the year was playing in the Go Games in Croke Park.

> Primary Schools Coaching

At primary schools level we are delighted to be directly involved in 423 primary schools (74%) coaching almost 35,000 children. In addition our Skills for Schools has involved empowering 234 teachers to deliver live football and hurling sessions to infants to 2nd class and 3rd to 6th class all during the school year. I wish to thank our GDC's and county players for their cooperation in this initiative and also the participating schools and teachers.

> Post-Primary Schools Coaching

Our Post-Primary Schools Coaching Programme comes in many forms. Not alone is formal coaching provided but also, future leaders programmes, TY life skills programme, after-schools programmes to give a flavour of the skills involved and required in our games. Our coaches, outside of the games programme, are involved in 58 schools dealing directly with 3,456 participants.

> Youth Games

County competitions in our counties provided 1,452 Hurling and 3,941 Football for players from U-13 to U-18 during the year. Again, as in previous years, our U-13 Skills Challenges in hurling, winners Meelick Eyrecourt, and football, winners Caherlistrane, were a huge success.

> Super Games

The concept of Super Games, for the 12 to 17 age group, is to provide formal and informal games for our players. They are based around development and fun of the game that is not about winning.

Currently there are 63 secondary schools in the province running Super Games Centres and 3,182 participants taking part. At club level 66 football and 63 hurling clubs took part in the initiative with 2,040 participants involved. I have, no doubt, that if more





clubs buy into the concept it can be an outstanding success, especially with the facilities available at the COE.

> Club Coaching

This year saw the Club Development Officer (CDO) initiative launched. It commenced in February and had 72 participating clubs. The initiative involves clubs receiving a third level student to help assist club volunteers to carry out the key National Coaching & Games Programmes. Among the activities carried out by the CDO: are primary schools coaching, establishing and coordinating a club nursery (U-4, U-6), coordinating a club Go Games programme (U-7, U-9 and U-11s), organising and running of Club Camps and Cúl Camps, providing youth super games, athletic development programmes, promotion of all club activities through social media platforms through the club PRO. For clubs that fully bought into the programmes and the ideas behind it was a tremendous success. After a Review undertaken with the students, Club Steering Committee, teachers, all viewpoints were taken on board and a number of changes, which were recommended, will be taken on board in 2024. At present over 80 clubs are committed to the CDO Scheme for 2024.

> Talent Academy Games Programme

Our academy squads at U-14, U-15 and U-16 saw a large number of players have been involved across all counties.

The Connacht Academy Hurling took place on five dates between April and August. All academy days were competitive and were beneficial for all counties.

The National Academy Football dates were played on five dates between April and August with additional blitz days for U-15, U-16s on three further days. At this level these games were played at the Connacht Centre with each age group having all games played in a blitz format with no cups on offer. This proved to be an ideal format for developing players to play and develop at county level with no pressure on winning. London and New York U-17s football teams travelled to play in the Mary McPartland Memorial Tournament at the Connacht Centre on the same weekend as Féile. Out of this initiative London have been given a place in the National Tier 3 U-17 competition in 2024. This is a brilliant boost for the efforts of our coaches in working with our twinning partners.

In recent weeks I am particularly concerned by what goes on at Academy Squad Level away from the formal games programme. Academies seem to be on the go all year round with a huge emphasis, at this time of year, on physical development and running programmes. The footballs have been put away and many of our young players are undergoing programmes designed more for Aintree than Croke Park. We cannot continue to behave as if we were a professional sport at this age level. I am appealing to all of our counties to ensure that our school players are allowed, without any outside pressure, to play for our schools and also to ensure that underage squads adhere to the return to train and play policy of the Association which does not commence until January

for training and February for playing competition or challenge games. It will pay benefits in the long run.

> Celtic Challenge

The Celtic Challenge Cup (U-17) saw all Connacht counties eligible participating in all three rounds.

> Táin Óg Hurling League

Twenty clubs took part in the Táin Óg League made up of :

- 6- Roscommon
- 2- Leitrim
- 7- Sligo
- 5- Mayo

On behalf of the Council I wish to thank the following:

- > Our Coaching Committee under the Chairmanship of **Pádraig McGourty**, and our County Coaching Officers, **Declan O'Reilly** (Mayo), **Pádraig Ó Griofa** (Galway), **David McDonnell** (Roscommon), **Peadar Niland** (Sligo) and **Paul Murphy** (Leitrim). Paul is leaving his role in Leitrim and is being replaced by **Brian Breen**.
- > To our Games Managers, **Thomas Keenan**, **Willie Hegarty**, **Billy Mc Nicholas**, **Denis Carr** and **Liam Óg Gormley**. Special thanks is also due to **Padraic Ó Conaire** for his work under Clar na gCluichi Gaelacha. Willie has moved on from his post in Roscommon and has been replaced by **Padraic Mitchell**. We wish Willie well and thank him for his excellent stewardship.
- > Also to our Third Level Officers, **Michael Harte** (ATU, Sligo), **Damien Curley** (ATU, Galway), **Michael O'Connor** (University of Galway) for all of their efforts throughout the year.
- > **Danial Forde** our Strength & Conditioning Officer has been working with clubs and development squads in rolling out Fitness Testing, Training Programmes and Video Analysis.
- > I also wish to thank **Oran Hester**, who is doing outstanding work with our CDO Scheme.
- > I wish to pay tribute to the National Coaching & Games Development Committee, under the chairmanship of **John Tobin** and the guidance and direction of **Shane Flanagan** and his Coaching & Games Development staff.
- > Finally, I wish to pay tribute to our Provincial Games Manager, **Cathal Cregg**, for his continued commitment to the promotion of our games within the province.

The Split Season

The new format for the All-Ireland combined with the Split Season got its first airing in 2023. In my opinion for both club and inter-county players, the split season has fulfilled the criteria for which it was brought in. Both knew when the season commenced and all of our clubs had the benefit of the knowledge that their county players would be available for the majority of their games. Despite the fact that some people think otherwise club games are as important to the Association as the inter-county game.

The new championship format, however, has brought a couple of anomalies. The fact that 24 games were required, in the Round Robin series, to eliminate





four teams in hindsight is probably excessive. The logic of the current format, of having three out of four teams qualify is to minimise the possibility of dead rubbers in the final game. In the current format there is no advantage for a team to win their provincial championship. If continued this eventually will dilute the importance of the provincial championship and I suggest that when we next sit down to examine the Split Season and try to eliminate dead rubbers we tweak the format to:

- Give a Bye to quarter-final to the provincial champions
- Have groups of three in the Round Robin

In such a scenario all games are now important with the last round a possible winner take all situation. It's worth pursuing.

Schools & Colleges

The Post-Primary Schools calendar of fixtures returned to the programme similar to what was in vogue pre-Covid-19 with a number of exceptions. The County Post-Primary Schools Committees continued to play county leagues during the early season. Most of those finals finished up by being played in the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome much to the delight of the players, mentors and spectators on cold dreary evenings.

The Connacht Schools Committee organises the Mezzino Post-Primary School Championship on a provincial basis. Last year I reported: "I wish to remind all schools and teachers that the fixture schedule must be adhered to by everybody. There is no room for private arrangements between schools which sees some games being rescheduled for dates after the final round of games". There has been some improvement but not a lot. This places huge pressures on the organising committee to get the schedule completed on time. Despite the scheduling problems thankfully all competitions were completed.

On a number of occasions in the past I have referred to the clashes between schools games and academies, U-17 county teams and U-20 teams. Too much pressure is being put on schools players, be it training sessions by counties on the eve of schools

championship games, pressure on parents and by parents who have bought into the idea that all that is important is Johnny, who is going to be a county star. In my opinion there is too much of a professional emphasis at too young of an age on players who should be allowed develop in their clubs and schools without the pressures from other squads who in reality are not allowed to come together until the New Year.

I wish to congratulate all schools that competed in our competitions. **Hugh Rudden**, in his report, gives a comprehensive account of the winners and losers of the competitions. Congratulations to Summerhill College and Presentation College, Athenry, who qualified for the Hogan Cup and Croke Cup finals. Unfortunately they suffered defeat in both finals.

I wish to thank our Second Level Schools Committee, under the Chairmanship of **Joe McCabe**, for their great cooperation during the year. Hugh Rudden continues to do tremendous work to ensure that second level games are organised and promoted at all times. I also wish to thank the teachers in the schools for the huge amount of work they put into promoting Gaelic Games and I ask our county committees to give them their fullest support also.

The role of our Third Level sector, in the promotion of our games, cannot be over emphasised. It gives an opportunity to students to integrate into college and by joining any of the Gaelic Games clubs they are given the chance to meet and play with players of different standards and improve their skills at a different level that they are used to heretofore.

At Connacht level our Comhairle Ardoideachais organised a very successful Connacht Junior Championship with ATU Galway, University of Galway and ATU Sligo participating. The final was contested by ATU Sligo and ATU Galway which eventually was decided on penalties with ATU Sligo taking the title. In the All-Ireland semi-final they were defeated by Queens University.

I wish to pay tribute to our Third Level Committee, under the Chairmanship of **Pádraig McGourty**. They have done trojan work over the years and are a valuable part in promoting Gaelic Games.

I wish to thank our Third Level Development



Sacred Heart Westport secured their second Connacht Post-Primary Schools senior title in succession at a sun-splashed Swinford. The Sacred Heart team that were crowned Connacht champions after victory over Colaiste Bhaile Chláir.





Ryan Cup glory for University of Galway.

Officers, **Damien Curley** (ATU Galway); **Michael Harte** (ATU Sligo), and **Michael O'Connor** (University of Galway), for their co-operation and dedication to promoting Gaelic Games in their colleges.

The O'Connor Cup was hosted by ATU, Castlebar, at the COE, this year and was a tremendous success. I wish to pay tribute to **Nigel Jennings** (ATU Castlebar) and his committee for the amount of work and the efficient way they organised the competition.

Currently University of Galway under **Michael O'Connor** are busy making preparations for the Ashbourne Cup which will be hosted at the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome and also on our outside pitches at COE. We look forward to the competition in February .

Third Level competitions are very important to the Association but unfortunately all colleges still do not get sufficient support from county committees and in particular team managers. While some commentators criticise the timing of the Third Level competitions due to some overlap it is important to remember that Sigerson and Fitzgibbon Cups in particular can only be played when the colleges are open and when there is no clash with examinations. Some of our best players honed their skills at this level in the past and the competitions did not hinder their progress. Concerning the critics I often wonder did they ever go to any type of school.

Thankfully, the Third Level Bursary Scheme, is back on the agenda. 62 bursaries were awarded this year and after Christmas the scheme will see a further 62 awarded with the value of the Bursary restored to pre-Covid-19 amounts. Unfortunately all applicants cannot be awarded a Bursary and the scheme is designed not only for top-class Gaelic Football, Hurling, Ladies' Football and Camogie players in the colleges but also for up-and-coming young administrators who play an important part in the college clubs and may be future administrators at club, county, provincial and maybe national level.

I wish to thank our Cumann na mBunscol committee who work closely in the promotion of Gaelic Games in conjunction with our games managers, coaches and GPO's. I wish to compliment them and thank them for their efforts. During the year all of our games managers have brought hordes of

primary schools children to their county days at the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome which has been a brilliant experience for the children and also the teachers.

Finally I wish to pay tribute to the representatives of the Educational Sector on the Council, **Pádraig McGourty** (Third Level), **Hugh Rudden** (Secondary Schools), and Gerry O'Gara (Cumann na mBunscol) for their contribution to their respective sectors and also to the overall work of the council.

On behalf of the Council I wish to thank all of those who promote Gaelic Games in each sector and I look forward to working with them in the future.

Financial Sustainability

The big financial challenge facing our counties, in particular, is the rising cost of preparing inter-county teams at all levels. The question must be asked are we getting value for money? Do we have to have a professional regime for an amateur game? One wonders why the current game of Gaelic football, in particular, needs so much physical conditioning when the game is now designed to keep out of physical contact and recycle the ball backwards, sideways and sometimes forward in a game which is becoming increasingly difficult to watch at inter-county level.

Our county officers, who are volunteers, are tasked with ensuring that the money is available to fund the increasing costs and a huge proportion of their time has to be devoted to fund-raising, to ensuring that facilities are adequate and fit for purpose to accommodate the training required. The mantra of our county officers is that "our players deserve only the best" which is true and in the current climate is necessary in order to compete at the highest level. It appears that we are locked into a system where we must copy what other teams, including professional outfits, are doing and to hell with the cost.

The GPA demands of mileage of up to 70c per mile is placing a huge burden on our counties to meet those demands. Other demands on player supports also come with a cost and adds to the financial situation our counties are facing. Recent pronouncements by the GPA shows little respect to the GAA in a number of areas:





The London squad and mentors after winning the Division 2 shield at the John West Féile Peile na nÓg Finals 2023 at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Began, Mayo. Photo by Stephen Marken/Sportsfile

- Very little respect for voluntary County and Provincial officers or their work in really running the association. Maybe we need a GVA!
- The efforts to involve GAA players in protests, at our games, to support players from our sister associations at a time before we are fully integrated.
- The involvement of the senior hurling captains in the discussion on the sustainability of Hurling in five counties. I am looking forward to their *hands on* approach to increase the numbers of players playing club hurling in Leitrim.

Obviously inter-county games are the *bee all* and *end all* of our Association and nothing else seems to matters.

Returning to the financial spending on county team administration by the five counties of Connacht, there was a total spend, in this area, of €6,702,339 at a time when the total gate receipts of the Connacht Council is €1,267,432. All of this, at a time, before the GAA is fully integrated with the LGFA and Camogie Associations which will at least double the costs of preparing inter-county teams without taking into account the infrastructural requirements which will come with being one Association.

In the past I have suggested that it may be time that a *fair play financial ceiling* is put in place on how much should be spent on Inter county teams. Maybe now is the time to act before things go out of control?

Club Development/Infrastructure

In 2023 the Council and Ard Chomhairle has provided grant aid of €448,000 to clubs in the province to supplement the great works they are undertaking in very difficult times.

At every meeting of the Council, and annually in my report, I highlighted the process that must be undertaken in *all property matters* and because of its importance I include it here again:

- * Clubs propose their plan at a Club meeting, which must be approved and minuted.
- * Once approved by club the notice is sent to County Facilities & Safety Committee for approval/refusal. If approved decision sent to County Committee for ratification
- * County Committee, on approval, sends on decision to Provincial Council for examination and approval/refusal
- * Provincial Council, on approval sends on decision to NFMC for examination and approval/refusal
- * Decision of the NFMC communicated to the unit involved within 10 days of the meeting.

In my opinion there is still a lack of full examination of the applications at the county level in some counties. This process also applies to property matters at county level and any applications that do not follow the process should not be facilitated.

Currently there are projects, which have commenced or are planned, in the various grounds in Connacht:

Galway: Tuam Stadium - New stand
Pearsé Stadium - Floodlights
Kenny Park - Drainage works on pitch drainage.

Leitrim: AvantMoney Pairc Seán MacDiarmada - New playing surface and Pitch Perimeter fencing

Mayo: Hasting's MacHale Park - Upgrade on Floodlighting.

Roscommon: Dr Hyde Park - new uncovered seating. Planning permission has been received for the development of the Dermot Earley Centre.

Sligo: Markievicz Park - upgrade on perimeter fencing

At the Connacht GAA Centre a number of infrastructure improvements have been undertaken to include: New LED Lights on Pitch 5, Ground mounted





Iconic hayshed stand at Tuam Stadium to be demolished.

Photo courtesy Ian Doyle (Tuam Stars).

Solar Panels; Machinery Shed, Presentation area and continuous maintenance work on the pitches to keep them at the highest standard

Over €920,000 in grant aid has been allocated to those counties under the 2023 County Infrastructural Capital Grants Scheme.

Roscommon County Committee has been grant-aided for works in Dr Hyde Park in the upgrade works on uncovered seating.

Galway have had a grant awarded for drainage works at Kenny Park, Athenry.

Mayo have received funding for upgrade of floodlighting at Hasting's MacHale Park.

Leitrim received funding towards pitch works at AvantMoney Pairc Sheain MacDiarmada.

Sligo have been grant-aided for perimeter fencing at Markievicz Park.

All of the above grants will make a significant improvement in all of the grounds mentioned. As the National Infrastructure Committee, under the chairmanship of **John Murphy**, has previously highlighted there are significant infrastructural funding challenges facing the Association into the future.

Overall we must continue to ensure that our county grounds have a capacity and an infrastructure which appreciates the current needs of our stakeholders and patrons. I am pleased to see that there are plans afoot nationally to carry out audits to review capacities and safety at all of our major county grounds in the coming couple of years. In addition the Council's Planning and Physical Development Committee plan to meet all counties in relation to:

- Event Management
- Match Day arrangements
- Property Matters
- Trustees etc.

On behalf of the Council I wish to thank all our County Grounds Committees, Event Controllers and Match Day Stewards for their contributions throughout the year.

Connacht GAA Centre

2023 has been a hugely-successful year for all at the Centre of Excellence.

During the year several high profile events have taken place at the centre including:

- Over 180,000 visitors to centre between 1/10/2022 and 30/9/2023
- Féile na nGael
- Féile Peil na nÓg
- O'Connor Cup Ladies' Third Level Championships
- FBD League
- Connacht Hurling League
- Connacht U-20 Championship
- Walking Football
- School Summit
- National Sliotar Testing
- Hurling Skills Challenge
- Football Skills Challenge
- School Summer Camps

Other services provided by our Strength & Conditioning Officer **Daniel Forde** include:

1. Fitness Testing (45 teams tested)
2. Movement Screening
3. Injury Screening
4. Conditioning Programme Design
5. Match Analysis
6. Hamstring testing with new HRIG hamstring assessment tool.

The UPMC Institute of Health, is a brilliant facility to have onsite. Every day people from the local community and further afield, without any necessary connection with the GAA, avail of the various services being provided on site. UPMC delivers various medical programmes and expertise. This has huge benefits to the region, our community, membership and clubs going forward. Hopefully other planned facilities in this area will come on site early in 2024.

All of the above are just a flavour of the number of activities being organised inside the University of





Galway Connacht GAA Airdome without taking into account the hundreds of games and training sessions organised outside on our grass pitches and our AstroTurf pitch. All of the inter-county teams from the five counties have used the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome or our grass pitches on several occasions during the year. Clubs from all over the country have availed of the University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome for training sessions for their underage teams,

While our University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome is the jewel in the crown on site we must remember that our grass pitches takes the major volume of activity. Our pitches have continued to deliver quality games and availability to our clubs, schools and counties, the maintenance programmes delivered ongoing and throughout the year under the stewardship of **Prunty Pitches** have ensured pitch availability all year round.

A comprehensive list of the many services at the centre is accessible on our website - www.connachtgaa.ie. Those services such as fitness testing, etc., are available to clubs at a most competitive rates.

Our 1902 Coffee Shop has added a new dimension to our facilities on site and has been a great success since it opened. It is very important that our visitors can now avail of teas and coffees while they enjoy a game.

Our Biodiversity & Sustainability programme, continues to drive much change to our centre. The award by the SEAI, designating Connacht GAA as an Inspirational Sustainable Community, the first for the GAA, has been a huge boost for the council and our staff.

Among the various Biodiversity and sustainability projects being undertaken include:

- > Our 10-year Energy Master Plan which was recently launched
- > The planting of 13,000 trees and hedgerow
- > Pitch Maintenance including regular pitch cutting and pitch marking with a Robotic Line Marker
- > Walkway Extensions
- > Waste and Recycling programmes
- > EV Chargers
- > Export license for electricity
- > HVO replacing oil for generators/lights etc
- > Additional Car parking
- > Green Clubs Programme

All of the above is just a flavour of the huge volume of activity being undertaken on a daily basis in Cloonacurry.

Due to the amount of activity on site there has been a large increase in the volume of work for our maintenance staff.

I wish to thank the RSS, CE and Barnacaroll Scheme without whom we would not be able to deliver the daily schedules and up keep of the centre. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank both the scheme and also the workers themselves.

Finally, I wish to thank our Facilities Manager, **Kurt Reinhardt**, who is the glue that makes the whole operation stick

The Connacht GAA Centre belongs to all of our units in Connacht and I look forward to all club and

county teams at all ages continuing to play and train there for the future.

Communications & Media

From a media and public relations point of view, 2023 was a very successful year. Our PRO, **Hugh Lynn**, in his report, has highlighted the main areas of the promotion of our competitions. He has dealt with all media partners, particularly on Match Days, to ensure that our activities get maximum publicity.

Our accredited GAA journalists continue to give a fair and balanced outline of our affairs and their match day reports are still eagerly sought after.

Particular thanks is due to **Brian Mangan**, who managed our media communications. Brian has done tremendous work in promoting all aspects of the Council and a number of items have received particular traction:

- * Connacht GAA GO Games days in Croke Park
- * Scór finals
- * The Inspirational SEC award at the SEAI awards
- * Féile na nGael
- * Féile Peil na Óg
- * Walking Football initiative in the University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome
- * The various sustainability projects

Among the major items that were highlighted by Brian are:

- Senior championship tickets available on Ticketmaster in selected shops
- All tickets sold on line. No Match Day Sales. Tickets available on Universe.
- Tickets being bought on your 'phone on the way to a game
- Tickets available on Ticketmaster for concluding stages of our club championships
- Scanning of all tickets for entry
- All match programmes, except for senior championship, online and distributed free at the game.

Streaming has been a huge success with a total of 33 games streamed including New York v Leitrim from Gaelic Park in Connacht Senior Football Championship, all games in the Connacht Hurling and FBD Leagues . Also streamed were all U-20, U-17 and school final games.

I wish to thank **Rory O'Brien** and his team as well as our commentators **John Lynch**, **Mike Finnerty** and **Martin McGowan** for providing a consistent television quality production.

Live television coverage again enhanced the availability of our games to the general public and with the advent of live games on TG4, RTÉ and GAA GO most weeks throughout the year sees some type of game shown on television.

There has been particular criticism, especially at political level, at the decision to show 38 games on GAA Go on a pay per view basis. Amongst the complaints by some politicians have been:

- All games should be free to air - This is a nonsense. With only one TV Company interested in bidding for the Broadcasting Rights there is not the capacity nor the capability to show all games.





- The cost is too dear:
Is €69 or €79, too dear for 38 games + a mid-week GAA Programme
- Older people have a problem with the technology.
Not very complementary to older people who have no problem buying tickets on line.
- Many areas have very poor broadband coverage.
Agreed. This is not a GAA problem. Maybe the politicians could help to solve this problem!

TG4 and RTÉ Radio has given tremendous coverage to the club championships in the Autumn and they are to be commended for their support.

In the Connacht Championship games televised live on either RTÉ, GAA GO or RTÉ streaming service. I wish to thank all of the TV stations and their staff for their co-operation during the year.

On behalf of the Council I wish to thank the media for their support in 2023. The local radios, newspapers, Radio na Gaeltachta, RTÉ Sport, Newstalk and Today FM have been most cooperative.

I wish to thank DBA for the production of our Senior Championship Programmes and also **Pádraig Corcoran** for the production of the other programmes

On behalf of the Council, I wish to thank our Communications Committee for their endeavours during the year. I also wish to thank **Alan Milton** and **Siobhán Brady** from the Communications Department in Croke Park for their help.

Changes to the Council

This Convention sees a number of changes to the Council. Current Uachtarán, **John Murphy**, has come to the end of his presidency having led the council with distinction and excellent leadership over the past three years. He has overseen many significant developments in the province and has seen the Connacht GAA Centre become a beacon of excellence for the Association worldwide.

While John is leaving the 'hot seat' we look forward to his guidance over the next year as Iar Uachtarán. We wish John well in his efforts to be elected as the representative of Congress at the next Congress. Connacht are overdue to have somebody elected at Congress.



We welcome **Vincent Neary** as Uachtarán Comhairle Chonnacht. Vincent has vast experience in all aspects of Cumann Luthchleas Gael. He has served as player and administrator in his club, Bonniclon. As an officer of the North Mayo GAA Board; as Secretary of Mayo GAA Board; as a referee at all levels, club, county and inter-county and as Leas-Uachtarán of Comhairle Chonnacht over the past three years.

We wish Vincent the best of luck during his term of office.

Vincent is being replaced as Leas-Uachtarán **Tommy Kelly**. Tommy brings vast experience as an administrator at all levels of club and on Galway GAA Board. Currently he is Galway delegate to the Council and will make a seamless transition onto the Vice-Chairman's role where his experience on CCC will stand him in good stead.

Christy Brown has come to the end of his term of office as Galway Council Delegate. Christy has always been available to the council where no task was too big or too small. As Chairman of Coisde Iomana he gave excellent leadership in promoting hurling. I wish to thank Christy for his help and cooperation during his term of office.

For the coming year I welcome new Galway delegates **Séamus O'Grady**, former County Board Secretary, and **Michael Larkin**, Former Hurling Board Chairman and wish them well.

I wish to thank all of the officers and members of the Council for their guidance and support during the year.

Also to all of our sub committees who have done trojan work on behalf of the Comhairle Chonnacht. Míle buíochas.

Sympathy

Sympathy is expressed to the many GAA families who suffered bereavements in 2023: The past year saw the passing of Iar Uachtarán Cumann Luthchleas Gael and Iar Uachtarán Comhairle Con-nacht, **Dr Mick Loftus**. Dr Mick in his role as Patron of the Council, brought a font of experience and knowledge to the council and was always available to advise.

Former Council Delegate, **Johnny Haughey** (Roscommon).

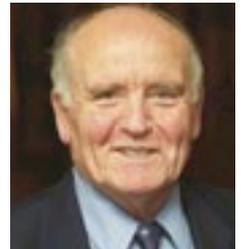
Former President of Provincial Council of Britain **John Gormley** (Cloone), also passed away.

Galway lost former hurling great, **Jimmy Duggan**, and former three-in-a-row football star **Séamus Leyden**.

Leitrim mourned the passing of the noted **Paddy O'Connor** who put his lifetime into the promotion of hurling in the county.

Former Mayo hurling star **Pierce Higgins** passed away during the year following a long illness.

Roscommon saw the passing of noted handballer and footballer and former gateman for the council, **Mark O'Gara**; excellent administrator **Tommy Dolan** (St Brigid's) and well-known photographer **Michael McCormack**.



Dr Mick Loftus



Johnny Haughey



Jimmy Duggan



Pierce Higgins





John Cosgrove

Mayo mourned the passing of **John Cosgrove**, a stalwart in his local club, Crossmolina, where he held many positions, and was also an inter-county referee.

Sligo lost **Anthony McCormack** who was no stranger to the sidelines, on match days, as a photographer.

On behalf of the Council I wish to extend deepest sympathy to all of the families of the bereaved. Go ndeara Dia Trocaire ar a n-ainmneacha.

Buiochas

On my own behalf and on behalf of Chomhairle Connacht it is a pleasure to record our gratitude to the many groups and individuals who have ensured the smooth running of the Council over the past year:

- To the members and representatives on the council and its various sub-committees, CCC, Coisde Iomana, Development, Coaching and Games Development, Scór, Games for All Communications, Marketing and our schools bodies.
- Our Referees Co-ordinator, **Marty Duffy**, and his committee and to his Tutors and Assessors who have had a busy year.
- To **John Hopkins**, Chairman; **Michael O'Connor**, Secretary; **Seán Martin**, Referees Co-ordinator, and all of the Connacht Féile na nGael and Féile Peil Committee who organised two outstanding Féiles during the year.
- To our Audit and Risk Committee under the Chairperson, **Lauri Quinn**, and Secretary, **Mary Judge**, and its members.
- To the members from the province who are representing us on national committees.
- To the five County Secretaries, for their assistance and help, and to all of the County Board officers and members. Roscommon Secretary, **Valerie Murray**, and Galway Secretary, **Séamus O'Grady**, have come to the end of their terms of office. I wish to thank them for their co-operation during their terms of office Valerie has been replaced by **Brian Mullen**; while **Michael McMahon** takes over as Galway Secretary. We wish them well during their term of office.
- To the members of the various Development & Park Committees and in particular to our Event Controllers for their assistance at the many major games we have hosted this year. To our voluntary workers, ticket collectors, Ticket scanning personnel, stewards, stiles men and medical personnel.
- To the Gardai and services for their co-operation, at all times.
- To the media in its various forms for the continued excellent reporting and previewing of our games.
- To University of Galway who have the naming rights of the Dome and also our Foundation Sponsors GAA, O'Neills, FBD, Elverys, Smyths Toys, Canon Kirk and our various hoarding sponsors.
- To our competition sponsors Eir, AIB, Supervalu, Bord Gais Energy, Centra, Littlewoods Ireland, for their immense contribution to our affairs.
- To the many players, referees and officials who have given many hours of pleasure and enjoyment a special word of gratitude is due.
- I want to thank Accountant, **Michael McHugh**, and Auditor, **Ciaran Loftus**, for their advice and professional assistance during the year.
- I wish to thank **Ger Mulryan**, **Stephen Lohan**, **Peter Greene** and the members of the National Finance Committee, with whom we have worked very closely during the year.
- I want to record our sincere thanks to Ard Stiurthoir, **Tomás Ó Riain**, and all of the staff at Pairc an Chrocaigh for their continued valued advice, courtesy and assistance.
- To Uachtarán, **Labhras Mac Cartaigh**, I say míle buíochas for his advice, support and help during his term of office.
- To our CE Scheme and RSS Scheme workers I say a sincere 'thanks' for how they have maintained the full facility at all times.
- I wish to thank Coaching and Games Manager, **Cathal Cregg**, for his tremendous work in the area of Coaching and Games Development.
- I also wish to thank our Operations Manager, **Adrian Hassett**, for his work and co-operation
- To our Facilities Manager, **Kurt Reinhardt**, I offer a 'heartfelt thanks' for his management of our facilities which can be tricky at times.
- I pay tribute to **Brian Mangan**, who looks after our various information and Media platforms and does a tremendous job.
- To **Danial Forde**, Strength & Conditioning Officer, for his *Trojan* work in the Connacht GAA Centre.
- To **Oran Hestor**, who is looking after the CDO Scheme,
- Also, a special word of 'thanks' is due to **Amanda Diskin** and **Attracta Hunt** in the office for the way that they have undertaken their duties. Also thanks to caretakers, **John Clancy** and **Patrick Gallagher**.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow officers, **John Murphy**, **Vincent Neary**, **Anthony Flaherty** and **Hugh Lynn**, for their major and unselfish contribution to the workings of Chomhairle Connacht in 2023

In conclusion, I look forward to 2024 with success for our units in all facets of the Association.

Rath Dé oraibh go leir.

Seán Ó Pronntaigh,
Rúnaí.





Planning & Physical Development Committee 2023

By Adrian Hassett

THE Planning & Physical Development Committee is responsible for advising and assisting all units within the province on:

- Physical Infrastructure Development
- Best Practice in the area of physical infrastructure
- Administering club grants
- Sourcing financial aid towards club development
- Preparing and managing our venues in hosting our games
- Steward Training
- Club Officer Training
- Club Planning

The members of the Committee are:

John Murphy, Vincent Neary, John Prenty, Anthony Flaherty, Hugh Lynn, Christy Browne, Martin McGowan, Liam Moffatt, Seamus Nugent, Pauric Clancy, Adrian Hassett.

Club Grants

The GAA Club Grants scheme was available to clubs this year, with €438,000 grant aided to Connacht GAA Clubs towards club Infrastructure development. GAA clubs have benefitted from this funding with the monies going to numerous projects like pitch development, club houses, floodlights, and spectator facilities. There were 46 **applications** from clubs across the province this year with a spend of over €8million towards infrastructure development from our clubs. The clubs are to be complimented on

having the vision and bravery to take on these projects which greatly enhance local communities and club members. The full list of recipients is posted elsewhere in this booklet.

Our **Club Ground Improvement Scheme** is a continued success, the county winners for 2023 were as follows;

- Galway: St. Mary's, Athenry
- Leitrim: Drumkeerin GAA Club
- Roscommon: St. Michael's
- Sligo: Enniscrone Kilglass

The overall winner of the Connacht GAA "Club Ground of the Year 2023" has yet to be finalised.

Sports Capital

The Sports Capital funding window was opened earlier this year and was made available to sporting units throughout the country clubs units across the province have applied for funding to enhance their facilities and are currently waiting on the decision of how much monies will be allocated to their projects.

Connacht GAA clubs received €1.3 million under the 2023 Clár Funding Programme. This fund provides funding for small scale projects in rural areas that have experienced population decline. In total twenty-nine clubs in Connacht benefited from this fund, see details *below*.

The funding made available to the various units within Connacht is most welcome and ensures that they have facilities that are fit for purpose for our many members. The benefits accrued from funding sporting organisations are well documented and are an investment in the future wellbeing of our state. This should never be forgotten.

County	Club	Project	
Galway	Portumna GAA Club	Construction of a Spectator Stand	€50,000
Galway	Beagh GAA	Upgrades at Community Centre	€50,000
Galway	Killimor GAA	Spectator Stand Upgrade	€45,000
Galway	Tommy Larkins	Upgrade of Lighting	€43,184
Galway	St. Brendan's GAA, Ballygar	Lighting of walkway	€50,000
Galway	Tynagh Abbey Duniry HC	Provision of Toilets	€50,000
Leitrim	Allens Gaels GAA Club	Access facilities to Club Grounds	€48,850
Leitrim	Ballinaglera GAA	Stand & Walkway	€38,364
Leitrim	Fenagh GAA	Provision of Walkway	€50,000
Leitrim	Kiltubrid GAA	Carparking & Walking Track	€35,595
Leitrim	Carrigallen GAA	Carparking & Disability Services	€41,897
Mayo	Hollymount Carramore GAA Club	Stand and accesibility works	€37,620
Mayo	Killala GAA	New carpark	€50,000
Mayo	Charlestown Sarsfields GAA	Walkway	€50,000
Mayo	Kilmeena GAA	Resurface works	€50,000
Mayo	Knockmore GAA	Playground	€49,950
Mayo	Cumann Liathr id Láimhe Tuar Mhic Éadaigh	Fencing & spectator seating	€19,800
Mayo	Crossmolina Deel Rovers GAA	Upgrade of Carparking	€50,000
Mayo	Garrymore GAA Club	Community Centre Upgrade	€45,000

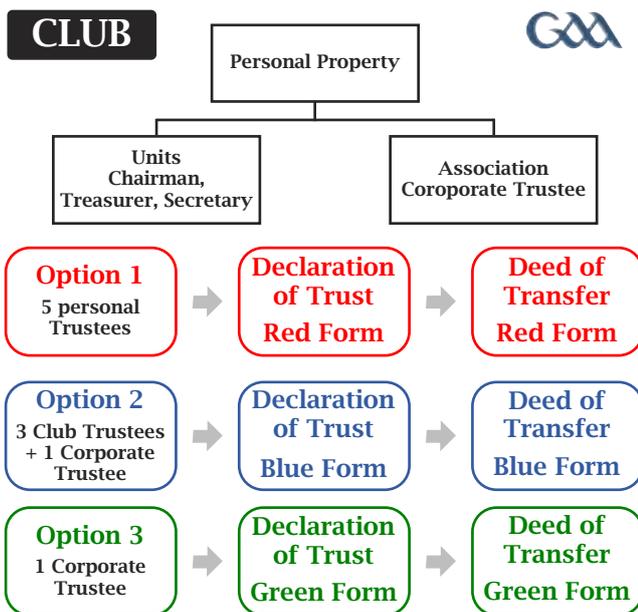




County	Club	Project	
Roscommon	Tremane Hurling Club	Install artificial grass carpet	€50,000
Roscommon	Kilglass GAA	Carpark Facilities	€50,000
Roscommon	St. Joseph's GAA Kiltievenan	Renovation of grounds at GAA Park	€50,000
Roscommon	Kilbride GAA	Car Park Works	€50,000
Roscommon	Elphin GAA Club	Spectator Stand	€50,000
Roscommon	Castlerea St. Kevin's GAA	Carpark Works	€50,000
Sligo	St. Patrick's GAA	Extension to Gym	€45,000
Sligo	St. Molaise Gaels	Outdoor activity and games area	€50,000
Sligo	Easkey GAA	Improvement of access to walking area	€50,000
Sligo	St. Michael's GAA	Upgrade at Car Park	€50,000

Club Trustees & Vesting

The GAA has established a trust company ("Iontaobhas Corparáideach Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Cuideachta Faoi Theorainn Ráthaíochta", ICCLG), Corporate Trustee to hold on trust property for various units of the Association. To streamline how property is held throughout the Association the GAA is providing its units with the option to hold property through the Corporate Trustee. This is a facility open to units but is entirely optional. Holding property through the Corporate Trustee does not in any way affect the ownership; the Corporate Trustee is merely holding on trust in the same way as personal trustees do.



A lot more clubs within the province have moved their property holding to the ICCLG in the past few years, with many clubs making decisions at their annual AGM on how they want their grounds vested in the future. Following various meetings with clubs over the past few years it has been evident that it is an area that clubs do need more information on. It is our intention to deliver more workshops on this topic in the coming year.

Hosting of Games

The introduction of the 'GAA Split Season' shortened the intercounty playing season into a seven-month season with county grounds across the

province hosting a programme of games in a tighter timeframe. Connacht GAA hosted 45 games in the Connacht GAA Senior, U-20 & Minor Championship, Leinster Hurling Championship, All-Ireland U-20 Football & Minor Football series, Tailteann Cup and Sam Maguire games in the All-Ireland series. This placed huge responsibility on County Committees, Ground Committees, Event Controllers and Stewards, with games scheduled on successive weekends. I would like to thank all our major grounds for hosting these games throughout the year, a special word of thanks to the Event Controllers and their diligent staff for their cooperation and help throughout the year. The various Grounds Committees and county boards had their facilities prepared and ready with gatemen and staff to assist in the smooth running of each event.

As we plan for the year ahead, the safety of our players, officials and patrons are of paramount importance and each county should take the opportunity early in the year to review their practices for the match day set up and further enhance the match day experience for all involved. We must endeavour to take a practical, responsible, and common-sense approach to managing risk whilst observing existing regulations and advice all our units on the control measures required to operate safe events for all those that use our facilities.

The next 12/18 months will see Audits carried out on all county grounds across the country which will include review of capacities and the structural safety of our grounds. Each county will have a bespoke report and the relevant supporting documentation for their facilities.

County Grounds

In relation to Event Management and County Grounds and Health & Safety, it is proposed to host a Workshop in January and invite Event Controllers, Safety Officers, Chief Stewards and County Secretary/Chairperson on their responsibilities in relation to County Grounds. Topics to discuss include:

- Event Management Plans
- Safety Statements
- Structural Reports - to include testing of crash barriers, etc
- Risk Assessments
- Steward Training
- Incident Reporting

Details of this workshop will be communicated to all counties.





Steward Training

The National Health & Safety Committee revised and updated the content of the Steward Training Course and were joined by Europlan as the accrediting body on the delivery of these courses. Within the province we have trained up three tutors to assist in the delivery of these courses. This is a significant boost to us in that we have Connacht Tutors who are available to deliver these courses to the counties. The Steward Training Course is available both online and in-person. There is a need to deliver training in all five counties in 2024 to upskill our existing stewards and to also train/recruit more stewards. These people are on the front-line of all our games and are the 'face' of the organisation for a lot of our patrons. We must equip and assist them in their roles.

County Infrastructure Development

Counties in the province have various projects ongoing on their County Ground facilities. Currently there are projects started and planned for the various grounds in Connacht.

Galway: Tuam Stadium - New stand
Pearse Stadium - Floodlights
Kenny Park - Drainage works on pitch drainage

Leitrim: Pairc Seán MacDiarmada, new playing surface and Pitch Perimeter Fencing

Mayo: Upgrade on Floodlighting.

Roscommon: Dr Hyde Park, new uncovered seating

Sligo: Markievicz Park- upgrade on perimeter fencing

In August the GAA allocated funding to the various counties towards infrastructure development. The following is the summary information for the 2023 GAA County Infrastructure Capital Grants awarded to Connacht GAA counties:

County	Project	Amount
Galway	Drainage Works, Kenny Park	€50,000
Leitrim	Pitch works	€300,000
Mayo	Upgrade on floodlighting	€150,000
Roscommon	Upgrade works on uncovered seating	€300,000
Sligo	Perimeter Fencing, Markievicz Park	€120,000

This funding is most welcome as counties felt the pinch of Covid-19 on their finances and subsequently on their ability to carry out works on their facilities. I asked this question last year, however, I will ask it again, should consideration be given to create a fund for our Secondary County Grounds. With the tightening of our inter-county season and the impact of weather conditions on our playing surfaces, our Secondary County Grounds have been required to host major games at very short notice. Would it be prudent to create a fund to assist Counties in maintaining and improving their Secondary County Grounds?

Connacht GAA Centre

The works and improvements carried out in the Connacht GAA Centre are ongoing and are certainly placing it as a **Centre of Excellence**. The University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome is proving to be a major attraction with teams and clubs throughout the

country availing of the facility as well as the centre being a leading exponent of the GAA's Green Club Programme. A more detailed outline of the projects carried out in the centre will be available in the convention booklet; however, suffice to say, that it is a credit to the GAA in Connacht and nationally. It has garnered headlines, locally, nationally and internationally for both its scale and its impact. The facility will provide a hub for excellence in education and research which will have a positive impact on the greater community.

National Health & Safety Committee

Under the chairmanship of Shay Bannon, this committee are tasked with:

1. To draft Health & Safety Policy proposals:
2. Develop and make available H&S documentation
3. Provide Health & Safety Support, Advice and Guidance
4. Site Visits & Audits
5. Safe Capacity in Grounds
6. Training Courses

The committee has already in place a Strategic Plan for Health & Safety with the main aim of the plan, "to make health and safety an integral consideration for all activities and events undertaken under the auspices of the GAA and to ensure that the GAA is an exemplar organisation in the delivery of health and safety". The committee were also responsible for the following:

NH&SC Conference

The NHSC Event Safety Conference, which was hosted in Croke Park in November brought together a multitude of stakeholders and experts along with GAA officers and event managers to discuss and examine some crucial issues relating to event safety management. The conference, which was organised by the NHSC as part of their vision to ensure that health and safety is an integral consideration for all activities and events undertaken under the auspices of the GAA.

The speakers included experts such as **Dr. Patrick Leahy, Dr. May Tan, Martin Girvan and Ciaran Whelan**. Their insightful presentations provided invaluable perspectives on health and safety that offered a wealth of knowledge to the engaged audience.

Safety & Facilities Officer

The role of the Safety and Facilities Officer is to provide advice and support to the clubs of the county and the county committee on best practice in several key areas including:

- Ground Health & Safety
- Property & Facilities
- Insurance
- Sustainability

The officer will chair the County Safety & Facilities Committee and partner with the relevant personnel at provincial and central levels to implement Association-wide policies at local level.

The committee shall consist of at least six members, to include the Safety & Facilities Officer (as Chairperson) and a qualified Event Controller. The





remaining members should be suitably qualified in areas relevant to the terms of reference of the committee. Other persons with the skill set appropriate to specific items under discussion by the committee may be added from time-to-time and shall act as complementary workgroups.

GAA Health & Safety Officer

Last year saw the appointment of **Patrick O'Brien** as the GAA Health & Safety Officer. This is a significant appointment with Patrick now acting as a contact point for all Health & Safety queries nationally. His role is to support the development, management and the ongoing improvement of health and safety structures, policies and practices across all levels and units of the Association (Central Council, Provincial Councils, County Committees and Clubs), including the GAA's Safe Club Initiative.

I wish Patrick every success in what is an important aspect of GAA activity.

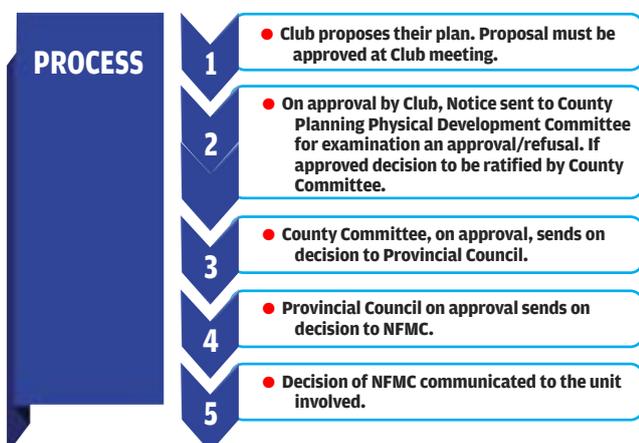
Resources

There has been a need for a central online database of resources for all units to access, this to include Health & Safety statements, good practice guidelines, templates towards risk assessments etc. Many of these resources are now being made available on the GAA Elearning portal, <https://learning.gaa.ie/safeclub> with more resources to be added.

Finally, I would also like to acknowledge the support and assistance of the National Health & Safety Committee throughout the year, this Committee has been very supportive in the work carried out in Connacht.

Club Application Process

Unfortunately, many units are failing to address control over activities and use of property and their responsibilities in the upkeep of our club and county grounds. Elsewhere in this booklet you will read that our Insurance cover is coming under increased pressure as our units are not facing up to their responsibilities in the upkeep and management of our facilities. Can we please ask all units to adhere to the following procedures when carrying out any development works on their facilities.



Pitch Maintenance Committee

This committee, chaired by **Kieran McGann**, has been tasked to raise the standards of playing surfaces across the GAA, particularly at inter-county stadia. This committee have been active in advising clubs/counties on proper procedures and policies in maintaining GAA grounds. The group were central to the production of the 'GAA Synthetic Pitch Standards 2022'.

Hugh Rudden is our provincial representative on this committee and has been active in communicating the good work carried out.

CRBOT

New European Anti-Money Laundering legislation introduced in October, 2021, now requires each Member State to maintain a central register to record the beneficial ownership information of "Relevant Trusts". In Ireland, the central register is called the Central Register of Beneficial Ownership of Trusts (CRBOT) and is being hosted and managed by the Revenue Commissioners. The Regulations apply to a relevant trust whose trustees are resident in the State of which is otherwise administered in the State. A beneficial owner of an approved sports body / Relevant Trust / GAA unit is a person who has responsibility over or holds custody over the assets of an approved body of persons established for, and existing for, the sole purpose of promoting amateur game or amateur sports within the meaning of section 235 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 (No. 39 of 1997).

As a GAA unit:

- (A) GAA units are in the main unincorporated associations, which means that they do not have legal capacity to hold their assets in their own right. This means that those assets must be held through trustees and therefore, fall under the legislation as a Trust.
- (B) A GAA club's 'beneficial owners' are:

The property trustees and all members of the club executive if the Club has a Sports Exemption Number.

All club members, including property trustees and all members of the club executive if the club does not have a Sports Exemption Number. It would be advisable to apply for the Sports Exemption Number if this is the case. The onus is now all clubs to ensure that they now register their information on the platform, it is a legal requirement that this register is updated when there are changes in the Property Trustees and Club Executive, i.e. within 14 days of a club convention.

County Safety & Facilities Officers

The five County Safety and Facilities Officer have carried out trojan work in their role. The portfolio they hold is quite onerous, however, they have carried it lightly. I wish to thank, Mary Judge (Galway), Gerry McGovern (Leitrim), Frank Flynn (Mayo), Frank Egan (Roscommon) and Richard Brennan (Sligo) for their sterling work, they have been of immense value to their clubs and have provided good counsel and support to me throughout. Thank you.





Planning & Training

County Planning & Training Officer

The County Planning & Training Officer 'is to lead the implementation of officer training, strategic planning for both county and club, and to develop club and county officers, and ultimately the units they represent'. The two areas targeted for the year were:

- Club Planning
- Club Officer Training

A calendar of events is already in place for 2024 with county and club officer training dates scheduled. Work is ongoing with several clubs in the delivery of their Club Plan.

County Officer Training

County Officer Training has been delivered online and in person with various modules presented in 2023. This has been well-attended by our various county officers as well as officers and staff from Connacht GAA.

Club Officer Training

Club officer training was delivered both online and in person in 2023, providing participants with various methods of availing of information and to interact with other officers. Officer training was delivered on various modules throughout the year and this included:

- Club Officer Induction Training
- Healthy Club Officer Training
- Diversity & Inclusion in Gaelic Games
- Leading, Managing and Governing your Club
- Digital Communications
- Healthy Club Officer Training
- Fundraising, Commercial & Sponsorship
- Using IT to simplify Club Admin
- One Club Model
- Scór
- Coaching & Games.
- Property Issues & Ownership

Although there was good attendance at the workshops, it was notable that some officer workshops or Webinars were not very well attended. All club officers need assistance and advice throughout the year and these training opportunities can provide club officers with a forum to source information and learn from each other. Club Officer Workshops are scheduled in each county for 2024; however, clubs are reminded that **they can only be of benefit to you, once you attend.**

Volunteer Effort

The efforts and work carried out by club and county officers throughout the year must be acknowledged, they have been to the forefront within their own county and communities and have provided leadership and support to many. We must continue to support all our Club & County officers and their members in the delivery of information to them and

to be able to assist and support them. We, National & Provincial officers and full-time personnel, need to assist by any means and alleviate the pressures and responsibilities that these officers face.

Club Constitution

The importance of all clubs adopting and having the Club Constitution in place cannot be emphasised enough. Having the Club Constitution in place could help solve a lot of the issues clubs may encounter when they happen upon a dispute within their ranks.

Club Compas

The GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association have partnered to develop a new club development tool called the Club Compás. The Club Compás is a self-assessment tool available within Foireann that helps clubs to review their performance against the standards set by the Gaelic Games Association. Each club receives a bespoke report that scores their performance and recommends both advice and resources to help address any operational shortcomings. The tool has been developed to encourage:

- Club Planning
- Improve Governance Standards
- Simplify Volunteer Workload
- Inform Decision Making and
- Reward Clubs for their Commitment to Good Governance

Once the self-assessment tool is fully operational, work will begin to provide clubs with trained facilitators to develop action plans. To date 74 clubs in Connacht have completed it. I would recommend it to all clubs to complete as it gives clubs an indication on their performance and areas to build on and develop in the year(s) ahead.

Club Planning

The Club Planning Programme (CPP) is designed to support clubs to develop and implement strategic plans. The key features of the programme include trained Club Planning Facilitators working with each club and a detailed Club Planning Guide.

The facility is available to clubs who are not yet ready to develop a 3-year plan but who may develop a 1-year Action Plan, that in time this can lead the club into developing a 3-year Club Plan. The Club Planning Programme is available to all clubs, however in advance of undergoing a club Plan, all clubs should reflect on the following questions:

- (1) Has your club currently got a Club Development Plan?
- (2) If so,
 - (A) what stage is it at? (e.g. Year 2 of 5)
 - (B) Has the plan been forwarded to your County Committee and Croke Park? -
 - (C) What has worked well for your club regarding club planning?
 - (D) What further assistance is required to ensure that your Club Plan is delivered successfully?





What is a Club Plan?

A club development plan is a simple document that outlines the following:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- How are we going to get there?
- Who is responsible for getting us there?

It is developed when club officers and members undertake an analysis and examination of all club activity. They then decide on actions for their club and outline how these actions can be achieved.

A good club plan is:

- Concise
- Well presented
- Practical
- Achievable

Most importantly, a Club Plan will be developed by the club and for the club.

Why Plan?

- Planning can help your club to:
- Look objectively and honestly at the current position of the club
- Clarify its purpose and status in the community
- Determine priorities for improvement and to cope with changes
- Agree the best method of delivery
- Monitor progress

Club planning is best achieved by thorough review and honest assessment by the club officers and members.

If a club expresses an interest in developing a Club plan, they should send notice to the County Planning & Training Officer who in turn, contact the Connacht GAA Officer to initiate the process for the club.

Clubs that are developing Club plans should forward on their final draft to the County Planning & Training Officer for review and ensure that any parts of the plan are not contravening GAA rule.

County Planning

To assist counties develop a plan the Club & County Planning Committee revamped the County Planning Programme, this document has been sent to all counties. The programme provides each county with a County Planning Guide, toolkit of advice notes and templates, and dedicated mentoring from staff members in the relevant Provincial and Central Council. In Connacht, four counties are undergoing the process of developing their own three-year plans. The need for a plan by counties is of increasing importance, and this has been further highlighted by the governance reviews carried out with the counties. The creation of a county plan will not only guide county officers on their roles but serve the county and its clubs for the better in how it goes about its business. Assistance is available, just ask.

I would like to acknowledge the tremendous work carried out by the five County Planning & Training Officers: **Alan Mongey** (Galway), **Terence Boyle** (Leitrim), **Mary Prenty** (Mayo), **Teresa Hession** (Roscommon), and **Declan Bruen** (Sligo), they have been active in assisting and guiding clubs and have been a valuable point of contact in answering the various queries that clubs have posed to them.

I wish to thank our Council Planning & Physical Development committee for their help and co-operation during the year.

Provincial Coiste Iomána Report 2023

By **Michael O'Connor** (Coiste Secretary)

2023 was a very successful year for Hurling in the province with Tooreen narrowly being defeated in the Intermediate Hurling gAll Ireland Final and Easkey suffering a similar fate in the All Ireland Junior Final.

The Connacht Academy hurling dates took place on April 22nd, May 20th, June 3rd, July 22nd and Aug 26th. All academy days were competitive and played in great spirit by all the counties.

The Celtic Challenge Cup (U-17) seen all Connacht counties eligible participating in all 3 rounds.

Tàin òg

Hurling clubs around the province have seen success with the emergence of the Tàin Òg leagues. It gives these clubs and their youth hurlers a better

games programme. Below is a breakdown of the crucial numbers nationally. A total of 20 clubs took part from the eligible Connacht counties (Roscommon x 6, Leitrim x 2, Sligo x 7 and Mayo x 5). I would urge counties and clubs to get behind this programme of games at all grades to further develop hurling in the province.

The Feile na nGael was held in the province on 24th June. It was a most successful event titles in hurling and Camogie coming to the following clubs:

Hurling Feile winners 2023

- Division 1 Cup: **Athenry** (Galway)
- Div 3 Shield: **Westport** (Mayo)
- Div 4 Shield: **Carrick** (Leitrim)

Camogie Feile winners 2023

- Div 1: Cup: **Turloughmore** (Galway)
- Div 2 Shield: **Castlegar** (Galway)
- Div 5 Shield: **Padraig Pearse** (Roscommon)





Coaching and Games Development Report 2023

By Cathal Cregg

OUR Coaching & Games Committee under the Chairmanship of Padraic McGourty consists of our five County Head of Games: **Thomas Keenan** (Leitrim), **Padraic Mitchell** (Roscommon), **Liam Óg Gormely** (Sligo), **Dennis Carr** (Galway) and **Billy McNicholas** (Mayo) along with the County Coaching Officers, **Paul Murphy** (Leitrim), **David McDonald** (Roscommon), **Peadar Niland** (Sligo), **Paddy Griffin** (Galway) and **Declan Reilly** (Mayo); **John Prenty** (Provincial Secretary) and **Cathal Cregg** (Provincial Games Manager) make up the last two places on the committee.



to the participation component. To participate in the camp, these coaches also underwent coach education, Garda Vetting Clearance, and Child Safe Guarding. I would keep urging clubs to interact with these young coaches and involve them in coaching in their organisations. I would like to thank Seán Gannon the National Cúl Camp Co-Ordinator, the County Head of Games, all the full-time personnel in the counties, county officers, clubs and all the coaches who worked tirelessly on our camps, helping to deliver such a safe and enjoyable experience for all the children in attendance.

Coaching and Games are based around twelve priority areas (Camps, Nursery, Go Games, Super Games, Primary Schools Coaching, Post-Primary Schools Coaching, Coach Development, Youth Games, Club Coaching, Talent Academy Games Programme, Celtic Challenge & Táin Óg Hurling League) which feed into the National & Provincial Coaching and Games Development Plan. Each county then has a county coaching plan that is tailored to suit the individual counties needs and delivered to clubs. This is implemented by the County Head of Games, County Coaching Officer, and Games Development staff in each of the counties on a day-to-day basis. Governance for the plan is over seen by the County Steering Committee which consists of the County Chairperson, Secretary, Coaching Officer, Head of Games, Treasurer & PRO who meet 6-8 times per year to review how the plan is going.

Nursery

The Nursery Programme is the first introduction to Gaelic Games for boys and girls aged 4-7 in clubs. The nursery programme consists of exercises to develop fundamental movement skills and basic motor skills with the focus on the player's ability to move, play, and manipulate a ball. From the information garnered 181 clubs took part in the nursery programme with 1,114 coaches and 6,451 participants taking part. These figures would be very conservative as it is one of our programmes that is quite challenging to collect accurate data on.

Skills developed through the nursery programme form the fundamental components of many of the sport specific skills in Hurling, Gaelic Football, and other sports. Throughout each session, children are given an opportunity to develop their basic striking, catching, kicking, throwing, and athletic development skills with the emphasis on fun, play and enjoyment. In relation to athletic development skills, the focus is on agility, balance, co-ordination, running, jumping, and throwing.

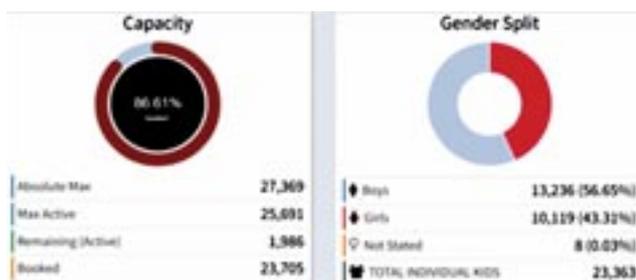
Cúl Camps

A total of 23,705 boys and girls participated in 2023 Cúl Camps this summer across 186 venues throughout Connacht. This represents a slight increase from 23,465 boys and girls, who participated in 2022. The breakdown of the key figures involved in our camps this summer across the province, is shown in the image below. These increased participation rates and ongoing expansion of the programme demonstrate the long-term success of the initiative. These camps gave many young people in Connacht employment for the duration of the camps in addition

Go Games

Across the province U-7, U-9 and 11-year-old players continue to get a valuable Go Games programme from all the counties. Over the past 15 plus years, this programme has been successfully implemented through national schools and clubs. Continual educational workshops are needed for new coaches and parents whose kids are involved where discussions are needed on the topic of playing vs. winning. I would encourage clubs to stick with and implement the Go Games model for the future participation rates in their club as invariably if players do not get a "Go" they will go elsewhere!

Our **Connacht GAA 2023 Go Games Days** in Croke Park took place on August 14th and 15th. This year 1,001 children across 50 clubs and 60 teams in hurling and football participated from all Connacht counties. These days provide the selected clubs from all over Connacht the incredible experience of Croke





Park. The players involved got to play a number of games in Croke Park and a trip to the Croke Park Museum. All the clubs in the province have had the opportunity of experiencing Croke Park. Clubs are selected on a rota basis and clubs get to participate every 4/5 years.

Super Games Centre

Super Games Centres are informal playing opportunities aimed at keeping youth age grade players aged 12-17 years old involved and participating in Gaelic Games for as long as possible. Informal playing opportunities provide complimentary and/or enhanced game opportunities for all youth age grade players irrespective of their playing abilities, experience, or levels during window's in the fixtures calendar when formal club competitions have finished. Informal playing opportunities can be delivered in the Club, Post Primary School, or Community setting.

The Super Games concept has always worked quite well in the secondary school setting with 63 secondary schools in the province running Super Games Centres and 3,182 participants taking part. The concept at club level has always been slower to catch on, but I feel this is down to no competition been attached to it. 66 football and 63 hurling clubs across the province took part in the initiative in 2023 and 2,040 participants involved. We as an association have to provide formal and informal games for our players that are based around development and fun of the game and not all based around competition and winning.

Primary Schools Coaching

The **National Schools Coaching Programme** has continued this year. All counties delivered coaching to a substantial number of schools across the province with Coaching & Games activities been provided to 423 of the 570 national schools in the province. There has been a total of 34,831 participants (18,919 male & 15,912 female) with a total of 18,526 sessions been conducted. This all totals to 671,192 cumulative coaching opportunities for the participants.

A total of 234 teachers have signed up to take part in the 2023/2024 **Skills for Schools** initiative across the province (Mayo 59, Leitrim 6, Roscommon 20, Sligo 23 and Galway 126). The programme commenced on the week starting October 20th. Two separate age-appropriate programmes are delivered to **infants to 2nd classes** and **3rd to 6th classes**. This programme is a teacher-led initiative which delivers live football and hurling sessions into national schools from the Connacht GAA centre hosted by one of our GDC's and a county player (Changes each week). This allows us to coach in schools all year round by empowering the teachers. One skill is focused on for two weeks. 6 weeks is delivered during each of the 4 terms (24 weeks in total).

I would like to thank the schools and teachers for all their help in assisting in the coaching programme and facilitating sessions in a safe environment.

Post Primary Schools Coaching

Information on the **Post Primary Schools Programme** fixtures schedule can be read in detail in **Hugh Rudden's** Post Primary Schools Report and **Adrian Hassett's** Fixtures Analysis Report. Support to post primary schools comes in many forms such as coaching, TY life skills programme, after schools programmes future leaders and planning support to name a few. In total 58 schools received support with 3,456 participants taking part from 1st to 6th year students.

Coach Education

Our Coach Education System through our full-time staff and body of Connacht/County GAA Coach Developers, have delivered a total of 108 formal (Introduction to Gaelic Games, Award 1 & Award 2) GAA Football and Hurling Coaching Courses throughout Connacht. In each of the counties there were various informal club and coach development workshops that took place throughout the year. Our Award 2 Course for 2023/2024 commenced on November 4th. This will take place across 5 full days. This involves a total of 40 participants in total from football and hurling and from each of the counties. All modules will be delivered by our Connacht GAA Coach Developers.

Youth Games

Counties have now adopted either odd or even age groups depending on how their county have voted. The formal **Youth Fixtures Programmes** in the counties provided a total of 5,393 games (1,452 hurling and 3,941 football) from U-13 to U-18 in 2023.

Connacht GAA hosted both the football and hurling National Hurling Féiles in 2023. On both Saturdays a large number of pitches in the province facilitated action. There were five divisions in Camogie, LGFA and Football and four divisions in Hurling. A total of 350 games were played across the two days.

The **Connacht GAA U-13 Skills Challenge** took place on October 27th for football and November 7th for hurling at the Connacht GAA Centre. Congratulations to **Meelick Eyrecourt**, who won the Hurling Skills Challenge, and **Caherlistrane**, who won the football skills challenge. This is a great event that encourages clubs to focus on developing the skills of both codes. I would strongly encourage counties and clubs to promote this initiative as improving the skills must be central to developing our games going forward.

Academy Squads

All our academy squads at u-14, u-15 and u-16 have had a very good year in terms of player development, and a large number of players have been involved across all counties. The **Connacht Academy Hurling** dates took place on April 22nd, May 20th, June 3rd, July 22nd and Aug 26th. All academy days were competitive and played in great spirits by all the counties. The Celtic Challenge Cup (U-17) seen all Connacht counties eligible participating in all three rounds. The **National Academy Football** dates were on April 1th, April 29th, May 27th, July 8th and Aug





12th. There were additional blitz days for U-15 and U-16s on April 15th, July 29th and August 19th. These games days were played at the Connacht Centre with each age group having a designated part of the day with all games played in a blitz format with no cups on offer. It provided a comfortable environment for players to play and develop at county level with no pressure on winning. Thanks to the County Head of Games, GPO/GDA's, clubs, coaches, and county officers for full co-operation contributing to success.

London and New York U-17s football teams travelled to play in the **Mary McPartland Memorial Tournament** at the Connacht Centre on the same weekend as Féile. The format for the tournament was short-games with a league format followed by the cup and shield competitions. Sligo and Mayo U-16 teams made up the other places. These teams also played in a club blitz at the Connacht Centre with Moycullen and Mountbellow U-17 club teams two days prior to the competition. It was a very worthwhile exercise for London and New York as they wish to bridge the gap from U-15 Féile to senior level. Great credit must go to the London and New York boards for endorsing the trip, along with all players, parents and sponsors involved.

Tàin Óg

Hurling clubs around the province have seen success with the emergence of the **Tàin Óg Leagues**. It gives these clubs and their youth hurlers a better games programme. Below is a breakdown of the crucial numbers nationally. A total of 20 clubs took part from the eligible Connacht counties (Roscommon x 6, Leitrim x 2, Sligo x 7 and Mayo x 5). I would urge counties and clubs to get behind this programme of games at all grades to further develop hurling in the province. Along with the clubs and coaches I would like to thank the county coaching and games staff **Darragh Cox, Proinsias Killian, Cian O'Dea** and **Adrian Hassett** who have worked tirelessly over the past number of years to ensure this project goes from strength to strength.

Tàin Óg	Overall Fixtures	Games Played	Not Played/Conceded
U-13	198	165	33
U-15	165	125	40
U-17	132	67	65
Total	495	357	138

Social Media

Connacht GAA has several **social media** Coaching & Games accounts that promote events from all around the province through the five counties. To communicate information about all the work being done inside each county, each county initially established its own Coaching & Games County Twitter pages. As of right now, these pages have a combined total of 12,505 followers, an increase from 10,767 followers in 2022, 9,886 in 2021 and 8,002 in 2020. If you want to follow them on Twitter, their handles are as follows:

@MayoGAACoaching @RosCoachingGAA,
 @CoachingGalway, @LeitrimG and
 @SligoGAACandG.

I want to express my gratitude to Connacht GAA's **Brian Mangan** for managing and organising all our social media initiatives. I also want to express my gratitude to the employees in each county who oversee uploading content in connection with Brian. All this material is linked to the Connacht GAA website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram profiles. The collaboration between Brian, the county PROs, and the C&G social media pages will increase awareness of the work being done in each county. There has been a lot of work put into compiling resources and these can be viewed by visiting the provincial and national coaching pages at

<http://connachtgaa.ie/coaching/> and
<https://learning.gaa.ie/coach>

Club Development Officer

The Club Development Officer (CDO) initiative was launched fully in 2023 following a pilot in 2022. A total of 72 clubs across the province started in February, 2023, for 26 weeks. The initiative started with a training week for all CDOs at the Connacht Centre. The goal is to assist clubs in growing their membership and becoming more self-sufficient. The initiative involves clubs receiving a 3rd level student to help assist club volunteers to carry out the key National Coaching and Games Programmes. The key activities carried out by the CDO would be primary schools coaching, establishing and coordinating an excellent club nursery (U-4 - U-6), coordinate an excellent club Go Games programme (U-7, U-9 and U-11s), organising and running of Club Camps & Cúl Camps, provide extra opportunities for young players, i.e., youth super games, athletic development programme for youth players and promotion of all club activities through social media platforms through the club PRO.

The project finished in July and a full review was conducted which included surveying all teachers, clubs and CDOs. Feedback was largely positive but there were areas that needed changing. A number of changes from the review were recommended and approved by the Connacht C&G Committee to improve the project in 2024. For more information on the project and the review it can be seen by searching the following on YouTube "Connacht GAA Club Development Officer Presentation to Clubs May 2024." For 2024 there are currently 81 clubs committed to taking part with another five on a shortlist to come into the programme.

Connacht Centre

Daniel Forde as Connacht GAA Strength & Conditioning Officer, has continued offering a wide range of services to all schools, clubs and counties in the areas of:

1. Fitness Testing
2. Movement Screening
3. Injury Screening
4. Conditioning Programme Design
5. Match Analysis

As with the previous years there has been a large uptake of these services from clubs and county teams throughout the province with players from all five provincial counties being tested and screened at the





centre in Began. In total we had 45 teams tested at the centre in 2023. Additionally, we had 17 adult teams avail of our 12-month structured S&C programme through our app Volt. In October we were happy to launch our new injury screening service, which is featured with the purchase of a HRIG, the world's leading hamstring strength assessment tool. Further details of these services can be seen on the Connacht GAA website.

Daniel continues to work closely with the County Head of Games within each of the counties to prepare all the academy squads. Our third level placement programme is now in its 7th year and again it has been a huge success from its initiation in 2016. There is a student placed in the Connacht counties where they assist in the roll out of the S&C programmes with each of the Academy/Development Squads. Overall, this has been a huge success and offers a great support to each of the counties' volunteer coaches. The placement involves fitness testing, movement screening, and supervising resistance training programmes, helping with field sessions and performing video analysis. This programme will continue again in 2024.

Daniel has also rolled out 5 Strength & Conditioning Courses across the five provincial counties. A total of 72 coaches took part in the courses and will now work with club and county teams across the province. The course covers many aspects surrounding the physical preparation of our teams with modules including Physical Demands of Gaelic Games, Basic Science Theory, Fitness Testing, Warm Ups, Recovery, Conditioning for Gaelic Games and Supervision of a Resistance Training Programme. This course is designed and delivered so that coaches can carry out training in a safe and effective manner in their own particular club/county setting with the assistance of Daniel. The idea behind such a course is to build a volunteer led module for clubs so that they can implement a safe and cost-effective physical fitness programme in place within their own club. This course will again be offered out to all clubs around the province in 2024.

Overseas

Daniel Forde travelled to **Asia** in November to referee at the Asian youth championships in Vietnam. While out there Daniel delivered two Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games Courses. A total of 34 coaches took part in these courses. This is testament to Asia GAA who tirelessly work to grow the game.

Under the guidance of full time staff member, **Eamon Fitzgerald**, New York GAA continue to deliver a very comprehensive coaching and games programme. **Cian O'Dea** has been a welcome addition to the coaching staff over the past few months. In April I made a trip to New York as Connacht Provincial Games Manager. The trip consisted of meetings with the full-time staff, board members, coaching sessions with academy teams and deliver of an Introduction to Coaching Gaelic Games course.

This year New York also had boys and girl's teams participating at the football and hurling Féile. New York also had a boys u-17 football and hurling academy team that travelled to Ireland on the weeks

of Féile. They played and took part in various trainings and matches.

Under the guidance of full-time staff member, **Cormac Duffy**, London GAA also continue to deliver a very comprehensive coaching and games programme. London would participate in the majority of coaching programmes mentioned above. This year London also had boys and girls teams participating at the football and hurling Féiles. London also travelled to Ireland to participate in the boys U-17 football competition with the New York footballers.

Third Level

I want to acknowledge the work being done in the third level institutions in the province and thank the Games Promotion Officers, **Damien Curley** (ATU Galway Campus), **Michael O'Connor** (UG), and **Michael Harte** (ATU Sligo Campus) for all their work in organising the teams across all codes in camogie, hurling, men's and women's football, and other sports.

Acknowledgements

- Our Coach Education Committee under the chairmanship of **Brian Henry**.
- To our County Head of Games, **Dennis Carr**, **Thomas Keenan**, **Padraic Mitchell**, **Billy Mc Nicholas** and **Liam Óg Gormley**. Also, to all the GDC's working in the counties we are very grateful for all the work you do in delivering our projects on the ground.
- Our Provincial Coaching Officer, **Pádraig McGourty**; our County Coaching Officers, **Paul Murphy** (Leitrim); **David McDonald** (Roscommon); **Peadar Niland** (Sligo), **Paddy Griffin** (Galway) and **Declan Reilly** (Mayo) who in conjunction with the Games Managers are responsible for the design and implementation of projects in the key areas.
- Also, to our third level officers, **Damien Curley** (ATU Galway Campus), **Michael O'Connor** (UG), and **Michael Harte** (ATU Sligo Campus) for all their efforts throughout the year.
- I would like to thank our secretaries, **Amanda Diskin** and **Attracta Hunt**; **Adrian Hassett** (Operations Manager), **Daniel Forde** (Strength and Conditioning Officer), **Brian Mangan** (Communications), **Oran Hester** (Connacht GAA PO), **Cian O'Dea** (Coach Education Coordinator) and our Secretary, **John Prenty**, for all their assistance with C&G throughout the year.
- Finally, I would like to thank **Willie Hegarty** for all his work for Connacht and Roscommon GAA. He left Roscommon GAA Coaching & Games in a great place after 17 years. We would all like to wish Willie all the best in his future endeavours.





Connacht PRO Report 2023

By Hugh Lynn

Overview

IS CUIS áthais dom tuarascáil on Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí a chur os bhur gcomhair. Bhiomar gnothach aris sa Comhairle sa bhlian atá caite. Bhí sár bhlian ag Cumann Luthchleas Gael sa Cuige agus molaim gach einne a d'obraigh go dian ar an gComhairle. Ba mhaith liom mo bhuiochas a ghabháil leo. Bhí blian sásuil ag an gComhairle anuraidh.

Le déanaí bhí comortas na gclubanna ar siul agus bhí roinnt cluichí thar bharr againn seachtain í ndiaidh seachtain. Comghairdeas le na buateoirí agus go neiri go breá leo sna cluichí leath-cheannais san athbhlian.

It is my pleasant duty to present this, my first annual report, to Connacht Convention. We have had another busy year in Connacht G.A.A. with a huge amount of activity right throughout the year.

Sincere thanks to all the members of the council and all who assisted with the activities of Connacht GAA. Of course the focus of those activities is here at the Centre of Excellence which continues to expand its services to all units of the Gaelic Games family. With the University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome as the centre piece the campus is, without doubt, our proud Association's greatest asset in the Province and a vindication of the foresight and vision of those who planned it.

In June of this year, we successfully hosted the **John West Féile na nGael** in June and then the following week we saw the footballers of the nation descend on the province for Féile Peil na nÓg on July 1st. The main finals were played at the Connacht Centre and, of course, it was a major occasion for the Connacht Gaelic family, GAA, LGFA, Camogie and Rounders. We were delighted to host all the organisations.

Connacht Championship

This year, because the championship started so soon after the league, we did not have an actual championship launch in the province, for 2024 we hopefully will be in a position to do something to launch the competition and also to create some content to assist the province and our counties to further promote our championship.

Even without a launch we were still able to successfully run a media campaign to promote each of our championship games. I would like to highlight the fantastic assistance we received from the county PROs. 'Thank you' to **John Walker, Michelle Healy, John O'Connor, Barbara Loughlin Byrne, Padraig McKeon** and also to **Charlie Evans** the PRO in London for his assistance during the year.

Match ticket sales were promoted through Supervalu and Centra outlets as well as online.

We have a dedicated staff member who looks after the communications function within the council, **Brian Mangan** and he does trojan work to promote all our activities.

I wish to thank the committees in the various venues that hosted our championship games for their continued interest, co-operation and great presentation. We must remember that these are all volunteers who give freely of their time to accommodate our fixtures. Without their valuable assistance we simply wouldn't be able to stage our games.

Best wishes to Tuam Stadium Committee who are undertaking a major project with their stand facility. The iconic stand has been taken down and a new stand and media facilities are being built as we speak. Hopefully all will be ready for the visit of Derry to Páirc Naomh Iarlath in the Allianz League in 2024. The final game played in the stadium before the stand came down was the 2023 AIB sponsored Connacht Intermediate Football Final between Castlerea St Kevin's of Roscommon and Monivea Abbey of Galway.

In addition I also commend Roscommon who are in the process of carrying out major works on the concrete seating area in front of the stand and media area in Páirc de hÍde. This, too, will make a major improvement to match day experiences for the Gaels of the province who attend our games.

I want to take a moment to mention an important group of GAA volunteers who I describe as the public face of the GAA. The stewards, you are one of the most important public relations assets in the association. Hail, rain, snow or shine you are there to assist in the smooth running of our games. It's great to see stewards well turned out, wearing easily identifiable high visibility bibs with their official card with photograph on display. Well done and 'thank you'.

Another very important group who deserve our appreciation are our referees who continue to try their best to keep everybody happy, often in difficult circumstances. A special word of commendation is well due to Marty Duffy and Seán Martin who do so much work to organise referees training, instruction and monitoring and continue to raise the bar for our established and aspiring referees. It's great to see so many Connacht referees featuring so well on the national stage.

Connacht F.B.D. League

January sees the opening competitions of the season when we host the Connacht League kindly sponsored by FBD. The football cup, of course, for this competition is the **Paddy Francis Dwyer Cup** in memory of their late former employee, former





Roscommon Co. Secretary, and Oran Clubman, **Paddy Francis Dwyer**.

Since the advent of the University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome we are lucky to be able to play all the games indoors away from inclement weather and wet pitches. The games are all 'streamed' and there is great interest in the games. We had a wonderful competition in 2023 starting on 6th January when Galway overcame Leitrim on a scoreline of Leitrim 1-13 Galway 3-21.

Our two semi-finals were played on the 13th & 14th of January, the Rossies had too much for Sligo in the first semi-final which finished on a score line of Sligo 2-13 Roscommon 3-17. The following day Mayo beat Galway on a score line of Mayo 2-18 Galway 3-12.

Then on the 20th of January Mayo defeated Roscommon by four points in the final on a score line of Mayo 0-13 Roscommon 0-9.

In 2023 our new Connacht Hurling League featured the five counties of the province and Longford and New York also joined the fare. It was great to have New York join us and even better that they got so much out of it that they are returning for the 2024 event. Indoor Hurling is international thanks to the University of Galway Connacht GAA AirDome.

For the record Roscommon beat Sligo in the first quarter-final on a score line of Roscommon 0-31 Sligo 2-18. Leitrim overcame Mayo on a score line of Leitrim 4-23 Mayo 1-18. The visitor's, New York, over came Longford 3-30 to 0-16.

In the semi-finals Roscommon beat Leitrim 6-33 to 1-10 and a Galway Development team beat New York 0-30 to 0-17. In the final Galway overcame Roscommon 1-25 to 1-20 while in the Shield Final New York defeated Leitrim 3-29 to 1-16.

This year we're delighted that all seven counties are back competing in the hurling and London are joining the five home counties in the football. As usual the games will be "streamed" via ConnachtGAA.ie

Connacht Club Championship

We have just concluded the club championships and there has been a great interest in all the games. A sincere 'thank you' to all the clubs who competed and a special 'thank you' to the club officers especially club PRO's and secretaries who aided me on match day. Likewise to the committees in the various venues around the province, 'thank you'. Best of luck to St. Brigid's, Castlerea; St. Kevin's, Lahardane MacHales, Tooreen and Easkey Sea Blues who are all competing in the All-Ireland series as our provincial champions and I'd also like to wish Galway's St Thomas' all the best in the senior hurling too.

Connacht Senior Football Championship

As is now the norm our championship opens overseas firstly in London and later that night in New York. Last Easter Saturday Sligo took to the field in McGovern Park, Ruislip, and defeated London on a score-line of London 0-12 Sligo 2-20.

As usual there was a festive atmosphere in Ruislip

when thousands of emigrants joined the travelling Sligo supporters for the annual gathering.

The annual championship game in London is a special occasion for the many Connacht people resident there. The committee in Ruislip and London County Board deserve great credit for the way they cater for the regular supporters as well as the party goers who are often more interested in the post match celebrations!

In New York later that same day history was made when the Big Apple took a bite out of Leitrim and defeated them after a penalty shoot out. This was the first time that New York had recorded a victory in the Connacht Championship. The match was "streamed" by the council and was watched by people all over the world on GAAGO as they watched the production from our own "streaming" partner, **Rory O'Brien**, who looked after production and broadcast and was assisted by his very able number two **James Conlon**; while **Darren Frehill** of RTÉ was the match commentator.

On the following day, Easter Sunday in Hastings Insurance MacHale Park, we saw Roscommon overcome Mayo. In our two semi-finals Galway defeated Roscommon and Sligo overcame New York.

The Connacht final

The main shop window for Connacht GAA is our provincial final. This year we were in Hastings Insurance MacHale Park for the meeting of Galway and Sligo, their first Connacht Final meeting since 2007. This game provided wonderful symmetry to our championship as the first game and last games both featured Sligo, both featured Kildare's **Brendan Cawley** as the referee and the scoreboard read the same 2-20 to 0-12. The first day Sligo were victorious the last day they were defeated.

We were delighted to share the Connacht final day with our sisters in the LGFA and their Connacht Senior Final was the start to the day's proceedings. 'Thank you' to the LGFA Administrator, **Ita Hannon**, for her assistance to me in the lead up to the game and on match day.

The Connacht Final was shown live on RTÉ as were the Roscommon v. Mayo quarter-final and the Roscommon Galway semi-final.

Our jubilee team in 2023 were the Galway All-Ireland winners of 1998 and they were presented to a very appreciative crowd in Castlebar at the final. It was great to see them all looking hale and hearty and fit to play again.

Media Coverage

Media Coverage of our activities at all levels from schools and clubs to our county teams is getting more intense by the minute. We live in an era of instant news, stories appear, are not always checked, sometimes false and in the internet age trend quickly across social media. Now more than ever integrity and accuracy are important parts of the media tool box. The GAA through **Siobhán Brady** in Croke Park try to





ensure that media accreditation is only given to responsible and credible media. In this age we can't be responsible for every podcast, website or "citizen journalist" so it's important that people are careful about where they take their news from.

Our supporters like to get their updates as quickly as possible and I would like to praise again the work of our counties through their PRO's and communication committees.

Even with all the instant news we all still like to read the match reports in the papers, thankfully in the province we are very well served by an excellent provincial press. All local papers carry great GAA coverage and as a council we thank you for your continued interest in our games and as PRO I assure all members of the local media that any help I can give you I will happily give.

In addition to the local press we are also very well served by local radio. Stations like Midwest, Galway Bay, Shannonside and Ocean FM all provide great GAA coverage and many live matches during the year. Thank you for all your help and assistance over the year. We're delighted that you share our games and help to make the GAA the place where we all belong.

The national print media provide a very important piece to our jigsaw and to all your members 'thank you'.

Our photographers

I cannot present a report to convention without mentioning a great friend of mine who sadly left the playing fields of Connacht this year. **Michael McCormack** a proud Ballaghaderreen-man, who bled the primrose and blue was a noted press photographer who for many years operated on the Roscommon and Longford news, sport and PR beats. **Mickey Doodle** as we knew him was a proud GAA man who covered many great Connacht events. In addition we also lost **Anthony "Schillaci" Connolly** a photographer from Sligo and a proud Shamrock Gael's Club-man. God rest them both.

We are blessed in the province that so many photographers cover games for the local press. It's great to see the pictorial content in our papers so 'thank you' to all. In addition to the many local photographers I also would like to thank the two big national sports agencies INPHO and Sportsfile for their coverage and wish our good friend Ray all the best as he recovers from recent surgery.

I also want to thank the other National media the Radio be it Newstalk, RTÉ, Radio na Gaeltachta, Today FM who all are our broadcast partners. Of course television is also important so thank you to RTÉ and TG4 for all your coverage too.

We really appreciate the coverage given to our activities by the print media, radio and television, various websites, podcasts, etc. On behalf of the Council I 'thank' you all.

Our Connacht GAA website is a very important promotional tool and medium of communication. 'Thanks' to our Communications Officer **Brian** and

also our Operations Manager, **Adrian Hassett**, for their continued work on the website.

Into the West, the Council's bi-monthly magazine continues to produce excellent coverage of our activities. Our thanks to all the contributors and photographers who combine to provide the material for each edition.

The magazine is a credit to the expertise of the editor, **John Fallon**, his team in Media West and also the publisher, **Pádraig Corcoran**.

I thank the members of the PR Committee for their assistance and co-operation in various tasks. Their ideas, suggestions, are much appreciated and in 2024 we will make a few changes to the way we do things.

Scór

One of the aims of our organisation is the promotion of our language and culture. Scór is the perfect medium to accomplish this.

As provincial PRO one of the committees I sit on is the Provincial Scór Committee. I would like to praise the Leas-Uachtarán, **Vincent Neary**, who chairs the committee; Secretary, Diane; Treasurer, Anthony, and the other members of the committee who put in a great effort this year. Some members really went above and beyond the call and their efforts are a credit to themselves and those who appointed them to the positions.

There were wonderful provincial finals this year, Scór na nÓg in Ballinasloe and the Scór senior finals in Tubbercurry. They were both fantastic events. Well done to all who participated, congratulations to those that won and went on to represent us at the All-Ireland Finals in Killarney and a special Comhghairdeachas to those who won national titles.

Mar Fhocal Scóir

In conclusion, I'd like to thank the members of the council for their courtesy, kindness and generosity especially when it comes to the sharing of their time and knowledge. To my county colleagues, **Anthony, Seamus** and **John** 'thank you' for your assistance and friendship throughout the year, likewise to the other members of the council you really are a great bunch of people.

To the members of the management committee I believe we have worked well together to date and look forward to another great year in '24. I'd like to wish our President, John, and Galway's Christy Browne all the best as they depart from the management committee and wish Vincent all the best as he assumes the position of President of Connacht GAA.

To all the full-time employees of the council especially those based in the Connacht Centre of Excellence, 'thank you' for all your help especially, **John Prenty, Adrian Hassett, Cathal Cregg, Kurt Reinhardt, John Clancy, Brian, Daniel Forde and Oran Hester** and, of course, **Amanda** and **Attracta** in the office. You all make the job of the volunteer a lot easier especially by being available during volunteer hours!





PR & Media Report 2023

By **Brían Mangan**

2023 was another massively busy year for Connacht GAA both on the field and with all various other initiatives off the field we are engaged in. We have done our best to be as proactive as possible in generating as much publicity around our games and activities as possible online and in print. Some of the events that have gained major traction online include the ever popular Connacht GAA GO Games Days in Croke Park, Scór finals, Connacht GAA being awarded the Inspirational SEC Award at the SEAI awards as well as hosting Féile na nGael and Féile Peil na Óg again and the brilliant Walking Football initiative which took place in the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome in the summer. The various sustainability projects spearheaded by **Kurt Reinhardt** and his team have been brilliant to be involved in and I look forward to seeing how it's going to grow even bigger in '24. It was great to be able to gain publicity for these brilliant initiatives and events both through our own channels and also getting such good coverage in national and local media outlets!

I'd like to personally thank **John Prenty** and the hard-working COE staff for all the support and craic throughout the year. Special mention to our mighty Ops Manager, **Adrian Hassett**, who does absolute trojan work behind the scenes making sure every matchday and event runs smoothly with no fuss. Thanks also to the dedicated PRO's in each county who I work closely with all year and I rely so heavily on as well as our own provincial PRO, **Hugh Lynn**, who has been a pleasure to work alongside since he stepped into the role and helped me hugely in every facet of my job.



Matchday Promotions

We have continued to try and improve our match day promotions and updates during matches to try and generate as much interest as possible in the games through graphics and online posters and also photography of the games and trophy presentations. This year, again, a large part of our pre-game messaging continues to focus around raising awareness with supporters that you can no longer purchase your match tickets at the gate so we put a huge emphasis on reminding fans that tickets can now only be bought online. All match programmes outside of senior inter-county championship are free at the game and available online on the day of the games so this also helps get people interacting online around upcoming games. As with last year we have seen very pleasing growth and increased engagement on all our social channels and this is due to consistent quality content being contributed from many different sources so I'll take this opportunity to thank everyone who sent on any photos or copy for posting it's all a massive help.

Streaming

It was great to develop further on the progress made in our streaming services in 2023. We streamed almost every game possible with 33 games streamed altogether. It was brilliant to have the Connacht Hurling League for developing counties streamed in January alongside the FBD league and having New York flying over for it meant their fans back in the States could keep track of their games. We also streamed schools games and every minor and u-20 championship game that wasn't on TG4 which drew very healthy viewing numbers across the board. We can now clip highlights together and post almost in real time and as part of promotional packs for upcoming games so I'm excited to see where we can take things in 2024. **Rory O'Brien** and his team do a very professional job so huge thanks to him for helping everything run smoothly.

Coaching and Games

C&G is an area where we place a lot of emphasis on promotion to try and showcase all the fantastic work going on around the province. Each county has their own dedicated coaching account and they put huge work into posting photos and updates on what's going on locally. We also had new videos made as part of a promotional campaign to highlight the services clubs, teams and individuals can avail of at the COE. **Danny Forde**, and his team, have a new service around injury screening so a big push was made to get the word out about that as it is extremely beneficial for anyone who avails of it at a fraction of the price they would pay for it elsewhere. This will be a big priority for 2024 to try and find new and creative ways to get the message out to every club and team in Connacht that they should consider availing of the magnificent facilities and top class expertise available at the centre.





Biodiversity and Sustainability Report 2023

By Kurt Reinhardt

Connacht GAA, to the forefront

THE years 2022 through 2023 have seen a realisation of the relationship between our sustainability efforts and our games, facilities, programmes, planning and their implementation there of. The topics of **Biodiversity & Sustainability** have connotations that reverberate around the world, especially now that we are living in and through the catastrophic affects of climate change, up to know, happening, in the main, somewhere else! Every day we hear and read of various scary and eye-opening changes and impacts that are directly related to climate change, and if remedial action is not taken in the coming years and decades, even worse will unfold before our very eyes, and it might not be always on the television!

Definitely profound and terrifying scientific predictions and a wake-up call to all nations, but the linkage to our facilities and games has not been apparent until recently, and its association to the core business of games and facilities and what the Connacht GAA have been implementing over the last number of years is now becoming more apparent and relevant.

The playing of our games maybe, in the near to long-term future, come under threat from man-made burning of fossil fuels, i.e., non-renewable energy sources such as coal and its by-products, natural gas, crude oil, petroleum, etc., which has been scientifically proven to have a detrimental affect on the world's climate, ancient weather patterns becoming more unpredictable and unstable . . . thus our playing facilities are becoming more challenged with unforeseeable frequency. In 2023 the world has witnessed more extreme heat waves, more aggressive storms that have had a direct impact on the playing of our games at our facilities.

As a result our playing calendar has changed dramatically to keep up with these developments requiring more pitch availability, especially in the evenings and at more challenging months of the year for some age groups and codes. Clubs and counties have installed floodlighting to alleviate the schedule but that creates its own problems as most lights get installed on the main pitch offering it up for ploughing so a catch 22! Weather data shows us that there has been an increase of over 60mm of rainfall over the last number of years, it is projected to decrease and become more seasonal with Spring-Summer having less rainfall and Winter-Autumn increasing by 20% rainfall.

If these patterns continue, as the scientists have projected, and our playing calendar remains as is, with all teams in all codes in all age groups, looking

for facilities at the same time, it will become further challenge to get games played on schedule!

At the Connacht GAA Center of Excellence, with the implementation pitch allocation directives, which have been in place for some time, we have had no games called off in 2023 due to any bad weather conditions. The 2022-23 saw four named storms (seven in 2021-2022) and only a quarter of snow events in comparison to 2022. The global Climate Change models suggest, we in Ireland, will begin to see more violent storms as the North Atlantic winter patterns extend further south.

Our sustainability efforts at Connacht GAA in 2023 have been directly associated with ensuring games are played, and indeed, conserve the environment in tandem. For example: our tree planting initiatives of the last number of years, will provide adequate shelter for the pitches, and indeed, further protect the University of Galway Connacht GAA Dome. Our solar panels and the excess electricity produce, which is sold back into the grid, allow us to continue to offer free access to schools and colleges and a supplement charge of €100 to clubs and counties for rental of a pitch in 2023 during an energy and climate emergency!

Our Waste & Recycling Programmes allow Connacht GAA to continue to manage and expand the huge increase in people using the facilities which has jumped from 40,000 to 182,000 patrons since the University of Galway Connacht GAA Dome's inception. As you can imagine waste and visitor behaviour is something of a challenge. Our pitch and facilities lighting upgrades ensure we are efficient and increase the quality of lighting levels for our playing facilities, facilities whilst focusing on the environment and wildlife around them. The installation of new maintenance facilities allow us to cut the pitches more regularly thus allowing us to leave off cuts (short grass cuttings) on the pitch which in turn, return to the soil as nitrogen and help feed the pitches. Our Robot Line Marker, charged by solar power, now allows us to redeploy resources to other necessary operations, so we can continue to manage our ever-increasing visitor numbers. The extension to our walkway networks gives our patrons and visitors alike, a safe place to walk as they transverse their way to a particular pitch and thus enhancing their own wellbeing. Our Rain Water Harvesting supplies all the water to our toilets and our bees complete the loop! It is all interconnected!

Biodiversity

- Tree Planting, Shelter Belt for our Pitches and the University of Galway Dome



Biodiversity

A further 5,000 trees and hedgerows were planted in the year in Phase II of the tree-planting plan for the grounds. This initiative has seen progress to areas beyond the 2022 Pitch Shelter Belt Programme. We





ongoing guidance of Prunty Pitches, we have started to cut the main grass playing facilities much more regularly than ever before. This has led to leaving the grass clippings on the pitch that, in turn, return to the soil eventually as nitrogen. It also solves the challenge of disposing of waste grass off cuts which can be hazardous also. There are facets to our Pitch Maintenance Programme, one more important than the other but collectively they have a huge impact on the quality of the playing surface at the Connacht GAA Centre.

In addition to regularly cutting the pitch surface, 2023 seen the introduction of Ireland's first Robot Line Marker, Danish technology that has proved a huge success. We now have a pitch line marker with quality never witnessed previously - always straight, always white, clear, clean, defined by using a solar charged robot and using a third less paint!

Apart from not having a negative direct impact on the grounds, games and officials positively this previously was a three-man job to line and mark and at times an extremely difficult job to square off a pitch 100% accurately. Now we have a pitch lined in forty minutes perfectly everytime by one person. The resources previously needed to mark a pitch are now able to work on other priorities such as those around managing our increase in visitors.

now have over 13,000 native trees and hedgerows planted since early 2022 and look forward to the final phase in early 2024. Our volunteers have been central to this programme and I'd like to pay a especial recognition to them for their time and help. It has been a fascinating programme driven by volunteerism. The planting programme started out small in 2022 and now has evolved into a Tuesday and Thursday meet up for an Exwell exercise programme, tea and coffee. This would not have been possible without the assistance and guidance of Sinéad Reinhardt, Stuart Maloney and Mary Prenty, along with our Partners UPMC, Trees on the Land and Coffee Perfection. The enjoyment and comradeship has been inspirational not to mention the huge health benefits for the volunteers. The social prescription element born from a tree planting programme should be witness to be believed.

Biodiversity:

Pitch Maintenance-Robot Line Marking & Regular Pitch Cutting

Our sustainability efforts have had a direct impact on our playing facilities and none more so than cutting the surface. In 2023, under the



Biodiversity:

Walkway Extensions

The year 2023 also witnessed an extension of 800 mtrs to our walkways around the center with the assistance of Clár and Mayo Co. Co. Minister Heather Humphries visited the centre to turn the sod and the programme has recently been completed. This has opened up an already thriving walkway for our visitors and members. It has given a safe floodlight walkway where visitors can come and enjoy the center and games whilst they are here, a massive addition to the center but also to the wellbeing and health of visitors, patrons, the overall community and our members.





Waste & Recycling Programmes

Maintaining ability to manage visitor numbers

With the huge success of the University of Galway Connacht GAA Airdome and year-on-year increase use of our outside pitch facilities, visitor numbers have increased exponentially. This is a major philip for the Centre of and, indeed, our Association but from a management and planning point of view it brings several unexpected challenges especially when it comes to peoples' behaviour and waste.

Our initial efforts to deal with these challenges was around understanding the waste produced at the centre better and the types of waste left behind. With the help of the Regional Waste Authority (www.waste.ie) we undertook a Waste Audit that collected data regarding waste products wnbrubf from the center. The audit's findings led to several effective solutions: such as ending the use of black bags so we could see what was in the bins; segregating recycling items more efficiently; promoting our waste programme and educating our visitors, patrons and indeed politely highlighting unacceptable and acceptable behaviour to them. These initial novel ideas over a three-year plan period have had fantastic results lifting recycled material left by visitors from 24% of 40,000 visitors pre -University of Galway Connacht GAA Dome to now recycling 56% of waste left by 182,000 visitors in 2023!

I would like to thank all our visitors to the center who are complying with these initiatives and I would appeal to those who have not yet engaged with these initiatives please do so as it is a major part of our daily environmental responsibilities at the center. All these initiatives, such placing rubbish in a bin, segregating rubbish and placing it in the right bin, and even down to small gestures such as cleaning up after yourself or giving a dressing-room a quick brushing with the provided sweeping brushes, etc., create a huge positive impact on the environment and contribute to a better experience of our facilities to the next person or team using the Centre of Excellence facilities thus allow us to continue to implement our ever-improving Environmental Management Strategy.



Waste



Transport:

EV Charging

We have installed 2 x 22kw Electric Vehicle charging points at the center for our visitors and facilities clientele. These allow us to redirect any solar production during the day to our charging points thus providing a convenient charging points at the centre, and hopefull, we envisage adding more points in the future. Located with priority car parking at the front of the University of Galway Connacht GAA Dome costing a nominal €0.28c a unit, they are now operational. For further detail please contact our staff on site.



Transport

Transport: Car Parks

With the increase in visitor and patron numbers in 2022/2023 the allocation and management of our parking facilities has become a necessity. With that in mind we have created and made available sustainable car parking areas at the front of the center with capacity for an additional 300 cars. Our other biodiversity programme of tree planting now envelopes these car parks and as they mature will, no doubt, be of huge benefit to the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence and visitors to games along with the biodiversity of our environment.

Water



Water

From monitoring water consumption at the centre, we identified several areas of improvement. February, 2023, saw a large increase in heating costs not pro-rata with the number of teams showering or indeed incliment weather conditions . . . rather our invesgations uncovered quite a lot of taps been left running and hot water being wasted, just going down the sink with nobody there using it, a double whammy where the apparent waste of heated water - at 28 liters per hour - after the cost of heating it, was just going down the drain!

This review of heated water consumption lead to the installation of push taps throughout the complex and we have seen great tangible benefits accruing already not alone around water consumption and conservation but also energy cost . . . another small win!

2023 also seen substantial increases in waste challenges especially around single-use plastic disposable bottles. We hope in 2024 to introduce a water conservation programme that will directly impact single-use plastic disposable bottle challenges. In the year ahead we also hope to install Water Fountains, again push taps, throughout the Centre of Excellence which we hope will motivate our visitors and patrons to use their own refillable bottles and therefore allowing us to ban single use plastics at the center. This will have untold benefits and a major positibe impact on the environment and our center and indeed, playing surfaces. One of the biggest challenges we have is people leaving plastic bottles on the pitch and dug outs that has an impact the next team to use our facilities and, indeed, our maintenance teams as the pitch needs to be clear of debris prior to cutting or marking. Again, forgive me for repeating myself, small small steps but huge impacts on those around you whether it be the next player or visitor and, of course, the environment.





Energy:

Solar & Export

2023 saw the installation of Phase II of our Energy Master Plan and a further 150kw of ground-mounted solar panels beside our outdoor all weather pitch. This additional 150kw now brings our current capacity to 300kw of solar energy onsite. This is enough to power the University of Galway Connacht GAA Dome, main building and export enough energy to power a further 20 homes! Connacht GAA is the first in Ireland to formally export power to the grid through the successful completion of a Category B Export Licence. It is an integral part of our road map for sustainability both environmental and financial. Phase three of the project will see a further 150kw of renewable power onsite through various technologies and we look forward to delivering them in the coming years.

In October, 2022, after a year of preliminary investigations, due diligence and planning, Connacht Council formally launch their 10-Year Energy Master Plan with the guidance of SEAI. This was a significant milestone on Connacht GAA's journey as it lays out a scientific roadmap for the next 10 years which has direct impact on our environment and indeed our games and the sustainability of them. The outward facing side of the Master Plan will see Connacht GAA assist and guide our County Boards in Connacht to embrace and implement their own plans for the clubs and grounds in the region ultimately enhancing those facilities and positioning them as the leader within their communities. Connacht GAA Center of Excellence is a center and a technology center for understanding these possibilities, experiencing what can be done, getting an understanding for best practice and inspiring those in our GAA family and community to enhance their grounds, their communities and our environment. 2024 will see Connacht GAA begin formal reporting of our Carbon Emissions, this is two years ahead of time when in 2026 the Government plan to enforce Carbon Reporting. Depending on how this is implemented there could be a value to these credits, Connacht GAA is already reporting this information internally and positioned well to trade our credits if and when the time comes as another step in our overall sustainability programme.



Energy:

HVO (Hydrogerated Vegetable Oil) – Floodlights & Emergency Back-Up

Historically we have powered our floodlighting and emergency back-up systems, at the center by diesel generators. 2023 saw a major review of this process. It lead Connacht GAA through a review of costs, running costs of a pitch for floodlighting, maintenance benefits and challenges and environmental impact. Along with the guidance of SEAI and the Connacht GAA 10-year Energy Master Plan which was launched in 2022, the following was identified regarding running costs:

- * **Low use model: 1.5 hours of floodlighting x 3 nights a week x 22 weeks a year = 99hrs**
- * **High use model: 1.5 hours of floodlighting x 4 nights a week x 30 weeks a year =240hrs**

From our review it was found that if you run your floodlights for under 160 hrs per year it was cheaper to continue to run on diesel rather than a costly upgrade to 3 Phase electricity for example.

A further examination into the data showed that when we include Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil as a substitute or an alternative to diesel the cost was negative or cheaper. Another big finding was clubs not understanding their electricity provider bills properly, there is now a free tool to assist which can be found on the Green Clubs Portal which is free to access.

Connacht GAA have now moved all diesel requirements to HVO and are seeing an excellent performance from it over the last few months. This was a simple step to change over which only included an order process there was no capital requirement or funding need and has a huge impact on our environment from an emissions point of view but also from an environmental risk point of view as HVO will not contaminate surrounding lands, pitches and habitats if there is a leak or spill.

Energy: S

EAI 2023 Inspirational Energy Community

On the 17th November, 2023, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) announced the winners of the 2023 SEAI Energy Awards while celebrating 20 years of the event. 2023 saw Connacht GAA announced as the winner of the “Inspirational Energy Community Award”.



Since the very first ceremony there have been 2,100 applicants, 190 award winners and collectively achieving around €650 million in energy savings. This year, there were 114 applications, 40 finalists, who collectively reduced energy consumption by 16% saving €50 million in energy costs. The renewable energy produced by the 2023 entrants is equivalent to powering over 400,000 homes per year. This is a huge accolade for Connacht GAA to have won, a first for the GAA nationally and one that we are very proud of.

A lot more to do as we continue in the years ahead to role out our Biodiversity, Energy & Sustainability Master Plan in 2024!





The projects in 2023 and implementation of the programs would not be possible without the assistance of the following, Our fantastic Volunteers, MSLETB, Mary Prently, Brian Mangan, John Harrington, Sinead Reinhardt, Stuart Maloney, Brendan Heaney Tobin Consultancy, Tadgh Buckley Ballyhaunis Bee Club, SEAI, Regional Waste Authority, Trees on the Land, Mayo Co Co, North West Regional Climate Action Office (CARO), Mayo North East Leader, CLAR.

Green Club Programme

Connacht GAA has positioned itself as the exemplar site within the GAA Green Clubs Programme a technology hub where clubs and members can come and experience for themselves for their own projects. Connacht GAA Center of Excellence has hosted various regional events and by actioning our Energy Master Plan we are now outward facing and assisting our clubs and county board with their endeavours.



The Green Club Programme was established to support Gaelic Games clubs in taking simple and effective sustainability action in their grounds and activities. The programme is structured around the themes of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel & Transport and is designed to promote sustainability awareness and action in GAA clubs and communities.

Phase I of the Green Club Programme ran from 2021 to 2023 with the participation of over 30 clubs from across Ireland. These trail-blazing Green Clubs established Green Teams, carried out club audits and engaged in exciting sustainability partnerships and projects. The experience and input of the Phase I Green Clubs led to the development of the GAA's first-ever Green Club Toolkit

The Green Club Programme is a partnership between the GAA, LGFA and Camogie Association and local authorities across Ireland. This partnership had its origins in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Champions Programme launched by the Department of Communication, Climate Action, and Environment in September 2019. Both the GAA and Carlow County Council were among the twelve inaugural SDG champions and their initial collaboration led to the signing of a Green Club Memorandum of Understanding between the local authority County and City Management Association (CCMA) and the Gaelic Games organisations and an ongoing-working relationship between the GAA and the Climate Action Regional Offices. The GAA is continuing as an SDG Champion in the current iteration of the programme for 2023/24, with Clare County Council now representing the Local Authority sector. For more info visit

<https://www.gaa.ie/stories/gaa-announced-as-sdg-champion/>

Both the Green Club Programme and the Green Club Toolkit have been developed with the expert input of organisations and agencies from across the island of Ireland. Details of these are included under the 'Partners' tab above

What is the Green Club Toolkit and where can I find it?

The GAA Green Club Toolkit was launched in December, 2022. It contains resources, advice and guidance, tailored especially for GAA clubs and members, in the areas of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel & Transport. The Toolkit also contains inspiring, practical case studies from Green Clubs from across the island of Ireland.

The Toolkit is available to all GAA, LGFA and Camogie clubs and members at:

<https://learning.gaa.ie/greenclub>

What do Green Clubs do?

Take a look at some of the Green Club Case Studies at <https://learning.gaa.ie/greenclub/casestudies>

For more info email: greenclubs@gaa.ie





Tuarascáil Coiste Éisteachta Connacht CLG 2023

le Déaglán Ó Buacháin (Rúnaí)

COISTE Éisteachta Connacht CLG has as its brief in accordance with Rule 3.30 TO 2023, to adjudicate on all Disciplinary Matters where a hearing is prescribed and requested, relating to the enforcement of rules arising from matters under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Council including the activities of the Provincial Schools Committee. It shall also hear appeals against decisions of the various County Committees under its jurisdiction.

This year all cases, both within the province and those that ultimately led to hearings at higher levels, were successfully conducted via MS Teams Platform. This has afforded ease of access to hearings at relatively short notice which is now vital, considering that we are operating with the split season; club action ongoing simultaneously in all of our counties with minimal breaks in between. Online hearings continue to ease travel burdens on constituent parties.

I wish to thank the members of the committee who sat on these cases across the playing season. While the committee's work is still ongoing with three cases to be heard and concluded at the time of compiling this report on November 30th, the vast majority of the committee's work was conducted during the playing of the various County Club Championships across the province.

Decisions

A breakdown of the various matters that came before the committee is shown below. It should be noted that in all cases brought before the committee, whether by individual or by clubs, they have been chronicled below in accordance with the county from which they originated.

It should also be noted that any disciplinary case that occurs at inter-county senior level, whether at Allianz Leagues or the various championships, these case are dealt with by the Central Hearings Committee.

Hearings

Contae	Submitted	Penalty set aside	Penalty Imposed	Penalty Imposed but less serious than alleged
Gaillimh	13	2	7	4
Liatroim	0	0	0	0
Maigheo	2	0	2	0
Roscomáin	1	0	0	1
Sligeach	2	1	1	0
Coláistí	0	0	0	0
Total Appeals	18	3	10	5

Two decisions (on top next column) were the subject of appeals to the Central Appeals Committee this year. CAC upheld both decisions of Connacht

Hearings Committee. One decision was the subject of a request for arbitration brought in front of the Disputes Resolution Authority that, after an oral hearing, dismissed the claimant's claim.

Appeals

Contae	Submitted	Appeal Upheld	Appeal Lost	Appeal Ruled out of Order or Not Allowed
Gaillimh	13	2	7	4
Liatroim	0	0	0	0
Maigheo	2	0	2	0
Roscomáin	1	0	0	1
Sligeach	2	1	1	0
Coláistí	0	0	0	0
Total Appeals	18	3	10	5

In dealing with the various cases as outlined above, members of Coiste Éisteachta Connacht who were from any county that was represented at any hearing stood aside from adjudicating on such a given case. While this may have put a strain at times on the human resources of the committee, all cases were met with and dealt with in a satisfactory manner. For this we are greatly appreciative of the efforts and sacrifices made by all members of the committee to ensure that our business was completed. On occasions this duty had to be met at short notice and we are indebted to all. Across the cases a quorum was reached with the varied engagement of a combination of eleven members of the Connacht Hearings Committee during the past year.

I wish to thank the various members listed below for their cooperation and courtesy with me, as rúnaí, to the committee over the past year. It was a pleasure dealing with you all. I also wish to thank the officers of the various clubs and county committees across the province that I have had dealings with in carrying out this duty. The gratitude of the committee is also extended to John Prenty, Rúnaí, Comhairle Connacht CLG, for all his help and assistance over 2023. On behalf of Coiste Éisteachta Connacht I wish all parties associated with Connacht CLG and throughout the province a healthy and successful 2024.

Baill Coiste Éisteachta Connacht 2023

The following assisted with the various cases during the year: **Tod Ó Mathúna**, Cathaoirleach (Maigheo), **Breandán Ó Broin** (Maigheo); **Gearóid Ó Lorcáin** (Gaillimh), **Maitiú Mac Giolla Rua** (Gaillimh); **Séamus Ó Meachair** (Roscomáin), **Mícheal Ó Holáin** (Roscomáin); **Eamonn Ó Maoláin** (Sligeach); **Seán Mac Samhraín** (Liatroim), **Traolach Ó Baoil** (Liatroim); **Déaglán Ó Buacháin**, Rúnaí (Liatroim). Additional Panel Members: **Aodh Ó Rudáin** (Maigheo); **Eamon Ó Campion** (Roscomáin), **Antóin Ó Flathartaigh** (Roscomáin); **Seán Ó Fiannaí** (Maigheo); **Mícheal Ó Muineacháin** (Gaillimh); **Risteard Ó Braonáin** (Sligeach), **Pádraig Ó Grádaigh** (Sligeach).





Post-Primary Schools Report 2022/'23

By Aodh Ó Rodáin

AT the Connacht Post-Primary Schools meeting on the 16/05/2022 it was agreed to draw-up a programme of fixtures for 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' & 'E' in football and 'A', 'B', 'C' & 'D' in hurling, with county competitions to be run off in the first school term. Junior competitions to be U-17 in hurling and football and run-off before Christmas to avoid a clash with county U-17 development activities. With the help of the office staff the programme of fixtures was drawn up.

A special effort was made to avoid clashes between hurling and football fixtures. The programme was circulated to all schools with proposed dates for all competitions. Follow-up emails were sent at various intervals to all schools asking for results of games played. The response to these requests was disappointing. As a result 'phone calls had to be made to find out if schools had played any games in time to meet the quarter-final or semi-final deadlines. We appreciate that difficulties will arise in schools and games will be postponed. Rearranged games should be done in cooperation with our office. Pitch problems created some difficulties but these were largely solved by the availability of pitches here at the Connacht GAA Centre.

Even with the various difficulties we have managed to get all competitions completed (although a little belated). I want to thank the office staff for all their help. Some people go above and beyond the call of duty to get things done. I would like to thank all clubs who made their pitches available and our referees for making themselves available in the middle of the day to officiate at our games. 'Thanks' to the press and local radio for the coverage they gave to our games. We would like to thank all schools for their cooperation in the running of our games.

Congratulations to all our winners of their competitions. Special congratulations to all senior winners and well done in the All-Ireland series. Summerhill, Sligo, had a great year winning Connacht 'A' Football and reaching the All-Ireland final by beating St. Brendan's, Killarney, on a scoreline of 2-11 to 1-11. Omagh CBS proved too strong for them in the All-Ireland final. Summerhill can be proud of their efforts in 2022/23.

Another Sligo team St. Attracta's, Tubbercurry, hit the high spots by winning the Connacht Senior 'B' Football Championship. They can consider themselves unlucky to lose out in extra time in the All-Ireland semi-final.

In Senior 'C' Dunmore CS won the Connacht championship in style. They lost out to St. Pat's, Castleisland, by a single point 3-17 to 4-13 in the All-Ireland series.

In Senior 'D' Our Lady's, Belmullet, were crowned Connacht Champions. In the All-Ireland series they lost narrowly to St. Joseph's, Spanish Point, by a scoreline of 3-15 to 2-15.

Hurling 'A' Connacht Champions were Presentation, Athenry. They reached the All-Ireland final with a great win over Thurles CBS in the All-Ireland semi-final, but

St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny, proved too strong for them in the All-Ireland final. St. Kieran's College also accounted for St. Raphael's in the All-Ireland quarter-final.

Senior 'B' Hurling Champions, Holy Rosary played Bandon in the All-Ireland semi-final losing out on a scoreline of 1-16 to 2-08.

Hurling 'C' Connacht Champions were Clarin College. Their opponents in the All-Ireland semi-final were Mitchelstown. Clarin College were unlucky to lose by 2 points with a scoreline of 1-16 to 1-14.

Senior 'D' Hurling was a new competition in Connacht and at All-Ireland level. Connacht 'D' Champions were Convent of Mercy, Woodford. In the All-Ireland semi-final they lost out to Coláiste na Trocaire, Rathkeale.

A full list of winners and runners-up in all competitions is printed below.

A special word of thanks to Connacht GAA for their help and support in 2022/2023, including their help in the distribution of equipment (sliotars and footballs) to schools during the year.

Connacht Colleges 2022-2023

Football Championship

Senior

	Winners	Runners Up
'A'	Summerhill College, Sligo 0-16	Colaiste Bhaile Chlair 1-9
'B'	St. Attracta's CS, Tubbercurry 0-11	Roscommon CBS 1-7
'C'	Dunmore CS 4-12	Ballinamore CS 1-7
'D'	Our Lady's College, Belmullet 0-11	St. Cuan's, Castleblakeney 0-8
'E'	Elphin CC 3-12	Lough Allen College 1-14

Junior

'A'	St. Gerald's, Castlebar 1-14	Roscommon CBS 0-11
'B'	St. Nathy's, Ballaghaderreen 3-14	Ballinrobe CS 1-8
'C'	Ballinamore CS 1-13	St. Jarlath's College, Tuam 1-10
'D'	St. Mary's College, Ballymote 4-10	Mohill CC 1-8
'E'	Elphin CC 3-4	Lough Allen College 1-4

Juvenile

'A'	Colman's, Claremorris 3-16	Summerhill College, Sligo 3-14
'B'	Presentation College, Headford 2-10	Roscommon CBS 2-7
'C'	St. Tiernan's, Crossmolina 1-9	Ballyhaunis CS 0-7
'D'	Roscommon CC 4-18	Scoil Mhuire & Phdraic, Swinford 1-8
'E'	Colaiste an Eachreidh 1-5	St. Killian's 2-7

1st Year

'A'	St. Gerald's, Castlebar 2-13	St. Joseph's College Galway 1-9
'B'	Roscommon CBS 2-6	St. Muredach's College 0-3
'C'	HRC Mountbellew 3-9	St. Tiernan's Crossmolina 0-12
'D'	Clarin College 7-7	Seamount College Kinvara 4-3
'E'	not played	

Hurling Championship

Senior

	Winners	Runners Up
'A'	Presentation College, Athenry 0-19	St. Raphael's College, Loughrea 2-10
'B'	HRC, Mountbellew 0-13	Portumna CS 0-12
'C'	Clarin College 2-15	St. Killian's New Inn 0-16
'D'	Mercy College, Woodford 1-13	St. Gerald's, Castlebar 0-12

Junior

'A'	St. Raphael's College, Loughrea 1-17	Presentation College, Athenry 1-7
'B'	HRC Mountbellew 4-11	Calasanctius College, Oranmore 1-15
'C'	Colaiste Mhuire, Ballygar 8-15	Colaiste Chroí Mhuire an Spideal 2-10
'D'	St. Gerald's, Castlebar 2-8	Jesus & Mary, Enniscrone 1-5

Juvenile

'A'	St. Raphael's College, Loughrea 1-16	Presentation College, Athenry 0-10
'B'	Clarin College 4-15	Portumna CS 1-5
'C'	St. Killian's, New Inn 4-18	Roscommon CBS 1-12

1st Year

'A'	St. Raphael's, Loughrea 2-17	Presentation College, Athenry 1-7
'B'	Clarin College 3-15	Portumna CS 1-6
'C'	not played	





Tuairisc an Rúnaí Cumann na mBunscol Chonnacht 2023



By **Aodán Ó Caoimh, Rúnaí**

Chairperson: **Declan Kirrane** (Maigheo)
Secretary: **Aodán Ó Caoimh** (Maigheo)
Treasurer: **David Dillon** (Sligeach)
PRO: **Mick Maye** (Sligeach)
Dev. Officer: **Cyril Mannion** (Gaillimh)
Handball Officer: **Fearghas Mac Lochlainn** (Gaillimh)
Connacht GAA Delegate: **Gerry O'Gara** (Ros Comáin)
Committee: **Mícheál Mac Thiarnáin** (Liatroim),
Gerry Hussey (Gaillimh), **Ciarán Kennedy** (Liatroim),
Adrian Collins (Ros Comáin)

Coaching & Games Development

Allianz Cumann na mBunscol and Comhairle Chonnacht CLG were very much to the fore in terms of coaching in primary schools, especially during the final term of the school year. Cathal Cregg (Provincial Games Manager) was instrumental with coordinating the Skills for Schools Programme. Credit also must go to the many teachers and children who logged in on a weekly basis and took part in this hugely successful initiative. The online format involved coaching sessions on YouTube and was especially appealing to many rural schools and meant that Gaelic Games, again, took their central place in the lives of primary school children. A total of 227 teachers from schools throughout Connacht signed up for this programme which commenced on October 23rd. Onsite coaching visits also took place in our primary schools and these were coordinated by the County Coaching and Games Staff - Dennis Carr (Gaillimh), Padraic Mitchell (Ros Comáin), Billy McNicholas (Maigheo), Thomas Keenan (Liatroim) and Liam Óg Gormley (Sligeach).

Mini Exhibition Games

In 2023 our exhibition games at Connacht SFC were greatly welcomed at all venues. Normally these games are a huge success and, in many ways, the highlight of the Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Chonnacht year in terms of promoting involvement and positive participation in Gaelic Games. Exhibition games were held at the Mayo v Roscommon Connacht SFC quarter-final fixture on April 9th; at the Roscommon v Galway semi-final on April 23rd and at the Sligo v New York semi-final at Markievicz Park on April 22nd. Our Connacht SFC Final exhibition games involved players from the competing counties and was played at the Sligo v Galway SFC Final on May 7th. All-in-all, 160 girls and boys participated with Young Whistlers from Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo as referees. The Connacht final exhibition games in Hastings Insurance MacHale Park were a marvellous occasion and the participating children enjoyed the day.

Handball

2023 marked a return to provincial Cumann na mBunscol competitions in handball after the global pandemic. Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Chonnacht Handball Finals were held on February 11th in Collooney and Drumcliffe Handball Clubs in Co. Sligo - a special word of thanks to both clubs for the use of their fine facilities. Many 'thanks' to all who gave freely of their time and refereed the games on the day. Children from schools across the province participated with all five counties being represented. A Fun Day was had by all and the standard of handball was very high.

Rounders

It was decided a number of years ago that we would

endeavour to better promote the game of Rounders, which, at the time, seemed to have been somewhat forgotten about in our primary schools. It is hoped that a Rounders Participation Day for primary school children from all Connacht counties will be held by the end of the school year in the Connacht COE in Began.

Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta

National Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Week took place from June 12th - 16th. We had a massive response across the whole country with hundreds of schools participating in a hugely successful week. Daily activities were set in Hurling, Camogie, Gaelic football, Handball and Rounders by some prominent inter-county stars such as Tipperary's Tommy Dunne, Armagh's Greg McCabe and Emma Cleary from Cork. Participating schools were asked to share content on social media using #AllianzCNMBweek - there was huge engagement on social media with these daily activities with many schools using @ConnachtCnamB. Our menu of activities proved very popular with schools participating in skills challenges, recreating famous match scenes, interviews with teachers, art competitions, jersey days and much more. The week was an incredible success and we cannot wait to do it all over again next year!

Ciarán Crowe and Joe Lyons (Cathaoirleach of Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta) have compiled Cumann na mBunscol - 50 Bliain ag Fás (a history of Cumann na mBunscol 1971-2021). Due to the global pandemic the publication was delayed until November 2023. Copies of this publication were recently sent to all primary schools. Much historical information was gathered from all Connacht counties and great credit goes to both serving and former members of the five Connacht county committees and Cumann na mBunscol Chonnacht for their contributions.

Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Day at the Dome

Our Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Day at the Dome was held on September 18th. Primary school children from all over the province took part in lots of fun Gaelic Games activities and got to visit the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome at Connacht GAA COE in Began. The schools taking part this year were Runnamoate NS & Lisanskey NS (Ros Comáin), Scoil Íosa NS, Ballyhaunis (Maigheo), Lavally NS & Browns Grove NS (Gaillimh), St. Manchan's NS, Mohill (Liatroim) and Moylough NS (Sligeach). Approximately 200 children participated in orienteering, fundamental movement skills, rounders, indoor hurling and football skills/games. The day was a great success and much credit goes to Cumann na mBunscol officials from each county who coordinated the event. Many thanks also to Cathal Cregg (Provincial Games Development Manager) and Games Managers/GPOs for their support on the day. Fad saoil ar fad!

GAA

We are very fortunate in having an excellent working relationship with Comhairle Chonnacht CLG. This is due mainly to the great support of John Murphy, John Prenty, Adrian Hassett, Cathal Cregg and the Games Managers in each county. Gerry O'Gara, Cumann na mBunscol delegate to Connacht GAA, keeps us informed of all issues pertaining to our organisation.

Ar seacht míle buíochas do Chomhairle Chonnacht CLG for all their help and support in the past and Allianz Cumann na mBunscol looks forward to working together in promoting our games in a safe and enjoyable way for all primary children in 2024.





Comhairle Ardoideachais Connacht Annual Report 2023

By Pádraig Mac Dhorcai

GAELIC Games continue to play an important role in student life across the various third level campuses in the province with many participation opportunities available to students of all levels. These opportunities provided by third level clubs, help students integrate themselves into campus life and provide an environment for those who were attending campus for the first to make friends and participate in competitive. Semester 1 of 2022/2023 seen a return to full higher education competitions following Covid-19 restrictions and a staggered return to pre-Covid-19 levels of campus activity in 2021/2022. In last year's report I gave details of the 2022/2023 league campaigns by our colleges. In this year's report I will detail the major achievements by our higher education institutions in the various championships for the 2022/2023 academic year plus the leagues for the 2023/2024 academic year.

Football Championship: 2022/2023

Connacht Comhairle Ardoideachais were represented by University of Galway, ATU Galway and ATU Sligo in the Sigerson Cup. Holders, University of Galway had wins over Maynooth University and UCD to progress to the quarter-finals, where they lost out to eventual finalists University of Limerick. ATU Galway exited at the second-round qualifier stage following defeats to TU Dublin and University College Cork. ATU Sligo had a hard-fought victory over MTU Kerry in the opening round, a win that saw them retain their Sigerson status for the 2023/2024 season. They exited the competition at the Rd. 3 qualifier stage following defeats to St. Mary's University College and MTU Cork. ATU, Connemara, took part in the Corn Comhairle Ardoideachais going all the way to the final where they lost out narrowly to the Law Society.



ATU Sligo and University of Galway entered teams in the Intermediate Football Championship with University of Galway defeating ATU Sligo in the opening round before exited the competition in the next round against University of Limerick.

Connacht Comhairle Ardoideachais organised a very successful Connacht Junior Championship with ATU Galway, University of Galway and ATU Sligo participating. After a round robin section that was hard-fought ATU Sligo and ATU Galway emerging to contest the final. After an absorbing final that went all the way to penalties, ATU Sligo emerged victorious and progressed to the All-Ireland semi-final where they lost out to Queens University.

The Freshers 1 Championship in football is organised on a regional basis with ATU Galway, University of Galway and ATU Sligo draw together in the same group with ATU Donegal. After some fiercely-contested games ATU Sligo and University of Galway emerged from the group stage. Both teams faced tough quarter finals with University of Galway travelling to Maynooth where they lost by 5 points; while ATU Sligo were well-beaten at home by DCU Dochas Eireann.

In the Freshers 'B' Championship ATU Sligo and University of Galway were drawn in the same group with Maynooth University with University of Galway joining the Kildare college in the quarter-finals after the round robin stage. They exited the competition at this stage following defeat to Ulster University.

Leagues, 2023-2024

In Division 1 of the football leagues, University of Galway won the title defeating Ulster University in the final. Congratulations to all involved in University of Galway GAA on this wonderful achievement. ATU Sligo reached the quarter-finals of this competition but were defeated by University of Limerick at this stage. ATU Galway exited the competition at the group stages but were successful in retaining their Division 1 status for the 2024/2025 academic year.

ATU Galway, ATU Connemara, ATU Mayo and University of Galway also had teams entered in Division 4 of the Senior League with ATU Galway progressing to quarter-final stage of this competition.

In the Intermediate League University of Galway progressed to the quarter-final stage where they lost out to University of Limerick. ATU Sligo exited this competition at the group stage.

In Freshers Division 1 Football, University Of Galway and ATU Sligo qualified for the quarter-final stage where they lost out to University of Cork and University of Limerick respectively. ATU Galway exited at the group stages of this competition.

ATU Sligo and University of Galway both had teams in the Division 3 of the Freshers Football League with University of Galway progressing to the quarter-final stage where they lost out to University College Cork.





Hurling Championship, 2022-2023

University of Galway and ATU Galway participated in the Fitzgibbon Cup where both emerged from their respective groups. ATU Galway were defeated at the quarter-final stage by University College Cork. University of Galway progressed to the final following victories over SETU Carlow and University College Cork. In the final University of Limerick proved too strong but great credit goes to the players, management, and officials in University of Galway for reaching this stage of the competition.

ATU Sligo and ATU Connemara participated in the Fergal Maher competition with both teams progressing to the finals' weekend. ATU Sligo were defeated at the semi-final by RCSI by the narrowest of margins. ATU Connemara qualified for the final where they proved too strong for RCSI. Congratulations to the players, management and officials in ATU Connemara on this wonderful achievement.

University of Galway also had a team participating in the Intermediate Hurling Championship but exited the competition at Rd. 2 following a narrow defeat to DCU Dochas Eireann. They also participated in the Junior Hurling Championship where they lost out in the opening round to Mayo University.

In the Fresher's 1 Hurling Championship University of Galway emerged victorious following a comprehensive defeat of University of Limerick in the final. Congratulations to the players, management, and officials in University of Galway on this wonderful achievement. ATU Galway and ATU Sligo took part in the Fresher's 2 Hurling Championship where they exited the competition at the group stages.

Leagues, 2023-2024

University of Galway and ATU Galway had teams in Division 1 of the Senior Hurling League with University of Galway progressing to the final at the time of the production of this report where they will face University of Limerick. ATU Galway exited this competition at the group stage.

University of Galway also had a team in Division 2 of the Senior Hurling League and progressed to the quarter-final stage losing out to University College Cork. ATU Sligo and ATU Connemara were drawn together in the same group in Division 3 of the Senior Hurling League with ATU Connemara progressing to the quarter-final stage where they were beaten by University College Dublin.

University of Galway competed in Division 1 of the Fresher's Hurling League where they progressed to the semi-final stage losing by the slimmest of margins to DCU Dochas Eireann. ATU Sligo and ATU Galway competed in Division 2 of the Fresher's Hurling League with ATU Galway progressing to the quarter-final stage where they were defeated by University College Cork.

In summary, congratulations to all of the successful colleges on their victories in 2022/2023. The level of activity detailed above demonstrates the hard work going on in the various institutions to promote Gaelic Games and to provide ample playing opportunities for players of all levels. This is a credit to all volunteers and staff in those institutions. We look forward to what hopefully will be a successful 2024 championship for all our colleges.

College Bursaries

The Connacht GAA Student Bursary Scheme resumed in 2022/2023 with a record 62 promising young players and administrators awarded bursaries. A presentation ceremony was held on the 3rd of March at the Connacht GAA Centre to mark the awards. Connacht Council are too

be commended for their unwavering support of the scheme which is entering its 14th year. Applications for the 2023/2024 scheme have now closed and awards will be made to the successful candidates in due course.

Games Promotion Officers (GPOs)

The ongoing efforts of the three GPO's working in the higher education institutions in the province must be acknowledged. Damien Curley (ATU Galway), Michael Harte (ATU Sligo) and Michael O'Connor (University of Galway) provide crucial support and guidance to the GAA clubs in each of their institutions. Credit should also go to Nigel Jennings, Sports Officer in ATU Castlebar, for his efforts in promoting Gaelic Games there. They ensure maximum effort is put into the promotion of Gaelic Games within the institutions and ensure the smooth running of the clubs. The institutions and the provincial council are to be commended for their past and ongoing support of the GPOs initiative.

Challenges ... The Future

There are still significant challenges facing our constituent institutions many of which I addressed in last year's report but are still relevant now.

Recruitment of players continues to be a challenge. The cost of living and accommodation crisis, however, has seen students make the choice to stay local which has helped our constituent colleges this year in terms of recruitment. Comhairle Ardoideachais Connacht would ask counties in the province to highlight the advantages for all players to study locally. It cuts down on their travel time for training and matches and should increase their ability to ensure both academic and sporting success. Our constituent colleges offer as wide and varied a range of courses as institutions outside of the province. These courses stand up to scrutiny in terms of their quality and relevance when compared to any others and the graduates are highly regarded in terms of employability by employers.

Travel costs remain high for our constituent institutions. With our universities based on the western seaboard, significant travel is required to participate in competitions and this has put a large amount of pressure on college budgets. Thankfully Comhairle Ardoideachais have tried where possible to arrange the early stages of competitions at a regional level in an attempt to alleviate this burden.

Player availability for competition and training can still be challenging. The late finish to club activity has also caused issues with access to players for our institution's teams. A lot of club championships did not finish until late October which left teams down significant numbers of players for the higher education leagues. The pre-season inter-county competitions coinciding with the higher education championships and the early scheduling of the U-20 inter-county championships will put further pressure on player availability.

In summary while challenges exist on an ongoing basis, Gaelic Games continues to prosper and thrive in higher education institutions in the province through the dedication of many officers, volunteers, and GPOs. 'Thank you' to the provincial council for their ongoing support. Special thanks go to provincial secretary, John Prenty, to Adrian Hassett and Cathal Cregg for their advice and support to our clubs over the last year. 'Thanks' to all the hard-working volunteers and officers in all our clubs for the trojan work they do in promoting and ensuring Gaelic Games continue to be to the fore in our third level institutions.

On behalf of Comhairle Ardoideachais Connacht I wish you all a safe, healthy and successful 2024.





Tuairisc Coiste Scór Chonnacht 2023

By Diane Ní Dhuinneacha

IS CÚIS mór áthais domsa an tuairisc seo ar imeachtaí Scór sa chúige a chur faoi bhráid na comhdhála. Gabhann Coiste Scór Chonnacht buíochas leis na h-Oifigigh Cultúir & Teanga, Coistí Scór na gContaetha agus go háirithe Oifigigh na gContaetha agus an Cúige a chabhraigh linn i rith na bliana.

The Connacht Finals of Scór na nÓg 2023 took place in the Town Hall Theatre, Ballinasloe on Sunday 16th April 2023. The standard of competition on the day was exceptionally performed to a packed hall. We had great representation across all disciplines as follows; Rince Foirne (Maigh Eo, Ros Comáin & Liatroim), Amhránaíocht Aonair (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Gaillimh & Sligeach), Aithriseoireacht / Scéalaíocht (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin & Sligeach), Bailéad-Ghrúpa (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Sligeach & Gaillimh), Tráth na gCeisteanna ((Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Gaillimh & Sligeach), Nuachleas (Maigh Eo, Ros Comáin & Liatroim), Ceol Uirlise (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Gaillimh & Sligeach) and Rince Seit (Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Maigh Eo & Gaillimh).

The All-Ireland Finals took place in the INEC, Killarney on 6th May. Connacht Scór had excellent representation in what proved to be a very successful day with a lot of young competitors taking to the stage. While all our competitors gave distinguished performances, the day belonged to the St. Dominic's club in Roscommon who triumphed on the double with Gemma Casey claiming the solo singing title and the novelty act group claiming the second title for the club. Scór na nÓg continues to go from strength to strength in the province due to the wonderful work in our five counties. We hope this continues for the years to come.

The Connacht Finals of Scór Sinsir 2023 took place in St. Brigid's Hall, Tubbercurry on Saturday 28th October 2023. Participation increased greatly on 2022 due to the hard work and dedication of all County Cultural Committees. The competition on the evening was of a very high calibre. We had representation in each discipline as follows; Rince Foirne (Maigh Eo, Liatroim & Ros Comáin), Amhránaíocht Aonair (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Gaillimh & Sligeach), Aithriseoireacht / Scéalaíocht (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin & Sligeach), Bailéad-Ghrúpa (Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin & Gaillimh), Tráth na gCeisteanna ((Maigh Eo, Liatroim, Ros Comáin, Gaillimh & Sligeach), Nuachleas (Maigh Eo, Ros Comáin & Gaillimh), Ceol Uirlise (Ros Comáin & Gaillimh) and Rince Seit (Liatroim, Ros Comáin & Gaillimh).

The All-Ireland Finals took place again in the fabulous INEC, Killarney on Saturday 18th November.

Buaiteoirí na bliana 2024 ag Scór Chonnacht

Comórtas	Scór na nÓg
Rince Foirne	Naomh Muire Cill Tochairt, Liatroim
Amhránaíocht Aonair	Gemma Ní Chathasaigh, Naomh Dominic, Ros Comáin.
Aithriseoireacht / Scéalaíocht	Lúsaí Níc Dhiarmada, CLG Na nDáibhéidí, Maigh Eo.
Ceol Uirlise	Bhóth Chomhla Dáibhéidí na Muaidhe, Maigh Eo.
Nuachleas	Naomh Dominic, Ros Comáin.
Bailéad Ghrúpa	Bhóth Chomhla Dáibhéidí na Muaidhe, Maigh Eo.
Rince Seit	Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe, Gaillimh.
Tráth na gCeisteanna	Mionlach/An Sceachánach, Gaillimh Gaeil Cill Gláis, Ros Comáin Eanach Dubh, Liatroim.

Comórtas	Scór Sinsir
Rince Foirne	Maothail, Liatroim.
Amhránaíocht Aonair	Sorcha Ní Chatháin, Ail Finn, Ros Comáin
Aithriseoireacht / Scéalaíocht	Caoimhín Ó hÉinrí, CLG & PnamB Bhéal Átha hÁmhnaís, Maigh Eo.
Ceol Uirlise	Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe, Gaillimh.
Nuachleas	Ail Finn, Ros Comáin.
Bailéad Ghrúpa	Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe, Gaillimh.
Rince Seit	Mainistir Chnoc Muaidhe, Gaillimh.
Tráth na gCeisteanna	Barr na Cúille, Liatroim. Misteálaigh Chaisleán a'Bharraigh, Maigh Eo Gaeil Chill Ghlais, Ros Comáin.

Coiste Scór Chonnacht were delighted with the news that Connacht claimed three national titles on the day. Sarah Keane from Elphin in County Roscommon won the solo singing competition and the Abbeyknockmoy music and ballad groups took home the double. This is an incredible achievement and is testament to all the hard work put in by all involved.

Coiste Scór Chonnacht would like to thank everyone who helped make our events such a success: the venue organisers, the stewards, the ticket scanners and to all others involved on the day. Congratulations to all competitors from across the province who represented their clubs and counties with great distinction 2023.

During the year Coiste Scór Chonnacht was saddened to hear the news of Patsy Conway's passing. Patsy was a former Secretary to the Committee, a role he served for many years with distinction in his ardent promotion of Scór across the Province. Patsy was involved with Scór since its inception and was synonymous with culture for many decades.

Tá súil agam go rachaidh Scór agus ár dteanga i láidreachta sna blianta amuigh romhainn.





Coiste na Reiteoiri Report 2023

Chairman: **Marty Duffy**
Director of Refereeing: **Seán Martin**
Secretary to the Committee: **Adrian Hassett**
Tutor Coordinator: **Francis Finan**
Mentoring: **Dennis Harrington**
Hurling: **Michael Nee**

County Referee Administrators

Leitrim: **Michael Doherty**
Sligo: **John Gilmartin**
Roscommon: **Declan Hunt**
Galway: **Shane Forde**
Mayo: **Seán McHale**



before, during and again at the end of each game. All those referees are now in our system heading into 2024, some with great potential, but they will be afforded every chance to advance.

Nominations will be sought for the year ahead from each County Administrator. We have a brilliant team of mentors in the province that invest huge time in developing these up-and-coming referees.

2023 Review

We started with FBD and the Connacht Hurling League games in early January and didn't finish our Club Championships until the first week in December - a huge commitment from all involved. Overall, we had a successful year from a refereeing perspective. All our referees performed well at their respective levels and a number of new referees with great potential, and the right age profile were integrated into our Academy programme.

Referee Mentoring

Over the past three years in particular, we have consciously moved away from an Advisor based system to a mentoring system in the province. We are the first of the provinces to go in this direction and to date we feel the change has been justified. Mentoring entails a personal relationship with the referees where the refereeing performance is discussed and analysed, and potential improvements are identified by both sides. These are then followed up on in the next contact with the particular referee after his next game. This is labour intensive as the number of mentors are relatively small. This is so as to ensure the consistency of the message and to help build relationships. Connacht Mentors attended Club Championship matches in each County to monitor members of the Provincial panel. Some of the Referees that we mentored were appointed to their respective County Finals at Junior, Intermediate and Senior level. We mentored the selected referees again in the Connacht Club Championship Games. This approach means there is more consistency in the feedback we give, but also the way we can evaluate performance & progress because we are using a smaller number of mentors.

Watching the standard across the Connacht Club Championship games, we believe our approach is working and hopefully this template will be carried forward over the next three years.

Connacht Academy Referees

We used the various underage competitions to mentor our Academy Provincial Referees. We assigned a mentor to each referee to advise him

Referee In-Service & Recruitment

In January and February Referee In-service courses were held in all five Counties. The In-service course for the New York Referees was done on the weekend of the NY Vs Sligo Connacht Championship match.

The first modules of the New Referee Courses are done Online with a classroom-based sessions held in the respective Counties in March. This was co-ordinated by **Francie Finan**.

We also ran an Umpires Course for all our provincial referees prior to the commencement of the Connacht Club Championship. It was well attended - we also ran courses in some of the county venues. It proved to be a very useful exercise.

Our Recruitment officers in each County will be working throughout the province in the months to come to maximise recruitment numbers and retention of our recently trained referees. This is a huge task and probably one of most challenging issues that the Association as a whole face. It is a task that I would ask all County Officers to get behind and drive forward in their respective Counties.

National Referees

All of referees on the National Panel have, as always, shown their capabilities to operate successfully at the highest level of our games. In both football and Hurling, Connacht referees are consistently involved in some of the biggest matches across all our national competitions. Our representation on the National panel in both codes is at its highest level in recent times. We have eight on the Football panel & six on the Hurling panel. A special congratulations to **Michael Connolly** and **Chris Ryan** who were promoted this year for the first time to the Hurling and Football panels respectively. Just reward for their efforts & hard work over the last number of years. The real hard work starts now for both men, but I have no doubt they will excel as they have thus far.

We will continue to support all our national level referees within the province and provide them with the backup, support, and appointments to give them the best chance of achieving their goals.

Refereeing Structures

My next paragraph is very much and unashamedly, a copy and paste from last year's report. Our





refereeing structures have not moved at the pace they should in order to keep up with our games as they develop and change. There is a strong willingness within the hierarchy to get this right, but the pace of change is too slow, and refereeing is being left behind.

How can two full time staff, good and all as they are, based in Croke Park, who are depending on volunteers in the provinces and counties continue to produce the necessary outcomes for our Association going forward, is not efficient or effective. We are trying to run a professional entity with volunteers – we need better.

In my opinion each province needs to have a full-time paid official, under the control of the National Referee Manager, to develop Refereeing in a similar way to what Coaching & Games have done on their side. Planning, recruitment, retention, training and ultimately the overall improvement of standards should be in the job description of a full time official and not depending on volunteers to try to shoehorn this workload into their everyday lives.

Volunteerism is the foundation of our organisation, but their just comes a point when that structure does not give us the outcomes we need in the modern day. We need to acknowledge this and act accordingly.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank Provincial President **John Murphy** for his help and support over the last three years and for giving me the opportunity to continue to experience this role.

On behalf of our committee and myself, I would like to thank our Provincial Secretary, **John Prenty**. We don't always agree on everything, and I do get the 'side eye' from him for some of my suggestions at different times, but we make it work and I think Connacht Refereeing is in a good place. He has been most supportive in everything I have done throughout the years. With that support our overall refereeing setup is as good as any in the organisation. As I said last year, to have someone with foresight and a willingness to change and try new ideas is invaluable from my perspective as Referee Administrator.

I would like to say a special 'thank you' to **Sean Martin**, our Director of Refereeing in what has been a personally challenging year for him and his family. We have worked extremely well together over the past number years. It has been a privilege and a pleasure

to work alone side him. He has one of the most demanding jobs in the Association, from a refereeing perspective, as National Chairman of the Referee's Development Committee – a role that he fulfils with pride and passion to the very highest level. That still never takes away from his passion to improve the standard of refereeing in Connacht where even the smallest detail doesn't go un-noticed.

I would like to thank **Donal Smith**, National Referee Manager in Croke Park, and **Aaron Douglas** who are both always at the end of the phone, always willing to help and give guidance.

Our Connacht Development Committee works well on many levels, and we see it as the template for the future. We are fortunate to have the calibre of people we do, **Dennis Harrington, Michael Nee and Francie Finnan**. They undertake huge amounts of work and give their time in a quiet & unassuming way throughout the whole year. This year Francie, as education & training officer, had a huge number of projects to oversee, and as always, they were done to the highest of standards.

I would like to thank the five County Referee Administrators within the Province who have worked closely with me in 2023. We have thrown a lot of extra work their way and to a man they have responded in the most positive fashion and all transitions made seamlessly. I also want to acknowledge the huge workload that each does within his own county, it should be remembered and acknowledged.

My thanks also to **Adrian Hassett**, the Provincial Operations Manager who is a very efficient secretary of our various committees and undertakes a huge amount of work on our behalf behind the scenes and like John has a huge interest in refereeing matters. A great guy to work with. My thanks also to **Daniel** for all his help in the training and fitness side.

My appreciation to each and every member of Connacht Council for the courtesy & support they have given me over the year.

My final acknowledgement is, as always, for the referees themselves. I have demanded much from them in many different ways, Fitness & training, education, and a general demand to be the best panel of referees they can possibly be. They have risen to the challenge at every juncture. As I leave my role that I have enjoyed immensely over my time here I wish each and every one the absolute best for the years to come.





Connacht Health and Wellbeing and GAA for All Committee Report 2023

By **Mattie Kilroy & Denis O'Boyle**

DURING 2023 four face-to-face meetings of the Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing and Games for All Committee took place in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence on the 30th January, 2023; 8th May, 2023; 5th September, 2023, and the 13th November, 2023. On each occasion an online link was provided to facilitate those unable to make the meeting in person.

This report will attempt to highlight some of the work undertaken throughout Connacht and in as much as is possible, acknowledge the contributions of the people responsible for the many activities which took place during 2023.

Membership of the Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing and GAA Games for All Committee

The Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing and GAA Games for All Committee was formed four years ago arising from the amalgamation of the Connacht GAA Games for All Committee and the Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee.

The membership of the Connacht GAA Health and Wellbeing and GAA for All Committee 2022 is as follows:

Chairperson, **Mattie Kilroy**; Secretary, **Denis**

O'Boyle; Recording Secretary, **Stuart Moloney**.

Connacht: GAA President: **John Murphy**; Connacht Secretary: **John Prenty**, and Connacht Games Manager, **Cathal Cregg**.

Galway: **Iggy Clarke/Ciarán Lynch, Christy Tyrrell/Peter Lyons and Siobhan McDonagh**.

Leitrim: **Bernie Dolan, Patrick Feely and Tracey Kelly**.

Mayo: **Fran Downey, Ray McNamara and John Hopkins**.

Sligo: **Trevor Coen and Tim Hynes**.

Roscommon: **Barry Lowe, Frank Egan and Sharon McManus**.

Rounders: **Peter Lyons**.

The following report will look at some of the activities and events which took place during 2023. As in previous years it will be a joint report comprising of two sections ... **Mattie Kilroy** will report on (A) Connacht Health & Wellbeing activities and **Denis O'Boyle** will report on (B) Connacht Games for All Activities.

(A) Connacht Health & Wellbeing Report 2023

By **Mattie Kilroy**

The Connacht Health & Wellbeing and Games for All have had four meetings in 2023. The meetings review the activities of all counties at all our meetings with reports from the county representatives. It is fantastic in these reports to hear of the great activities occurring in all five counties of Connacht. I would like to thank our Secretary, **Denis O'Boyle**, for his fantastic

reports, leadership, contact with us all and his drive to make all our efforts a success.

Irish Life GAA Healthy Club Project

The Irish Life GAA Healthy Club Project aims to help GAA clubs explore how they support the holistic health of their members and the communities they serve. GAA clubs already contribute to the health and wellbeing of their members by providing opportunities to develop their physical, social, emotional, and psychological health. Recent research has shown the Healthy Club Project continues to make a significant impact in improving health and wellbeing outcomes for local clubs and communities. Regional recognition awards for the 72 Connacht Clubs awarded Healthy Club status will take place on 13th December in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence.

Foundation Awards: 45 Clubs

Silver Awards: 17 Clubs

Gold Awards: 5 Awards

Critical Incident Response Plan

Training for clubs continues on Critical Incident Response Plan Development. It is important all clubs and counties work with their County Healthy & Wellbeing Committees to develop plans for their counties. The Community & Health Department continues to support counties with activities in the areas of Green Clubs, Diversity & Inclusion, Healthy Eating, Substance Use and Mental Fitness.

(B) Connacht Games for All Report 2023

By **Denis O'Boyle**

This year's Connacht Games for All Report will include reports from each of the five Connacht Counties on Games for All activities which took place in their respective counties and highlights Connacht GAA's commitment to the principle of inclusion and diversity at all levels. **Peter Lyons** will give an update on Rounders in Connacht.

The activities of the Connacht Wheelchair Hurling Team and the hosting of the National M. Donnolly Wheelchair Hurling League by Connacht GAA and held in Banada will also be highlighted. While many teams from Connacht attended the All-Stars Blitz in Croke Park this report will only just scratch the surface of all the wonderful work being undertaken by GAA clubs in putting in place Games for All activities throughout Connacht on a weekly basis. Indeed this report is a tribute to all their great work as enshrined in our GAA motto, 'Where we all Belong'.

County Reports from each of the GAA Games for All Co-ordinators in Connacht

The following are county reports from the County GAA Games for All Co-ordinators in Connacht, namely





(1) **Peter Lyons** on behalf of Co. Galway GAA; (2) **Bernie Dolan** on behalf of Co. Leitrim GAA; (3) **Ray McNamara**, Co. Mayo GAA Games for All Co-ordinator; (4) **Barry Lowe**, Co. Roscommon GAA Games for All Co-ordinator, and (5) **Tim Hynes**, Co. Sligo GAA Games for All Co-ordinator.

Craig Davis from Connacht Rounder's also provides a comprehensive report on Rounders in Connacht during 2023.

(1) Co. Galway Games for All Report 2023

By **Peter Lyons**

Galway GAA Games for All and Health and Wellbeing Committee has been actively involved in promoting and supporting the following:

- Increased participation in the GAA Cúl Camps (10,000+ children participated in camps during 2023).
- Healthy Club project promoting Health & Inclusion - 15 clubs received Healthy Club Awards in 2023 ... Gold Award for Tynagh Abbey, Duniry; Silver Award for Ballinderreen; Foundation Awards for Killimordaly, Clarinbridge, Ragoon-Newcastle, Bearnna Na Forbacha, Tommy Larkins Mountbellew Moylough, Salthill Knocknacarra, Ard Raithin Naomh Muire, Caherlistrane, Castlegar, Ath Eascrach/Fothaine, Mullagh & Cappataggle

In May, 2023, **Peter Lyons** on behalf of Galway Games for All Committee attended the Paralympics Ireland Permanent TSB NextGen athlete recruitment campaign at the Kingfisher Sports Centre at the University of Galway. The one-day regional event was an opportunity for young athletes interested in para sport to discover their Paralympic potential through a range of physical challenges and exploring different Paralympic sports.



Connacht Wheelchair Hurlers, John Blake and Shane Curran attending the NextGen recruitment day in Galway.

On behalf of the committee we wish to congratulate Moycullen's Wheelchair Hurler Shane Curran, who was selected on the International Wheelchair hurling squad that travelled to Prague for the Open Floorball

International in August. The team played teams from the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland.

Galway GAA Games for All and Health and Wellbeing Committee made a presentation also to **Christy Tyrrell** to thank him for his many years of service to the committee.

I wish to thank **Denis O'Boyle** (Secretary of the Connacht GAA Health and Wellbeing and Games for All Committee) and **Geraldine McTavish** (GAA Diversity and Inclusion Officer) who both have kept us informed on all upcoming events throughout the year.

(2) Co Leitrim GAA Games for All Report

By **Bernie Dolan**

On 9th September, I attended the Connacht venue for the Rd. 4 of the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League fixture which was held in Boyle Community Hall, Co. Roscommon GAA. As Patrick Feely was unable to attend, Denis O'Boyle suggested that it would be important that someone from Co. Leitrim would attend the event as it was Co Leitrim GAA's turn to host the event in August, 2024. Even though Health & Wellbeing in Leitrim GAA is my main area of expertise, I made myself available and took notes on the organisation of the event and sent my observations in writing to Pat Feely, the Co Leitrim Games for All Coordinator.

I take this opportunity to compliment **Barry Lowe**, Roscommon Games for All Coordinator, who organised a most successful event in Boyle. Barry took time to explain to me all the necessary elements that had to be put in place prior to and also during the event, to ensure the smooth running in hosting this National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League fixture on behalf of Connacht GAA. Barry said he would be available to help Patrick Feely and Leitrim GAA prepare for the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League fixture to be held in a venue in Leitrim next August.

There are three GAA Healthy Clubs - part of the Healthy Clubs Initiative - in Co. Leitrim that participate in the GAA's All Stars Programme, namely, St Mary's, Dromahair and Carrigallen GAA Clubs.

Carrigallen GAA Healthy Club runs Saturday morning sessions periodically throughout the year and have a total of 11 children who attend these sessions which are child-led and facilitated by local SNA's as well as other volunteers. The feedback from these sessions is excellent with parents continually complimenting the efforts of the club to include their children and integrate them within the club. We had a beautiful testimonial from one parent who finished by saying that her son commented to her that, "I am now a member of the club just like my brother". This was a ringing endorsement of all the activities taking place.

Our All-Stars are included in all club activities alongside our juvenile teams for example during the Summer festival. We recently had a planned visit from An Gardaí Síochana from Leitrim Community Gardaí and their engagement with the children was a pleasure to see.





I, myself, attended the All-Stars Inclusive Day in the Dome on the 12th April. This was very beneficial in terms of getting new ideas, etc.

Dromahair GAA Club has tried integrating some of their All-Stars participants into the mainstream training, with a child joining the girls and the boys training. They have organised for some of their All-Star coaches to be there providing 1:1 support during the training sessions.

One of the Dromahair GAA Club All-Stars attended the Connaught GAA All-Stars Inclusive Day in the Dome, Began, on the 12th April and as it turned out he was the only representative from Leitrim at the event.

Dromahair GAA Club also was granted €1,435 from the Sport Ireland Funding for Sport For All Initiatives in Gaelic Games, which they were able to get an inclusive swing seat for their playground which is now available to all in Dromahair GAA Club and the wider community.

(3) Mayo GAA Games for All Report

By Ray McNamara

GAA Inclusion 2023

Sports Inclusion Development Officer Ray McNamara has coordinated Inclusion Programmes throughout the county in association with Mayo GAA Games Manager, Billy McNicholas, and Mayo GAA County Board

Special thanks to Billy McNicholas, Martin Costello and Eoin Sweeney and all coaches for helping to deliver all the Inclusive GAA programmes throughout the year and we will continue to work together in providing more and more participation opportunities within local clubs.



Mayo GAA Coaches, Martin Costello and Eugene Lavin getting organised for the Cúl Camp Éile in the Dome.

National Inclusion GAA Activities

Mayo Sports Partnership and Mayo GAA teamed up for Sports Ability Week 2023 to provide GAA For All Adult session in Castlebar Mitchel's GAA Club with 28 participants.

Cúl Camp Éile (Inclusive Cúl Camp)

Mayo GAA and Mayo Sports Partnership partnered up over the October mid term break and hosted a Cúl Camp Éile in the Dome at the Centre of Excellence in Began.

The camp ran for two days on 31st October and 1st November in the Dome at the Connaught Centre of Excellence in Began. The camp was booked to capacity with 40 participants enrolled.



Cúl Camp Éile participants in the Dome.

A special 'thanks' to Billy McNicholas and his coaching staff from Mayo GAA and Mayo Sports Partnership who together make this camp possible every year and the GAA for providing Cúl Camp kits for all the participants



Also, a special thanks to our volunteers above from the LGFA, namely Leah, Aoife and Eva from Islandeady and Cara from Burrishoole LGFA, who were a tremendous help to the coaches and children.



Cúl Camp Éile participants taking part in the Dome.

This camp has been a huge success over the last three years, and we will continue to encourage and help clubs to promote GAA for All and help clubs to become more inclusive.

GAA For All in clubs throughout Mayo

Kilmeena GAA Club continued their programme on Saturday mornings in the Summer.





Bohola Moy Davitts

Bohola Moy Davitts ran a GAA For All programme in the spring with 15 participants taking part in the session.

Balla GAA

Balla GAA Hosted a summer GAA For All programme in Manulla, **Fran Glynn** co-ordinated the programme in conjunction with Mayo Autism Camp.

Louisburgh GAA Together we Play programme

Louisburgh GAA Club have hosted a Together we Play Programme throughout 2023, **Philip McKernan** has done great work in setting up the programmes with the help of Sports Inclusion Development officer **Ray McNamara**. They also hosted a Disability Inclusion Training Course in the club.

GAA For All Adults in Mayo

Mayo GAA and Mayo Sports Partnership partnered up to deliver a 6-week programmes for service users in Castlebar Mitchel's GAA Club in March. There were four programmes delivered throughout the year.



GAA For All Adults

If you are interested in developing a GAA section of your club, contact Ray at rmcnamara@mayococo.ie for more information.

(4) Roscommon GAA Games for All Report

By **Barry Lowe**

Saturday, September 9th, saw Boyle Sports Complex host the fourth round of the M. Donnelly GAA inter-provincial GAA Wheelchair Hurling League. It was the second time the event was hosted in Boyle, the previous time was in 2016.

The Connaught GAA Health & Wellbeing and Games for all Committee under the chairmanship of **Mattie Kilroy** was responsible for overall co-ordination of the event with me **Barry Lowe** organising the activities on the ground.

Preparations started on Monday, Sept. 4th, with the visit to Boyle of **Tony Watenee** GAA National Inclusion Officer; **Brian Armatage**, Ulster GAA; **Denis O'Boyle**, Connaught GAA, and **Pat Carty** the great Sligo-man from the Connaught Wheelchair hurling team. They were met in Boyle by **David Kelly**, Chairman of Boyle GAA and myself to put the wheels in motion.

The event was a resounding success receiving praise from many of the participants and their parents who had travelled from the four corners of Ireland. The reason for the success was the co-operation received from a number of organisations in Boyle including Abbey Community College, Boyle Scouts, Boyle Badminton Club and King House Catering. Special word of thanks goes to Connacht GAA Council that provided the necessary funding for us to host this event and to Connacht GAA Vice-President, **Vincent Neary**, for his support and for attending on the day.

I would like to especially thank my partner, **Anne**, for all her support and help with organising this event. 'Thanks' also to **Aaron O'Connor** from Abbey Community College for his positive 'can do' attitude and his help with the logistics of arranging the event. 'Thanks' goes to **Trevor Conroy** who arranged the use of the complex and the Scouts Den (which was required for additional disability toilets) and to **Anthony Mc Keown** for so generously allowing use of their facility for catering.

Three people who are core to the community spirit found in Boyle which makes events like this such a success and who deserve a big thank you are **Donal O'Connor** for his rendition of Amhran Na Bhfiann; **Seán O'Dowd** of Real Boyle for photographing the event, and **Dorothy Shannon** of King House Tea Rooms for her excellent catering. It is most important to give a huge thanks to all the volunteers from Boyle GAA Club and others who did themselves and Boyle proud on the day.

I also wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful work undertaken by **Orla O'Connor** who organised the Autism Friendly Family Fun Day on the 25th March, 2023. Orla has kindly compiled the following report.

On Saturday, 25th March, CBS hosted our second Autism Friendly Family Fun Day. It was organised by the management and staff of CBS and supported by Roscommon Leader Partnership, in particular **Linda Devine**. We also had some student council members helping out.

The sun was shining down upon us as the event kicked off at 11 a.m. There was a wonderful set-up outside with the Club Rossie Bus, supplied by **Jimmy Reilly**, along with the emergency services vehicles. **Alan Summers** and **Fergal Tully** from Roscommon Fire Station attended with one of the fire engines. The children had the opportunity to sit into the truck and push the siren. They also used the firehose to mimic putting out a fire by spraying the water out onto the grass. **Aisling O'Brien**, a member of the Roscommon branch of An Garda Síochána, attended with the Garda car. The children had the chance to sit into the squad car, play the sirens and even try on the uniform. This year paramedics **David Cunningham** and **John O'Callaghan** from the Roscommon unit of the National Ambulance Service, provided an ambulance and a rapid response vehicle for the event. They encouraged the families to look around the inside of the ambulance and answered any questions they had. Some parents mentioned that their children were afraid of the ambulance and so it was a fantastic opportunity for the kids to overcome their fear by





familiarising themselves with an ambulance and the paramedics if they ever needed to call for one. The emergency services were an absolute hit on the day.



In another section outside **Charlene, Michael and Elaine** of Roscommon Sports Partnership set up outdoor bowling, bean bag races and hula hoop activities while providing music for everyone. Ollie Lennon from Roscommon GAA also organised some inclusive GAA games for children to partake in. A wonderful addition was a pet farm with calves brought in by **Nick Martin**, a Transition Year student, and sheep brought in by **Jacinta Tully**. The animals proved to be very popular with the kids having the chance to rub the pet lamb.



Music Generation Roscommon provided percussion workshops in the GP hall throughout the morning. Udo and James facilitated the workshops and were fantastic in teaching the children how to play the drums. In the **Ciarán Byrne Hall** there was a great selection of arts and crafts. **Ms. Brogan**, art teacher, conducted a Pottery Workshop and children were able to make their own bowls to paint and bring home. **Mae Whyte** of Bitsy & Bobsy's Art Club, also provided a workshop to create Easter bunnies. The children could choose to use tissue paper or paint with cotton balls on pegs or both. To top off the day, we had Nick from Nick's Ices providing ice cream for everyone.

It is wonderful to be able to provide an inclusive Autism Friendly Fun Day and it would not have been possible without the support and participation of all the organisations on the day. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to all involved and are looking forward to next year's Autism Family Fun Day already.

Thank you Orla.

(5) Sligo G.A.A. Games for All Report

By **Tim Hynes**

Cúl Éile Camps - St Mary's held their 2nd Cúl Éile Camps in Kent Park from 9th to 12th August with 33 children with additional needs and 17 siblings - total

50. Genuine thanks to **Liam Óg Gormly** for providing 20 GAA coaches.

All-Star programmes ran for nine weeks on Saturday mornings with local club coaches helping. This is magnificent work and is continuing to progress and improve. **Maggie Heylin** and all involved deserve great credit.

The Curry GAA Healthy Club organised two six-week programmes of special coaching for children of different abilities, May/ June and Sept / Oct 2023. There were smiles all around when the children with special needs are being coached GAA skills by a dedicated group of coaches. Children from all clubs are invited to come and try.

Wheelchair Hurling / Camogie update 2023

The first round of the 2023 *Martin Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Camogie Inter-Provincial Leagues* took place on May 13th in Omagh Leisure Complex, Tyrone; 2nd Rd. was held in MI College in Limerick on Saturday, 1st July; 3rd Rd is on 26th August in Tullamore and 4th Rd was held on 9th Sept. in a Boyle. Connacht competed well in all venues and Ulster won the league title.

Inter-Provincial leagues took place on May 13th in Omagh Leisure Complex, Tyrone; 2nd Rd was held in MI College in Limerick on Saturday, 1st July (Connacht lost 3); 3rd Rd was on 26th Aug. in Tullamore and 4th Rd was held on 9th Sept. in a Boyle. Connacht competed well in all venues and Ulster won the league title.



Connacht Wheelchair Hurling team in Omagh, Tyrone

The Martin Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Inter-Provincial Championship finals were held on 21st Oct., in SETU Carlow. Connacht competed well but with no success. The final was won by Munster aet against Ulster.

2023 Prague Open Floorball International

Uachtarán CLG, **Larry McCarthy**, formally announced the players who will make up the international wheelchair hurling squad.

The 12-person panel, made up of wheelchair all-star hurlers from each of the four provinces, travelled to take part in the 2023 Prague Wheel Open Floorball International, which took place from 10th to the 12th August. The Connacht players were **Shane Curran** (Galway), **Aidan Hynes** (Sligo).

Floorball is a game being considered for addition to the list of sports in the Paralympics. It differs from wheelchair hurling in that players play on a field and use a stick, like those used in ice hockey.

The GAA team will represent the Association in competition against floorball teams from the Czech Republic, Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland.





St Attracta's Community School have commenced the coaching of 105 Transition Years students to help at GAA Games for All. Pat Kilcoyne is delivering the Introduction to Gaelic Games coaching level. Shane Hayes is organising Disability Awareness Workshops and Charlie Jordan will deliver the Child Safeguarding Course. When trained the plan is that three or four clubs in South Sligo will commence providing GAA For All each year for a block of six to eight weeks. Each club should be gaining ten to fifteen new coaches who will be able to coach with adult guidance. The clubs will then have those students to also help with other teams from nursery up.

St Attracta's are also signing up to the GAA Future Leaders Programme and planning their projects now.

All-Star Inclusion Day in Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence

On the 12th of April, Connacht GAA/Connacht PHWC & Games for All Committee in collaboration with Mayo Sports Partnership, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, GAA Community and Health Department organised an All-Star Inclusion Day for clubs in the province. There were 24 children and 10 coaches / parents from Curry and St. Mary's GAA Clubs. Sligo All-Star Programmes in GAA clubs were set up for children with special needs to support them in being part of their local GAA Club. The main objective of the programme is to promote an ethos of inclusion and participation in GAA clubs.

ISSSC: Irish Special Schools Sports Council - Calry St Joseph's G.A.A. Club organised two coaching programmes of six weeks in May/ June and Sept / Oct., 2021, periods with one and a half hours coaching each Wednesday for a total of twelve weeks, in Calry St. Joseph's pitch Ballinode.

This was organised by the club's 'Inclusion GAA Games for All' officer **Gerry Tuohy**. This coaching programme was supported by **Shane Hayes** from SSRP, and **Liam Óg Gormley**, **Aran McGowan** and **Cian O'Connor** from the Sligo Coaching & Development Committee.

The club wishes to thank the school principal Carmel Wynne and the staff for their co-operation and support in making this coaching project a reality for the twenty-four very enthusiastic pupils. 'Thanks' also to Calry St Joseph's GAA Club for the use of their pitch.

Sincere thanks to the coaches who gave willingly of their valuable time to ensure this initiative was a success, namely, **Gerry Tuohy**, **Pat Stenson**, and **Tim Hynes**. This is a great initiative - reaching out to people with a different ability and including them in our GAA games.

Trip to Croke Park on 14th June, 2023, to play in the Martin Donnelly GAA 'Football for All' Interprovincial Finals'

The sun shone brightly in Croke Park on Wednesday, 14th June, 2023, when players from St Joseph's School, Ballytivnan, Sligo, were part of the Connacht teams (boys and girls) who played in the Martin Donnelly GAA 'Football for All' Interprovincial Finals, with players (boys and girls) from St Anthony's School, Castlebar; St Bernadette's, Letterkenny, and Lakeview, Galway.

It is a great honour for any sports person to wear the colours of their province, and for each of these players and their families, this is a proud occasion, and the memories and social interaction will last a lifetime. The Connacht boys and girls team played Dublin, Leinster and Munster. Munster played Dublin in the boys and girls finals and won both finals after exciting games.

The GAA President, Larry McCarthy, was present to meet and greet the players, mentors, and supporters, and complimented all who helped. He presented the winners with the cup and medals and presented the other players with medals and stated that, *"These games provide an opportunity for the GAA to promote inclusivity by exploring ways to encourage more people to play Gaelic Games. To every player, I wish you much success and I hope your experience of our games is both enjoyable and rewarding."*

Special 'thanks' to the National GAA Games for All organisers, **Brian Armitage**, **Tony Watene**, **Ger McTavish**, and **Richie Doran** from ISSSC (Irish Special Schools Sports Council).

Sincere 'thanks' to the school principals and teachers who have taken the game on board as part of their sporting calendar and have supported and encouraged the pupils to play.

'Thanks' to **Carmel Wynne**, Sligo, and **Terence Shiels**, Letterkenny, who coordinated the list of players from the schools.

'Thanks' also to the coaches who helped in Croke Park - **Gerry Tuohy**, **Tim Hynes** and **Pat Stenson** from Sligo and **Eoin Sweeney**, **Martin Costello** from Mayo.

'Thanks' to the parents and siblings who encouraged and cheered on the players in Croke Park.

Special thanks to Connacht GAA Games for All chairperson, **Mattie Kilroy**, and Secretary, **Denis O'Boyle**, who spared no effort in ensuring the Connacht team were looked after in every way possible. Also, 'thanks' to the Connacht GAA for supporting these games: **John Murphy**, President; **John Prenty**, Secretary, and **Adrian Hassett**, Administrator.

Finally, and most importantly, 'thanks' to the players who travelled to Croke Park and played the games to the best of their ability.

List of Connacht players (boys - girls): St Joseph's, Ballytivnan, Sligo- **Stephen Ward**, **Tadhg Henry**, **David Jakubik**, **Jason Wimsey**, **Colm Judge Kelly**, **Grace Tobin**, **Edel Weston**, **Denezia Dreijja**, **Kiera O'Grady**.

St Bernadette's, Letterkenny: **Oisín Whoriskey-Coyle**, **Alex Coyle**, **Peter Browne**, **Aiden Durning**, **Matthew Kildea**, **Reece Devenney**, **Owne Mitchell**, **Chloe Kildea**, **Teigan McHugh**, **Melissa Matthews**.

St Anthony's, Castlebar: **David Gallagher**, **Charlie Golden**, **Emma Golden**, **Emily Joyce**.

Lakeview, Galway: **Verelt Siakam**, **Jack Kelly**, **Olivia Scanlon**, **Roisín Carolan**, **Vanessa Adamajts**, **Eadaoin**.

St. Joseph's School, Ballytivnan, visit the Dome

On Wednesday, 4th Oct., 2023, over 50 players from four Special Schools were hosted by Connacht GAA Games for ALL Committee, in collaboration with the Irish Special Schools Sports Council (ISSSC), in the





world's largest Sports Air Dome at the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome, Began, Co. Mayo.

Players from these four schools: - St Anthony's School, Castlebar; St Bernadett's, Letterkenny; St Joseph's, Ballytivnan, Sligo, and Lakeview School, Renmore, Galway, filled the Dome and enjoyed meeting and making friends from other schools. They were welcomed to the Dome by **Billy McNicholas**, head of Mayo coaching development, and divided into four groups and practiced a range of coaching skills and activities at four different coaching stations, which included a game of Gaelic football.

I would like to thank the National GAA Games for All Committee, Brian Armitage, Tony Watene and Geraldine McTavish and to Connacht Council for their encouragement and support and particularly **John Prenty**, Secretary, and **John Murphy**, President, and to the Connacht GAA Games for All Committee: **Mattie Kilroy** (Chairperson) and **Denis O'Boyle** (Secretary) and **Stuart Moloney** (Recording Secretary).

Finally, my sincere thanks to members of Sligo GAA Games for All committee: **Tim Hynes**, **Séamus Cummins**, **Terence Marren**, **Gerry Tuohy**, **Leonore Regan**, **Maggie Heylin**, **Trevor Coen**, **Bernardine McGauran** for their support and resistance. Also, thanks to **Eamonn McMunn** for his help.

Connacht GAA Rounders Report 2023

By Craig Davis

The game of GAA Rounders has seen fantastic growth over the last number of years, 2023 being its biggest year to date. Over 90 adult teams competed at men's, ladies' and mixed Rounders across three different grades, junior, intermediate and senior. In line with the national picture, the game has also grown in the province, with six clubs from three counties entering twelve different teams in the various competitions between them. Not without success either.

Three teams from the province entered junior mixed in 2023. Kilmeena (Mayo), Mayo Gaels (Mayo) and Galway City Rapparees (Galway). Despite its title of junior, this was a very competitive competition nationally with over twenty teams entered initially. Connacht clubs performed above expectations, indeed, the final, which was played in Abbotstown on the 19th of August, was to be an all Connacht affair when Kilmeena and Galway City Rapparees faced each other.

A thrilling final ensued, with barely anything separating the teams right up to the final play. Where Kilmeena seized their opportunity when extra innings seemed inevitable, taking the title with the minimum margin of one score separating the two teams.

At intermediate grade, the province was again well represented. Athenry (Galway) competed strongly at Intermediate Mixed, but, in a tough league came just shy of reaching the knockout stage.

In the intermediate ladies, Michael Glavey's (Roscommon) paved the way for Connacht, taking their journey all the way to the final in Kinnegad on September 9th. Here they came up against tough opposition in the form of Kevin's (Dublin) who, unfortunately, were too strong for the Roscommon

ladies on the day. So it was silver for the Glavey's ladies.

Three Connacht teams were in the Intermediate Men's competition for 2023. Galway City Rapparees (Galway), tournament newcomers Kilmeena (Mayo) and last season's silver medallists, Michael Glavey's (Roscommon) would all take part in a really tough adult league.

Once again, the Connacht clubs would continue to impress and again the final would be an all Connacht affair with Michael Glavey's and the Galway City Rapparees meeting each other in the decider. A final of very high quality was played out, but it was the Roscommon outfit who would prevail, their experience of finals gone by proving the difference on the day. Relative newcomers to the sport, Galway City Rapparees should be commended though, reaching two All-Ireland finals in the same season is testament to the dedication the club is putting into the game.

At the top end of the game, Breaffy (Mayo) continue to be a major force in the game entering a team in senior ladies, men's and mixed. Joined in the senior mixed by Michael Glavey's (Roscommon). Michael Glavey's continue to improve at senior, a win in the group stages against GAA Rounders heavyweights, Glynn Barntown (Wexford) being a particular highlight of their 2023 season.

Breaffy were to have a season to remember for all three of their teams. In only their second season since its resurrection, their men's team exceeded even their club's own expectations. A fantastic run in to close the season saw them reach a senior All-Ireland semi-final. Here they were to face reigning senior champions, Erne Eagles (Cavan). Breaffy gave a fantastic account of themselves in the semi-final, but it was just one bridge too far for the amazing journey the men had been on.

Their mixed team also found themselves in an All-Ireland semi final, where they would meet The Heath (Laois). This game was to be a belter. The lead would change hands a number of times and after the scheduled seven innings the two teams were tied. Two extra innings would have to decide who would play in the final. It wasn't to be Breaffy's day though and The Heath managed to find the two scores they needed in the last of the extra innings to run-out winners.

As reigning senior ladies champions, the pressure could have got the better of the Breaffy Ladies' team. But they managed to hold their nerve all season, pulling out some stellar performances along the way. Indeed, they found themselves in the All-Ireland Final in Kinnegad on September 10th against rivals, Glynn Barntown of Wexford.

This was a final of the very highest order, barely a mistake made by either side and some fantastic skills on display. The Breaffy ladies continue to set the bar in the ladies game though and had enough to take the win, securing back-to-back titles for the Mayo outfit.

More clubs than ever before are offering juvenile rounders nationwide too. This also rings true in Connacht, again, not without successes. Michael Glavey's (Roscommon) tasted success with their boys winning the U-13 Northern Plate and their girls winning the U-13 Roscommon Community Games title. Elphin also got in on the action with their U-13





boys taking the Roscommon Community Games title. Breaffy (Mayo) would take the U-13 and U-15 Boys' Connacht titles in Community Games and traveled to Carlow, where their U-13 team brought home silver and their U-15 brought home the gold in the National Community Games finals.

But it would be Athenry (Galway) who were to have a season like no other. At Community Games their girls teams would take home U-13 and U-15 gold medals both nationally and regionally. Add to that, silver medals at Minor Ladies, U-13 Girls All-Ireland Champions, U-14 Girls All-Ireland Champions and U-15 Girls All-Ireland Champions and it's fair to say there will hardly ever have been a more successful season by a club.

New clubs in the province have already signed up for Rounders in 2024 and it promises to continue growth year on year. For more information or to see how your club can get involved email

connacht.rounders@gaa.ie or
secretary.rounders@gaa.ie



Breaffy, All-Ireland Senior Ladies Champions



Athenry Féile na nGael Champions

Stuart Moloney, Connacht/Munster GAA Regional Community & Health Coordinator



Stuart Moloney was appointed in October, 2022, as Regional Community & Health Coordinator for Connacht/Munster. Stuart is a native of Galway and now lives in Tipperary. Stuart has taken on the role as recording and assistant secretary for our Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing and the GAA Games for All Committee

meetings. He has also provided tremendous support and help in the many Connacht GAA initiatives and events over the year.

The following is part of Stuart Moloney's new role:

- Support the Connacht/Munster PHWC and GAA Games for All Committees
- Support the delivery and growth of the Irish Life GAA Healthy Club Programme in the region
- Aid CHWC in the delivery of annual action plans and activities
- Support the promotion of the GAA's regional GAA Games for All and Social Gaelic Games Programmes
- Supporting Critical Incident Response policy development and offering support to clubs/counties where appropriate
- Assist in the delivery of the new GAA Green Clubs Programme
- Enhance the GAA's Youth Leadership Programmes in the region
- Establish a presence for the GAA Community & Health department agenda in the provinces

Ballaghaderreen GAA Inclusion Day

2nd March 2023

Compiled by Dermott Dillon, Principal/Co-ordinator

Ballaghaderreen GAA organised a Primary School Blitz on the 2nd March, 2023, in the Dome at the Connacht Centre of Excellence.

The games were non competitive and the teams were made up of children from different schools with the emphasis on fun and participation. Our two main aims of the blitz were to give children in our area the experience of playing in the world-class facility that is the Dome. Secondly, to give newly-arrived children to our country a positive experience of our national games and to build new friendships and connections in and between our school children.

The children also received expert coaching at a skills station with Mayo GAA coaches Billy McNicholas and Eugene Lavin as well as at a fundamental movement station with **Tracy Cunnane** of Mayo Sports Partnership.

All six club feeder schools attended namely; Brusna NS, St Attracta's NS, Carracastle NS, Derrinabroc NS, Monasteraden NS and Emergency Reception and Orientation Centre, Ballaghaderreen.

One-hundred and eighty children attended ranging from 4th to 6th class. Forty-three of the children were refugees and really enjoyed their first experience of a Gaelic football following some in school coaching from Ballaghaderreen GAA coach **David McHugh**. The home country of these children included: Ukraine, Syrian, Afghanistan, Arteoria and Eritrea.

The event was coordinated by Ballaghaderreen GAA Coaching Officer, **Dermot Dillon**, and club Well Being Officer, **David McHugh**.

The club would like to sincerely thank **Denis O'Boyle**, Connacht GAA Games for All Coordinator and **Kurt Reinhardt** of Connacht GAA for the support with hosting this fantastic event, as well as all the local teachers and St Nathy's students who helped with coaching the children on the day.





Denis O'Boyle, Connacht GAA Games for All Coordinator; Billy McNicholas, Mayo GAA Games Development Manager; Dermot Dillon, Ballaghaderreen GAA Coaching Officer; Tracy Cunnane, Mayo Sports Partnership.

GAA and ISSSC Football for All Interprovincial Event in Croke Park

On Wednesday, 14th June, 2023, Connacht GAA was represented by both boys and girls teams from St Joseph's School, Ballytivnan, Sligo; St Anthony's School, Castlebar; Lakeview school, Galway and St Bernadette's, Letterkenny, took part in the Martin Donnelly Irish Special Schools Sports Council (ISSSC) and GAA Football for All Interprovincial in Croke Park. The Connacht boys and girls teams played Dublin, Leinster, and Munster.



Connacht GAA boys and girls teams taking part in GAA and ISSSC Football for All Interprovincial Event in Croke Park



Saerlaith and Aoibhinn were among the St Nathy's College TV students who refereed and coached at the blitz.

The GAA President, **Larry McCarthy** stated that, "These games provide an opportunity for the GAA to promote inclusivity by exploring ways to encourage more people to play Gaelic Games. To every player, I wish you much success and I hope your experience of our games is both enjoyable and rewarding."

Well done to all the players who represented Connacht GAA in Croke Park and to their parents/guardians and teachers for their support on the day. It is important to acknowledge the help given by the organisers for the Connacht ISSSC Region, namely Carmel Wynne, Sligo, and Terence Shiels, Letterkenny, who coordinated the list of players from the schools. 'Thanks' also to the coaches who helped in Croke Park, namely Tim Hynes, Gerry Tuohy, and Pat Stenson from Sligo and Eoin Sweeney and Martin Costello from Mayo.

Sports Development Day in Croke Park

On Saturday, 11th March, 2023, players, coaches and members of the Connacht Wheelchair Hurling attended the first-ever Sports Development Day in Croke Park to discuss the following:

1. Rules Development Workshop (Officials/Committee) and
2. Wheelchair Hurling/ Camogie Players Forum

It was a most worthwhile day with healthy debates and discussions in regard to possible rule changes and many ideas to benefit the future development of Wheelchair Hurling/ Camogie.

All-Star Inclusion Day in Dome Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence

On the 12th April, Connacht GAA/Connacht PHWC and Games for All Committee in collaboration with Mayo Sports Partnership, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership, GAA Community and Health Department organised an All-Star Inclusion Day for clubs in the province.



Sports Development Day in Croke Park including players, coaches and officials representing Connacht Wheelchair Hurling.





Participants at All Star Inclusion Day in the Dome.

Stuart Moloney said that the, “Children, coaches and parents from each of the counties in Connacht attended on the day. All-Star programmes in GAA clubs were set up for children with special needs to support them in being part of their local GAA Club. The main objective of the programme is to promote an ethos of inclusion and participation in GAA clubs. Coaches support the children to take part in a team game, assisting them with ball skills, exercise, and of course, fun and enjoyment in a safe environment. Another important goal for us was to promote the ethos of inclusion in the community and the club.”



Some members of the Connacht GAA/Connacht PHWC and Games for All Committee

While the winds raged outside, the NUI Galway AirDome provided a safe, secure and dry environment for all to enjoy the day. Coaches from Connacht GAA, Mayo GAA, Sligo Sport and Recreation Partnership and Mayo Sports Partnership delivered the fun station-based activities on the day.



Participants in action at All Star Inclusion Day in the Dome.

The Connacht All-Star Inclusion Day built upon the impressive National All-Star Inclusion Day delivered in Croke Park last year.

Finally, **Tim Hynes**, stated that there were 20 children and 10 coaches / parents from Curry and St. Mary’s GAA Clubs, Sligo.

International Floorball Tournament in Prague

Congratulations to Connacht Wheelchair Hurling players **Shane Curran** and **Aiden Hynes** who represented Ireland and the GAA at the International Floorball Tournament in Prague which took place from 9th to 12th August, 2023.



Connacht GAA Wheelchair Hurling Players Shane Curran and Aiden Hynes who were selected for the Irish GAA team to play in the International Floorball Tournament held on the 9th to 12th August in Prague, Czech Republic. Pictured, left to right, front: Aidan Hynes and Shane Curran. Back, left to right: Denis O’Boyle, Tony Watene, GAA President, Larry McCarthy and Ger McTavish.

Connacht GAA Wheelchair Hurling team training

In preparation for the Martin Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling/Camogie League which was completed at the Connacht event, which was held in Boyle on 9th September and the Martin Donnelly All-Ireland Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling Championship held in Carlow on 21st October the Connacht Wheelchair Hurling training sessions took place in Charlestown Sports Complex and in Barnacarroil, Sports Centre, Co Mayo, for the Connacht players. We thank both these venues for accommodating our training sessions. During 2023 the Connacht team was coached by **Tim Hynes** and **Pat Carty** on Saturday mornings from 9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.

I take this opportunity to thank both Pat and Tim for their time, ongoing commitment and dedication. I have spoken to **Dr Cathal Cregg** and asked for assistance for Pat and Tim in the new year from a





Participants at All Star Inclusion Day in the Dome.

Connacht GAA Hurling Coach to help on a regular basis with the training sessions.

The first round of the 2023 Martin Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Inter-Provincial leagues took place on May 13th in Omagh Leisure Complex, Co. Tyrone. The second round was held in M.I. College in Limerick on Saturday, 1st July. The third round took place on the 26th August in Tullamore and the fourth round was held on 9th September in a Boyle. Connacht competed well in all venues and Ulster won the League title.

Round 4 of the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League held in Boyle, Co. Roscommon



Pre Event Venue Check in Boyle, on the 4th September 2023, front, Pat Carty. Back, left to right: Brian Armitage, National Games for All Chairperson, Denis O'Boyle, Connacht Games for All, Barry Lowe, Roscommon GAA Games for All Co-ordinator, David Kelly, Chairperson Boyle GAA Club, Tony Watene, Croke Park.

The Connacht venue for the Round 4 of the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League fixture was held in Boyle Community Hall, on 9th September. Co. Roscommon GAA Games for All Co-

ordinator Barry Lowe and his team of helpers deserve tremendous credit for facilitating the organisation of Round 4 of the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League.

A Pre-Event Venue Check took place in Boyle, on the 4th September, 2023, by Pat Carty,

Brian Armitage, National Games for All Chairperson, Denis O'Boyle, Connacht Games for All, Barry Lowe, Roscommon GAA Games for All Co-ordinator; David Kelly, Chairperson Boyle GAA Club; Tony Watene, Croke Park. The Chairperson of Boyle GAA Club, David Kelly also attended.

Round 4 of the National Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling League took place in the Boyle Community Hall



Front, left to right: Brian Armitage, National Games for All Chairperson; Denis O'Boyle, Connacht Games for All, Tony Watene, Croke Park. Back, left to right: Brian Carroll, Roscommon GAA Chairperson, Hugh Lynn, Connacht GAA PRO, Vincent Neary, Connacht GAA Vice President, Barry Lowe, Roscommon GAA Games for All Co-ordinator.



Connacht v Munster in Boyle.





The Martin Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling League was completed at the Connacht event, which was held in Boyle on 9th September. Ulster won the league.

Martin Donnelly Interprovincial Wheelchair Hurling Championship finals

The Connacht Wheelchair Hurling team competed in the Martin Donnelly GAA Wheelchair Hurling All-Ireland Championships Finals on Saturday 21st Oct 2023 in the SETU Carlow, Sports Hall.

The four provinces competed for the coveted trophy and the day-long feast of hurling commenced at 11.30 p.m. The teams played each other, and three teams finished level on points at the end of the league series- Munster, Ulster, and Leinster. The top two teams were selected on scoring difference and Munster having a better scoring difference of two goals over Leinster.

Tim Hynes reported that, “The final was contested between Munster and Ulster, and the large crowd were treated to a very exciting and tense game of wheelchair hurling. The game was won by Munster who scored two points from long range side line cuts. Both teams were exhausted at the final whistle and shook hands and congratulated each other.”

ISSSC and Connacht GAA Health and Well Being and Games for All and Day 2023

The Connacht GAA Health and Wellbeing and Games for ALL Committee, in collaboration with the Irish Special Schools Sports Council (ISSSC), were delighted to host a Coaching and Games with Fun Event on Wednesday 4th October in the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome, at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Bekan, Co.Mayo. Over over 50 players from four Special Schools attended.

Thanks to all organisers and coaches for making this a wonderful event enjoyed thoroughly by all.

The schools who attended were as follows:

- St Anthonys School, Castlebar.
- St Bernadetts, Letterkenny.
- St Josephs, Ballytivnan, Sligo.
- Lakeview School, Galway.

A special word of thanks goes to ISSSC Regional Coordinator, Terence Shiels, Letterkenny, who coordinated the players from each of the schools and to their principals and teachers for their cooperation. Thanks especially to all the players who travelled to

the Dome and participated to the best of their ability and to the teachers, parents/guardians who accompanied them.

It is also important to acknowledge the GAA Coaches on the day, namely Billy McNicholas, Martin Costello, Denise Fahy, Darragh Cox, Adam Roberts, Cian Breathnach, Oran Hester, and to the Connacht GAA Coaching and Games Development Manager, Dr Cathal Cregg for his support. Ray McNamara (Mayo Sports Partnership) deserves special praise for his expertise and involvement in making the day a tremendous success.

Connacht GAA Coaches undertake a Disability Awareness Workshop in 2023

Under the guidance of our Connacht Games Manager, Dr Cathal Cregg and together with Geraldine McTavish, GAA Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Croke Park, our Connacht GAA Coaches took part in a Disability Awareness Workshop consisting of theory and practice at the Connacht Centre of Excellence.



Connacht Coaches taking part in a Disability Awareness Workshop

TY Initiative at St Attracta’s Community School Sligo

Curry GAA Club in Sligo in conjunction with St Attracta’s Community School, Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo, have come together to get their TY’s students trained with basic Introduction to Gaelic Games Course and Safeguarding Courses. The plan is to have TY students available to their GAA clubs to coach under the guidance of adults. The intention is that each club will take a six-week programme of coaching children with additional needs. This will hopefully provides 24 weeks of coaching for children with additional needs.

Leonore Regan from Curry GAA and **Martina Roddy**, TY Coordinator deserve tremendous credit in the fact that the TY students will be involved in taking part in (1) a Safeguarding 1 Course, (2) Introduction



Participants at All Star Inclusion Day in the Dome.





to Gaelic Games Course and (3) a Certified Active Disability Workshop in conjunction with Sligo Sports and Recreation Partnership. St Attracta's Community School is also part of the national GAA/OIDE Future Leaders programme for TY students.

Thinking Futures, Building Recognition

Friday, 25th August, a new initiative called 'Thinking Futures, Building Recognition' was held in the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Began, Co Mayo. This event aimed to facilitate discussion and constructive debate between GAA members and members of the Unionist community, promoting reconciliation and a shared future. Even though the attendance was small there was very good debate, discussion and interaction.

Mayo GAA and Cúl Camp Éile (Inclusive Cúl Camp)

On 31st October and 1st November, Mayo Sports Partnership and Mayo GAA worked together over the October mid term break and hosted their third Cúl Camp Éile in the Dome at the Centre of Excellence in Began. Forty participants were booked into the camp..

Billy McNicholas and his coaching staff from Mayo GAA and Mayo Sports Partnership mwork together to make this camp possible every year and in addition the Mayo GAA provided Cúl camp kits for all the kids, who were delighted. **Ray McNamara** thanked the LGFA volunteers, namely Leah, Aoife, Eva and Cara who were a tremendous help and assistance to the coaches and the children.

The Cúl Camp Éile Camp has been a huge success over the last three years and we will hopefully continue to encourage and helps clubs to promote GAA for All and help them to become more inclusive as a result.



Left to right: Billy McNicholas, Co. Mayo Games Manager; Ray McNamara, Disability and Inclusion Officer, Mayo Sports Partnership; Denis O'Boyle and Mattie Kilroy at the Co Mayo, Cúl Éile Camp held in the Dome on the 31st October and 1st November, 2023.

Independent research into the work of GAA Games for All

The issue of 'amalgamation' or 'collaboration' between Health and Wellbeing and Games for All, as currently exists in Connacht and Munster, has not yet been agreed or decided at national level to date. However, independent research into the work of GAA Games for All, at club, county, provincial and national level, has recently commenced and it is intended that its outcomes will help to provide actions and strategies to meet the future needs and demands in this area.

Reminder of Give Respect Get Respect

Each year in this report we highlight the fact that it is GAA policy that all GAA Clubs have "Give Respect Get Respect" signs erected and visible in their Club Grounds in English or Irish or both. 2023 is no exception when we take this opportunity to remind all our GAA Clubs throughout



John Prenty and Mattie Kilroy with an example of the "Give Respect - Get Respect" Sign at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence.

Connacht to continue to develop the "Give Respect - Get Respect" initiative promoting respect between coaches, players, referees, and spectators. The essence of Give Respect Get Respect philosophy is that we respect each other on and off the playing fields, we operate with integrity at all levels, and we listen and respect the views of all.

While great strides have taken place in regard to the promotion of the Give Respect -Get Respect Initiative, it is still one of the Key aims of the Connacht Health and Wellbeing and GAA Games for All Committee, that all GAA County Grounds and Clubs in Connacht should have a "Give Respect - Get Respect" Sign displayed at the entrance to their ground. You can see examples of the signage on display at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Began and in the photograph below.

Give Respect - Get Respect Signs are available in Irish and in English, to help remind everyone that our Gaelic Games should be promoted and played in a positive, fair and enjoyable manner and where players, coaches, spectators and referees Give Respect - Get Respect from each other.



Participants and Coaches at the Cúl Éile Camp held in the Dome on the 31st October and 1st November 2023.





Galway GAA Health and Wellbeing Committee Conference 2023

Galway GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee deserve tremendous credit for hosting a very informative and enjoyable Conference on Wednesday, 15th November, 2023, in Loughgeorge. There was a high calibre of speakers namely, **Olivia Divilly**, **Dr Colman Noctor** and **Sambo McNaughton**, in what was an excellent presentation and discussion.

It was great to hear of all the tremendous work taking place throughout County Galway and each of the eleven clubs were delighted with their grants of €500 for their respective projects, which were presented by **Stuart Moloney**. It was all such a positive, empowering and enlightening Conference, to say the very least. It was also lovely to see a remarkable gentleman, **Christy Tyrrell**, honoured for all his years of loyal service.

Acknowledgement

In conclusion, 2023 it indeed has been a busy year in regard to activities coordinated by the Connacht GAA Health and Wellbeing and GAA Games for All Committee. I would like to acknowledge all those who unselfishly continue to give of their expertise, time and dedication to helping others within the GAA community.

At National level, it is important to thank Brian Armitage, Chairperson of the National GAA for All Committee, **Ger McTavish**, GAA Diversity and Inclusion Officer, **Tony Watene**, National GAA Project Co-Ordinator and **Colin Regan**, GAA Community and Health Manager, for their continued co-operation and encouragement. We are most grateful for the ongoing support and assistance from Connacht/Munster GAA Regional Community & Health Coordinator, **Stuart Moloney**.

My sincere appreciation goes to each of the County GAA Games for All Co-ordinators for the wonderful

work they undertake in each of their counties in the promotion of GAA Games for All activities and events. I wish to especially thank **Christ Tyrrell** for all the great work he has undertaken over the years. Christy has recently decided to step down from his role as Co Galway GAA Games for All Co-ordinator and was always a tremendous ambassador and advocate for GAA Games for All activities in his native Co Galway and in Connacht GAA. His wisdom, experience, energy, expertise, sincerity, enthusiasm, dedication, good humour and wit, will be greatly missed at our meeting.

It is important to acknowledge the encouragement and commitment given by the President of the Connacht GAA Council, **John Murphy**; Connacht Council Secretary, **John Prenty**, and the Connacht Council and all the Connacht Council staff for their continued support and encouragement. Connacht GAA Games Manager, **Dr Cathal Cregg** provides us with the wonderful support when organising events together with the provision of the necessary coaching skills from our County GAA Coaches. We especially wish to thank **Attracta Hunt** for looking after the needs of the Wheelchair Hurlers over the years. A special word of appreciation also goes to **Adrian Hassett**, who looks after our administration needs and to his colleague **Kurt Reinhardt** for providing us with usage of the Dome. Thanks also to **Amanda Diskin** and **John Clancy**.

Finally, I take this opportunity to especially acknowledge the continued leadership of our Chairperson **Mattie Kilroy** and the ongoing commitment, enthusiasm dedication, and collaboration given by each member of the Connacht Health and Wellbeing and GAA Games for All Committee.

Is mise le meas

Denis O'Boyle (Rúnaí)



Connacht GAA Health & Wellbeing and Games for All Committee members in attendance at the Conference. Front, left to right: Christy Tyrrell, Iggy Clarke; Back, left to right: Denis O'Boyle, Sambo McNaughton (Guest Speaker), Fran Downey, Mattie Kilroy, Stuart Moloney and Noreen Johnston.





Fixture Analyst Report 2023

By Adrian Hassett

Central Fixtures Analysis Committee

The role of the Central Fixtures Analysis Committee is:

- Identify and Train Fixture Analysts at both County & Provincial Level
- Analyse the Fixture Programs with the help of the County Fixture Analysts to see if counties are maximising the time available for their club.
- Gather relevant Data from Counties to establish a clearer picture with regard to club issues and to guide the Association at all levels in understanding how policy decisions may impact on the club game.
- Establishing broad principles of Best Practice for Counties in terms of fixture making and planning generally
- Make proposals to CCC regarding Master Fixture Plan based on the evidence collected.

The Central Fixture Analyst Committee redefined the role of the County Fixture Analyst to monitor the Fixtures within the County and report these observations/findings to the County Board, CCC and to the Provincial Fixture Analyst.

When monitoring the fixture programme within the County the Analyst should be focusing on:

- Fixtures played versus the master fixture plan.
- Postponements and re-fixture arrangements.
- Notification of fixtures to clubs (Rolling/Weekly).
- Identifying periods of no club activity.
- Identifying busy periods of club activity.

If the Fixture Analyst is not a member of the CCC, they should have a working relationship with the CCC within the County.

At the end of the playing season the Fixture Analyst will be required to carry out the following tasks:

- Measure the County Fixture Program against a set of Quality Statements
- Hold a Fixtures Forum with Players/Club Officials/County Officials
- Make recommendations to CCC on the Fixture Program for the following year

Fixture Programmes 2023

Overview

At the outset we must acknowledge the various fixture makers throughout the Association, from National CCC who outlined the National calendar and provide structure, the Provincial CCC's that advise and guide Counties, and the County CCC's who put in place a fixture schedule across all grades and codes to best maximise the time made available to them.

Connacht GAA Fixture Monitoring Committee

In accordance with Rule 3.31 (TO) Connacht GAA Fixture Monitoring Committee reviewed the Masters Fixtures Plan as submitted by each County. This group would have monitored fixtures programmes as they progressed throughout the year.

County Fixture Programmes

With the significant number of rule changes that have been introduced at recent Congress' to assist Counties in scheduling a Club Fixtures programme, and the additions which were added to with the changes made by National CCC, the two major questions to be asked of each county CCC would be:

- How can your County get full benefit out of the club weekends?
- Does your county need to adjust the structure of your competitions?

County Fixture plans 2023

County Fixture schedules for 2023 which are now structured as part of the new 'split season'. This was the second season of games in this new 'split season' format. With the opportunities created by club only window, counties had a chance to build on the lessons learned from their first season scheduling a full programme of games across all grades. See below for some details on how counties scheduled their main competitions.

County Championships

- Football (Adult)

GALWAY

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
Senior League						
Div 1	1	8	11-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Div 2	1	8	12-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Div 3A	1	8	12-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Div 3B	1	8	12-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Div 4A	1	8	12-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Div 4B	2	15	12-Mar	02-Jul	9	7
Junior League Championship						
Cahill	3	12	26-Feb	23-Apr	5	3
Senior	3	17	30-Jul	05-Nov	9	5
Intermed	4	16	13-Aug	05-Nov	7	3
Primary Jun 1	2	8	12-Aug	22-Oct	3	6
Primary Jun 2	2	10	16-Jul	22-Oct	7	4
Junior						
Junior A	2	16	07-May	08-Oct	10	5
Junior B	2	15	09-Apr	13-Aug	10	7
Junior C	2	15	09-Apr	13-Aug	10	7
Junior D	2	12	09-Apr	13-Aug	8	5





LEITRIM

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
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Senior League

Div 1	1	8	21-May	29-Jul	8	7
Div 2	1	8	21-May	28-Jul	8	7
Div 3	1	7	21-May	28-Jul	7	6

Reserve League

Div 1	1	8	16-Apr	23-Jul	8	7
Div 2	1	7	16-Apr	23-Jul	7	6
Div 3	1	10	16-Apr	29-Jul	10	9

Spring League

Div 1	2	12	25-Mar	12-May	6	5
Div 2	1	9	25-Mar	12-May	5	4

Senior Cship

1	10	05-Aug	08-Oct	7	4
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Inter Cship

1	10	11-Aug	15-Oct	7	4
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Jun A Cship

2	8	13-Aug	14-Oct	5	3
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Jun B Cship

2	8	20-Aug	21-Oct	5	3
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Jun C Cship*

3	9	20-Aug	21-Oct	4	2
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U-20

Div 1	1	4	22-Jun	13-Jul	4	3
Div 2	1	4	22-Jun	12-Jul	4	3
Div 3	1	4	22-Jun	19-Jul	4	3

U-19 Dev League

Div 1	1	4	26-Feb	26-Mar	4	3
Div 2	1	5	19-Feb	26-Mar	5	4
Div 3	1	4	26-Feb	19-Mar	4	3

MAYO

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
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Senior

Div 1	2	16	29-Apr	05-Aug	10	7
Div 2	2	16	29-Apr	06-Aug	10	7
Div 3	2	16	28-Apr	05-Aug	10	7
Div 4	2	14	30-Apr	06-Aug	9	6
Div 5	4	21	30-Apr	06-Aug	7	4

Senior Cship

4	16	20-Aug	29-Oct	6	3
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Intermediate Cship

4	16	19-Aug	28-Oct	6	3
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Exclusive Junior*

A	4	14	20-Aug	29-Oct	6	3
B				28-Oct	3	

Junior

A	2	8	06-May	24-Sep	5	3
B	4	15	06-May	24-Sep	6	3
C	4	14	07-May	24-Sep	6	3

MI Walsh

Senior		16	31-Mar		4	1
Intermediate		16	22-Apr	04-Aug	4	1
Junior		15	22-Apr		4	1

*Teams that do not qualify for Knockout stages of the Exclusive Junior A Championship go into the Exclusive Junior B championship.

ROSCOMMON

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
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Adult League

Div 1	1	12	11-Mar	15-Jul	12	11
Div 2	1	12	11-Mar	15-Jul	12	11
Div 3	1	12	11-Mar	16-Jul	12	11

ROSCOMMON continued

Div 4	1	8	17-Mar	14-Jul	9	8
Div 5	2	18	17-Mar	23-Jul	9	8

Championship

Senior	4*	14*	05-Aug	22-Oct	6	3
Inter	3	12	05-Aug	29-Oct	6	3
Junior A	3	12	07-Aug	28-Oct	6	3
Junior B	4	19	26-Aug	28-Oct	7	4

*Group D Consisted of 2 Amalgamated teams who play off to qualify for Knockout Stages. These games were played prior to Inter & Junior Cship

SLIGO

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
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Adult League

Div 1	1	10	28-May	11-Aug	10	9
Div 2	1	10	27-May	12-Aug	10	9
Div 3	1	9	26-May	13-Aug	9	8
Div 4A	1	6	26-May	04-Aug	6	5
Div 4B	1	7	26-May	04-Aug	7	6

Championship

Senior	2	10	19-Aug	22-Oct	6	4
Inter	2	10	19-Aug	22-Oct	6	4
Jun A	2	8	25-Aug	15-Oct	5	3
Jun B	4	14	25-Aug	15-Oct	6	3

Spring League

Senior	4	23	02-Apr	14-May	6	5
Junior	2	11	02-Apr	12-May	6	5

U-19

A	Knockout	5	05-Jul	19-Jul	3	1
B	Knockout	4	12-Jul	02-Aug	2	1

County Championships – Hurling (Adult)

GALWAY

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
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League

Div 1	2	12	02-Apr	25-Jun	7	5
Div 2	2	12	02-Apr	25-Jun	7	5
Div 3	3	17	02-Apr	25-Jun	7	5
Junior	9	37	19-Mar	28-May	7	3

Championship

Senior A	4	16	05-Aug	29-Oct	8	4
Senior B	2	8	05-Aug	15-Oct	5	3
Inter	4	16	05-Aug	29-Oct	6	3
Junior A	3	17	23-Jun	15-Oct	9	5
Junior B	2	12	23-Jun	01-Oct	8	5
Junior C	2	12	25-Jun	01-Oct	8	5
Junior D	2	12	25-Oct	01-Oct	8	5
Junior E	2	12	25-Oct	01-Oct	8	5
Junior F	2	11	25-Oct	01-Oct	8	5
Junior 1	1	4			2	1

U-20 Championship

A	2	8	28-Jun	06/20 Sept	6	3
A1	2	8	28-Jun	06/20 Sept	6	3
B	2	8	28-Jun	06/20 Sept	6	3
B1	3	13	28-Jun	06/20 Sept	6	3

U-20 League

A	4	16	17-Mar	17-May	5	3
B	5	20	17-Mar	17-May	6	3





LEITRIM

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
Championship		2		22-Oct	1	1
Cuchulainn League		2	05-Jun	16-Jul	5	4

Cluinín Iomáint competed in the Sligo County League.

MAYO

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
League						
Senior	2	10	04-Mar	07-May	4	3
Championship						
Senior	1	4	09-Sep	21-Oct	4	3
Junior A	1	5	21-May	26-Aug	4	3
Junior B	1	4	05-Jun	26-Aug	4	3
U-20		4	11-Sep	25-Sep	2	1
Cuchulainn League		6	05-Jun	16-Jul	5	4

ROSCOMMON

	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
League	2	7	03-Jun	22-Jul	5	2
Championship	1	7	01-Jul	01-Oct	8	5
Junior League	2	7	09-Apr	28-May	5	2
Cuchulainn League		2	05-Jun	16-Jul	6	5

SLIGO

Divisions	No of Groups	No of Teams	Start Date	Finish Date	Max	Min
Championship						
Senior	1	5	05-Jun	10-Sep	6	4
Junior	1	3	25-Jun	09-Sep	3	2
League						
Senior	2	8*	26-Mar	20-May	5	3
Cuchulainn	4 Sligo teams entered receiving min 5 games		05-Jun	16-Jul	6	5

*One team from Leitrim entered the Sligo League.

All Counties completed their full games programme with no games outstanding. This is testament to the outstanding work that is carried out by our Fixture makers, to plan and deliver a full schedule of games across all age grades.

Underage Competitions

Although not detailed above, all counties delivered a full programme of games for their Underage sector, with all counties adopting some form of a round robin competition within their competitions to guarantee their clubs and players a minimum number of games.

See Table below for the various competitions organised at the various age grades within the Counties.

		AGE GRADES							
GALWAY	Football	U-12	U-13	U-14	U-15	U-16	U-17	U-19	
	Hurling	U-12	U-13	U-14	U-15	U-16	U-17	U-20	
LEITRIM	Football	U-13	U-15	U-17	U-20				
	Hurling	U-13	U-15	U-17					
MAYO	Football	U-12	U-13	U-14	U-15	U-16	U-17	U-18	
	Hurling	U-12	U-14	U-15	U-16	U-18	U-20		

ROSCOMMON

	Football	U-12	U-14	U-16	U-18	U-20
	Hurling	U-12	U-14	U-16	U-17	U-18
SLIGO	Football	U-13	U-15	U-17	U-18	U-19
	Hurling	U-13	U-15	U-17		

Rule Change & Congress

This was supposed to be the second year of the move from prioritising 'even age' to 'odd age group Competitions, i.e. U13, U15 & U17. However a motion to Congress 2023 that permitted Counties to determine whether to prioritise 'even' or 'odd' age grades at juvenile was carried.

The changes brought through by recent Congress' and the reports that were produced supporting these decisions need to be reflected upon. It is important that we reflect on the reasoning behind why these changes were introduced. Significant research has been carried out. Changes to competition structures had been made over the past number of years in an effort to assist fixture makers and to alleviate some of the pressures on players.

One of the most significant rule changes introduced was decoupling of the Juvenile fixtures programme from the Adult fixture programmes, too long Juvenile fixtures were impacted or did impact on the Adult Fixtures programme, with the introduction of the motion, this has been avoided.

Before we go and change things again can we give time to these changes, yes, alterations may be needed, however these should be made with a body of evidence available.

Overall Observations

- Overall there has been just over 9300 club matches played within the province in 2023. This figure excludes walkovers and postponements and does not include games played by schools, academies, Tain and Cuchulainn fixtures, third level, Inter County Teams or Challenge games.
- All Counties are submitting Master Fixture plans to their Clubs at the start of the Year.
- These Master Fixture plans are being adhered to and are being observed.
- The progress, or not, of the Inter-County team is not impacting on these fixture programmes despite the noise that is created when counties depart Inter County championships. The Master Fixture Master plan exists for a reason!
- All counties are using the provincial Club championships as the deadline for completing club championships with most clubs having a two-week gap from County final to provincial club competitions.
- All Counties completed their County Games programme within the window provided with no games extending into 2024.
- All Club Championships were scheduled on a Round-Robin basis with most players receiving a minimum of 3 Championship games.
- All Counties scheduled League Competitions. Most players received a minimum of 7 games from these league competitions in football however these numbers reduce in hurling





competitions, with most players receiving a minimum of 5 games.

- The availability of County players for their clubs for Leagues games is now very limited and very much dependent on the progress of county teams in their competitions. It may be that County players may only be available to play with their clubs in club Championships only.
- All Counties included relegation in their Adult competitions.
- Anecdotally there was positive feedback to the split season format, with all players seeming to enjoy the timing of the competitions and the very defined season.
- County players being available fully to the club without being demanded by County commitments is a new departure that is appreciated by both the club and the player.
- One fear of moving to the 'split season' was that the Inter-County player would be removed from his club for half the year however the impact of this cannot be quantified as we are only at the beginning of this change.
- All players/clubs enjoyed the club taking centre stage from the months of August onwards.
- All counties operated a 'winner on the day' format which assisted in getting their programme of games completed.
- The advantages of the 'Split Season Model' can be summarised as follows
 - no crossover between the inter-county and club seasons,
 - no interruptions due to the County game,
 - no ambiguity over player availability, and
 - more regularity and certainty in the planning of club fixture programmes.

U19/U20/U21 Competitions

The gap from Juvenile to Adult is being debated across the country and how best it can be bridged, and that players can be retained in greater numbers or that we do not have a fall off of players once they depart Juvenile competitions. All counties operate at least one further competition for clubs once they progress from Underage competitions. This varies in each county with it being an U19 or U20 or U21 Competition. When these competitions are played is varied;

- Galway: Football: July-Nov
Hurling: March-May(League) and July-Sept (Championship)
- Leitrim: Football: June-July
- Mayo: Football: Oct-Dec
Hurling: Sept-Nov
- Roscommon: Football: July-Sept
Hurling: June-August
- Sligo: Football: Oct-Dec

Unfortunately finding a window for these competitions is proving challenging as the players involved are caught with Intercounty U20(January-May, but really it's November-May), Post Primary Schools Competitions(Oct-Feb), Third Level Competitions(Sept-Feb), Adult competitions(Feb-Oct), Dual players and everything else you are having yourself. The players involved can be answerable to a

multiple of managers all wanting full attention for that team/club. I mentioned earlier decoupling of Juvenile and Adult competitions, The U19/20/21 competitions are a perfect snapshot for why this is important. A quick look at some club competitions shows some examples of the challenges involved.

- In one county there was gap of 8 weeks from the final round robin game to the next round.
- This was seen elsewhere with a seven-week gap between rounds.
- Another with a four-week gap.

All this was because of the impact of the Adult Club Championships in each county and the effect it had on scheduling these competitions. We do need competitions to follow on from Juvenile whether it is U-19/-20/-21 however, they have to be respected, if and when scheduled the players involved must be permitted to play with their own peers. The 'ownership' some team managers feel they have on players does not often serve the best interests of either the player or the team involved.

Connacht GAA Fixture schedule for 2023

Connacht GAA have responsibility for Competitions at both Adult & Juvenile in Hurling and Football for all units across the province, this includes Academy & Development squad tournaments and the Post Primary Schools Programme, as well as group games in the Tain & Cuchulainn Competitions.

The province organised and scheduled five competitions at Intercounty level in both Football & Hurling as well as five club championship competitions. The table below details how our Fixture schedule played out during the year.

INTER-COUNTY

Competition	Code	Scheduled	Played	Game not played
Senior Cship	Football	6	6	0
Senior League	Football	4	4	0
Senior League	Hurling	7	7	0
U20	Football	4	4	0
Minor Cship	Football	13	13	0
Total		31	31	0

CLUB

Competition	Code	Scheduled	Played	Game not played
Senior Cship	Football	5	5	0
Intermediate	Football	4	4	0
Junior	Football	4	4	0
Junior Cship	Hurling	2	2	0
Intermediate	Hurling	3	3	0
Minor	Football	6	6	0
Total		18	18	0

Academy/Development Squads

There was a full programme of games delivered for the Academy/Development squad teams. Academy/Development Squad games were played over four dates across the summer providing all players with a minimum two games each day.

The impact of Academy/Development squad training and games does seem to be causing a certain level of friction with clubs because of scheduling and demands placed on players involved.





Tain Og & Cuchulainn Competitions

1. The National Tain League competitions which involved Club Juvenile hurling teams at U-13, U-15 and U-17 Grades resumed with 44 teams from across the province competing. Each club played a minimum three games.
2. The National Cuchulainn League involved clubs from across the province at Adult level with 15 teams involved. Each club played a minimum of 4 games.

These competitions have provided an additional games programme to our Hurling Clubs in Leitrim, Mayo, Roscommon & Sligo however we must ensure that they coexist with the games programmes delivered within the counties and that they are additional games opportunities and not to replace existing competitions.

Post Primary School Programme 2023

Connacht GAA delivered a full programme of games in both Hurling & Football for all schools in the province. Competitions were scheduled on a round robin basis with most schools receiving a minimum of 3 games per competition. **Hugh Rudden** will have a more detailed reports on the competitions elsewhere in the booklet however see below for details of each competition.

FOOTBALL

Competition	Scheduled	Played	Not Played	Walkovers	Changed*
Senior A Football Championship	15	15	0	0	3
Senior B Football Championship	20	15	0	0	5
Senior C Football Championship	29	24	1	4	15
Senior D Football Championship	40	35	2	3	10
Senior E Football Championship	23	11	7	5	4
Junior A Football Championship	15	15	0	0	3
Junior B Football Championship	28	25	2	1	2
Junior C Football Championship	52	36	13	3	7
Junior D Football Championship	52	39	7	6	14
Junior E Football Championship	9	6	3	0	4
Juvenile A Football Championship	15	15	0	0	5
Juvenile B Football Championship	33	28	4	1	4
Juvenile C Football Championship	43	38	4	1	7
Juvenile D Football Championship	53	33	17	3	7
Juvenile E Football Championship	15	12	2	1	3
1st Year A Football Championship	19	19	0	0	1
1st Year B Football Championship	23	21	2	0	3
1st Year C Football Championship	43	29	8	6	5
1st Year D Football Championship	31	23	3	5	6
1st Year E Football Championship	9	0	9	0	0
Total	567	439	84	39	108

HURLING

Competition	Scheduled	Played	Not Played	Walkovers	Changed*
Senior A Hurling Championship	12	12	0	0	6
Senior B Hurling Championship	9	8	0	1	2
Senior C Hurling Championship	19	11	4	4	2
Senior D Hurling Championship	19	14	2	3	2
Junior A Hurling Championship	12	10	2	0	3
Junior B Hurling Championship	12	12	0	0	10
Junior C Hurling Championship	23	13	7	3	8
Junior D Hurling Championship	12	10	2	0	1
Juvenile A Hurling Championship	17	14	2	1	5
Juvenile B Hurling Championship	15	12	3	0	3
Juvenile C Hurling Championship	19	14	4	1	6
1st Year A Hurling Championship	12	9	2	1	2
1st Year B Hurling Championship	15	10	3	2	4
1st Year C Hurling Championship	21	1	13	7	0
Total	217	150	44	23	54

Dates:

- Senior Competitions were scheduled to be completed in time for All-Ireland Semi-Final Dates with competitions commencing in November to be completed for February.
- Junior- As a result of a motion to the Provincial PPS AGM, the Junior Competitions in Hurling and Football were scheduled to be completed prior to the Christmas break.
- Juvenile & Ist Year Competitions were scheduled to be played after the Senior competitions to avoid any clashes with Senior games and that weather & pitch conditions may have improved so clubs may be more amenable to giving us access to their pitches. Most of these competitions were completed to schedule.
- County Post Primary Schools Committees organised County Games programmes prior to Christmas for all Schools. This initiative taken by the Counties was a great success.

Games Programme 2023

The National & Provincial games programme for the year ahead is already with the counties with the Inter-County season due to commence in January 2023 and is scheduled to be completed by 28th July, with the club having an uninterrupted window of activity from the weekend of the 3/4th August onwards, for some counties this will be earlier, depending on their progress in the championships.

Games programmes 2024

For the year ahead.

- Have we reviewed what happened in 2023 so that we may improve for 2024.
- Are we getting the full benefit for our clubs/teams on the windows provided for our players?
- Are the various fixtures making bodies communicating with each other?





Féile na nGael and Féile Peil Report 2023

By Michael O'Connor

Chairperson: **John Hopkins**
Secretary: **Michael O'Connor**
Connacht LGFA Rep: **Ita Hannon**
Camogie Rep: **Geraldine McGrath**
Referee Administrators: **Seán Martin** and **Marty Duffy**
Connacht GAA Centre Staff: **John Prenty**, **Kurt Reinhardt**, **Cathal Cregg**, **Adrian Hassett**.
Communications: **Briain Mangan** and **Michael O'Connor**.

There was a representative from each county:
Galway: **Michael Ryder**
Roscommon: **Marian Egan**
Leitrim: **Seán McGoldrick**
Sligo: **Seán Reynolds**
Mayo: **Brian O'Malley**
Each county games' manager will be an external member of the committee.

The good news from our successful efforts in 2023 is that Féile is back in Connacht for 2024 for football and LGFA and planning for another expected huge crowd at venues throughout Connacht has already begun.

Connacht once more hosts Féile with success

Since 2014 Connacht GAA has led the way in the hosting of what is now called simply Féile. In previous incarnations it was Féile na nGael and Péile Peil. With the huge event that was redefined since Covid visited us there is no longer teams hosted in the main by the regions they are visiting. 2023 says the province of Connacht host their fifth Féile in all. One can see below all the venues that were in one word, professional in their application to duties. Travelling the province to visit all host venues the committee could only say that the efforts that were undertaken to ensure that the visiting teams would have an occasion to remember

were exemplary. Many thanks, once again, to John West for their sponsorship of the National Féile Festival of GAA activity for under-15s.

The Div. I winners from each county participate in the John West National Féile Days, which is a one-day event. The National Hurling/Camogie series of games took place on Saturday, 24th June, and the National Football/Ladies Football day took place on Saturday, 1st July. 84 teams competed on the football weekend meaning over 2,000 plus children as well as perhaps 500 plus mentors were involved. This would mean that close on 8,000 people attended the venues throughout the province with the majority present at the centre piece venue of the Connacht GAA Centre. The week previous a similar number of people and players would have arrived into Connacht for the hurling and camogie weekend. This could mean up to 15,000 people staying and spending in the province over two weekends in the five counties.

The Connacht Féile Committee met on a number of occasions in the spring-time and various tasks were allocated to the members in terms of preparation, confirming venues, local knowledge, visiting venues to ensure all was adequate and helping with attaining local help and first aid. All these tasks were accomplished with great speed and determination. Credit also to the staff in the Connacht GAA Centre on which there is always pressure to ensure that all is set up to cater for all eventualities and crowds. Once again, over the two weekends with huge crowds and more importantly favourable weather allowed people to enjoy their visit to the jewel in the GAA crown and marvel at the Dome as their children were playing for their clubs.

The Connacht Féile Committee that steered Féile for 2023 had great experience from being front and centre at hosting Féiles going back to 2014. Aiding the efforts were the Croke Park staff of Ciaran Kearney, Taidh Geoghegan, Aislinn Harkin (LGFA) and James Heffernan (Camogie) and indeed their expertise and efficiency offered much to the pre-weekend planning.

Venues for John West Féile 2023

Div. 1 Hurling: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 2 Hurling: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 3 Hurling: Woodmount, Pádraig Pearse's GAA
Div. 4 Hurling: Gort GAA and Ardahan GAA
Div. 1 Camogie: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 2 Camogie: Craughwell GAA
Div. 3 Camogie: Caltra GAA
Div. 4 Camogie: St Brendans GAA
Div. 5 Camogie: Oran GAA
Div. 1 Football: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 2 Football: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 3 Football: Knockdoemore, Claregalway GAA
Div. 4 Football: Carrick-on-Shannon, Pairc Naomh Mhuire
Div. 5 Football: Castlebar Mitchels Grounds and Islandeady GAA
Div. 1 LGFA: Connacht GAA Centre
Div. 2 LGFA: Clonberne Sportsfield
Div. 3 LGFA: Castlerea St Kevins GAA
Div. 4 LGFA: Tubbercurry GAA
Div. 5 LGFA: Tuam Stars GAA

Hurling Feile winners 2023

Div. 1 Cup, Athenry (Galway)
Div. 1 Shield, De La Salle (Waterford)
Div.1 Plate, Clarecastle (Clare)
Div 2 Cup, Kevin Lynch's (Derry)
Div 2 Shield, Raharney (Westmeath)
Div 3 Cup, Bagnelstown (Carlow)
Div 3 Shield, Westport (Mayo)
Div 4 Cup, Middletown Na Fianna (Armagh)
Div 4 Shield, Carrick (Leitrim)
Div 4 Plate, Carrickmacross (Monaghan)

Féile Football winners 2023

Div 1 Cup, Kilmacud Crokes (Dublin)
Div 1 Shield, Carryduff (Down)
Div 2 Cup, O'Donovan Rossa (Cork)
Div 2 Shield, London (Great Britain)
Div 3 Cup, Mungret St Paul's (Limerick)
Div 3 Shield, Aughnamullen (Monaghan)
Div 4 Cup, Baile Talun (Louth)
Div 4 Shield, Pádraig Pearse's (Ros)
Div 5 Cup, Kilmore Shannon Gaels (Ros)
Div 5 Shield, Clonguish Óg (Longford)
Div 5 Plate, Parke Keellogues Crimlin (Mayo)

Camogie Féile winners 2023

Div 1 Cup, Turloughmore (Galway)
Div 1 Shield, Dicksboro (Kilkenny)
Div 2 Cup, Cushendall (Antrim)
Div 2 Shield, Castlegar (Galway)
Div 3 Cup, Raharney (Westmeath)
Div 3 Shield, Crossmaglen (Armagh)
Div 4 : Cup -Carnew Emmets (Wicklow)
Div 5 Shield : Burt (Donegal)
Div 5 Cup, Tralee Sarsfields (Kerry)
Div 5 Shield, Pádraig Pearse's (Roscommon)

Féile Ladies Football Champions 2023

Div 1 Cup, New York (USA)
Div 1 Shield, Inch Rovers (Cork)
Div 2 Cup, St Loman's, Mullingar (Westmeath)
Div 2 Shield:, Kildress Wolfe Tones (Tyrone)
Div 3 Cup, Baile Dubh Tire (Wexford)
Div 3 Shield:, Clann Eireann (Armagh)
Div 4 Cup, St Ergnat's, Moneyglass (Antrim)
Div 4 Shield, Mungret St Paul's (Limerick)
Div 5 Cup, London (Great Britain)
Div 5 Shield, Bearna (Galway)





COUNTY ANALYSIS 2023

MAYO COUNTY BOARD (52 Clubs)

Income	€4,075,639
Expenditure	€3,299,282
Surplus (Deficit)	€776,357



GALWAY COUNTY BOARD

(81 Clubs)	
Income	€5,869,684
Expenditure	€5,502,254
Operating Surplus	€367,430
Depreciation	(€360,044)
Surplus	€7,386

SLIGO COUNTY BOARD (26 Clubs)

Income	€1,772,954
Expenditure	€1,526,738
Surplus (Deficit)	€246,216
Depreciation	(€138,595)
Overall Surplus	€107,621

ROSCOMMON COUNTY BOARD

(33 Clubs)	
Income	€2,209,522
Expenditure	€1,877,188
Surplus	€332,334
Depreciation	(€136,504)
Surplus	€195,830

LEITRIM COUNTY BOARD

(33 Clubs)	
Income	€1,914,347
Expenditure	€1,610,400
Surplus (Deficit)	€303,947
Depreciation	(€49,752)
Retained Surplus	€254,195

2024 Connacht GAA Inter-County Fixtures

NB: ALL DATES ARE SUGGESTED DATES ONLY. EXTRA TIME & FINISH ON THE DAY, IN ALL GAME

Connacht GAA Senior Football Championship 2024

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue
Quarter-Final 1	Saturday 6th April, 3.00pm	London	v Galway	Ruislip
Quarter-Final 2	Sunday 7th April, 3.00pm (8pm)	New York	v Mayo	Gaelic Park
Quarter-Final 3	Sunday 7th April, 3.00pm (8pm)	Leitrim	v Sligo	Carrick-on-Shannon
Semi-Final 1	Saturday 20th April	Sligo/Leitrim	v Galway/London	Sligo/Leitrim/Galway
Semi-Final 2	Sunday 21st April	Roscommon	v Mayo/NY	Dr Hyde Park
FINAL	Sunday 5th May			

Connacht GAA U-20 Football Championship 2024 Competition Regulations TBC

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue
Round 1	Wednesday 20th March	Galway	v Leitrim	First named team has home venue
Round 1	Wednesday 20th March	Roscommon	v Mayo	First named team has home venue
Round 1		Sligo	Bye	
Round 2	Wednesday 27th March	Sligo	v Roscommon	First named team has home venue
Round 2	Wednesday 27th March	Mayo	v Galway	First named team has home venue
Round 2		Leitrim	Bye	
Round 3	Wednesday 3rd April	Leitrim	v Mayo	First named team has home venue
Round 3	Wednesday 3rd April	Galway	v Sligo	First named team has home venue
Round 3		Roscommon	Bye	
Round 4	Wednesday 10th April	Roscommon	v Galway	First named team has home venue
Round 4	Wednesday 10th April	Sligo	v Leitrim	First named team has home venue
Round 4		Mayo	Bye	
Round 5	Wednesday 17th April	Mayo	v Sligo	First named team has home venue
Round 5	Wednesday 17th April	Leitrim	v Roscommon	First named team has home venue
Round 5		Galway	Bye	
Top Team Qualifies for Final 4th/5th May - 2nd v 3rd in Semi-Final Wednesday 24th April				
AISF 11th/12th May - AIFF 18th/19th May				

Connacht U-17 CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

ROUND ROBIN FORMAT. SECOND YEAR OF NEW CYCLE. COMPETITION REGULATIONS TBC

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue
Round 1	Friday 12th April	Mayo	v Roscommon	First named team has home venue
Round 1	Friday 12th April	Galway	v Sligo	First named team has home venue
Round 1		Leitrim	Bye	
Round 2	Friday 19th April	Sligo	v Leitrim	First named team has home venue
Round 2	Friday 19th April	Roscommon	v Galway	First named team has home venue
Round 2		Mayo	Bye	
Round 3	Friday 26th April	Galway	v Mayo	First named team has home venue
Round 3	Friday 26th April	Leitrim	v Roscommon	First named team has home venue





Connacht U-17 CHAMPIONSHIP 2024 continued

Round 3		Sligo	Bye		
Round 4	Friday 3rd May	Roscommon	v	Sligo	First named team has home venue
Round 4	Friday 3rd May	Mayo	v	Leitrim	First named team has home venue
Round 4		Galway	Bye		
Round 5	Friday 10th May	Leitrim	v	Galway	First named team has home venue
Round 5	Friday 10th May	Sligo	v	Mayo	First named team has home venue
Round 5		Roscommon	Bye		
Top Team Qualifies for Final: Friday 24th May. Semi-Final: 2nd v 3rd Friday 17th May					
Shield Final: 4th v 5th Friday 17th May					
All-Ireland Q-Finals: 7th/8th/9th June. All-Ireland S-F: 22nd/23rd June. All-Ireland Final: 6th July					

FBD Insurance Connacht GAA Senior Football Competition 2024

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue
Quarter-Final A	Friday 5th January	Mayo	v London	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Quarter-Final B	Sunday 7th January	Sligo	v Roscommon	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Semi-Final A	Friday 12th January	Leitrim	v Galway	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Semi-Final A	Saturday 13th January	Winners A	v Winners B	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Final	Friday 19th January	LIVE ON TG4		University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome

COMPETITION REGULATIONS - Panel of 26 Players. All Players are allowed play -

Subject to: Once Substituted a player shall not be allowed to return to the game (Unless a Blood Sub or Head Injury Sub)
A Maximum of 6 substitutes allowed during second half of a given game
35 Minutes per half. Golden Score to decide the result, if necessary

Connacht GAA Senior Hurling Competition 2024

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue
Pre Lim.	Monday 1st January 2024 3pm:	New York	v Leitrim	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Pre Lim.	Monday 1st January 2024 5pm:	Roscommon	v Sligo	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Pre Lim.	Monday 1st January 2024 7pm:	Mayo	v Longford	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Semi-Final	Wednesday 3rd January 5pm	Galway	v New York/Leitrim	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Semi-Final	Wednesday 3rd January 7pm	Roscommon/Sligo	v Mayo/Longford	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome
Final	Saturday 6th January	5pm: Shield Final	7pm : Cup Final	University of Galway/Connacht GAA AirDome

COMPETITION REGULATIONS - Galway Development Panel Confined to players from Junior 1 Clubs who are not on another County Panel and have not played at any grade above Minor at Inter County Level

Panel of 26 Players. All Players are allowed play-

Subject to: Once Substituted a player shall not be allowed to return to the game (Unless a Blood Sub or Head Injury Sub)
A Maximum of 6 substitutes allowed during second half of a given game
35 Minutes per half. Golden Score to decide the result, if necessary.

2023 Connacht GAA Inter-County Results

AIB Connacht GAA Club Senior Football Championship 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Quarter-Final 1	Sat 8th April	New York 0-15	Leitrim 0-15 (aet)	Gaelic Park, New York	D. Coldrick
New York won 2-0 on penalties					
Quarter-Final 2	Sat 8th April	London 0-12	Sligo 2-20	McGovern Park, Ruislip	B. Cawley
Quarter Final 3	Sunday 9th April	Mayo 0-10	Roscommon 2-08	MacHale Park	N. Mooney
Semi-Final 1	Sun 23rd April	Roscommon 1-09	Galway 1-13	Dr. Hyde Park	D. Gough
Semi-Final 2	Sat 22nd April	New York 0-6	Sligo 2-16	Markievicz Park	B. Cassidy
Final	Sunday 7th May	Galway 2-20	Sligo 0-12	MacHale Park	B. Cawley

Connacht GAA U20 Football Championship 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Quarter Finals	Wed 5th April	Sligo 0-15	Roscommon 1-8	Dr. Hyde Park	C. Ryan
Semi-Final(1)	Wed 12th April	Sligo 0-17	Mayo 1-9	Connacht GAA Centre	M. McGirl
Semi-Final(2)	Tues 4th April	Leitrim 0-6	Galway 2-9	Tuam Stadium	J. Gilmartin
Final	Wed 19th April	Sligo 0-14	Galway 0-13	Tuam Stadium	L. Devenney





Electric Ireland Connacht GAA Minor Football Championship 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Round 1	Friday 14th April	Roscommon 0-11	Mayo 2-17	Dr. Hyde Park	R. Hynes
Round 1	Friday 14th April	Sligo 1-9	Galway 1-13	Markievicz Park	A Clogher
Round 2	Friday 21st April	Leitrim 1-8	Sligo 0-11	Pairc Sean	D. Lyons
Round 2	Friday 21st April	Galway 1-13	Roscommon 0-8	Tuam Stadium	S. Corcoran
Round 3	Friday 28th April	Mayo 1-11	Galway 1-12	MacHale Park	M. McGirl
Round 3	Friday 28th April	Roscommon 5-9	Leitrim 0-12	Dr. Hyde Park	A. Coyne
Round 4	Friday 5th May	Sligo 0-8	Roscommon 0-17	Markievicz Park	J. Glavey
Round 4	Friday 5th May	Leitrim 1-13	Mayo 1-17	Pairc Sean	B. Healy
Round 5	Friday 12th May	Galway 4-8	Leitrim 1-13	Tuam Stadium	D. Corcoran
Round 5	Friday 12th May	Mayo 1-11	Sligo 1-11	MacHale Park	C. Ryan
Semi-Final	Friday 19th May	Mayo 2-13	Sligo 2-12	MacHale Park	R. Hynes
Shield Final	Friday 19th May	Leitrim 0-12	Sligo 3-14	Markievicz Park	A. Clogher
Cup Final	Friday 26th May	Galway 1-10	Mayo 2-13	Tuam Stadium	D. Lyons

FBD Insurance Connacht GAA Senior Football Competition 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Quarter Final	Friday 6th January	Leitrim 1-13	Galway 3-21	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	A. Clogher
Semi-Final 1	Friday 13th January	Sligo 2-13	Roscommon 3-17	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	C. Ryan
Semi-Final 2	Saturday 14th January	Mayo 2-18	Galway 3-12	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	B. Judge
Final	Friday 20th January	Roscommon 0-9	Mayo 0-13	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	M. McGirl

Connacht GAA Senior Hurling Competition 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Prelim Round 1	Monday 2nd January	Leitrim 4-23	Mayo 1-18	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	M. Connolly
Prelim Round 2	Monday 2nd January	Sligo 2-18	Roscommon 0-31	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	S. Hynes
Prelim Round 3	Monday 2nd January	New York 3-30	Longford 0-16	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	P. Fahy
Semi-Final 1	Wednesday 4th January	Leitrim 1-10	Roscommon 6-33	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	D. Earls
Semi-Final 2	Wednesday 4th January	New York 0-17	Galway 0-30	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	M. Farrell
Shield Final	Saturday 7th January	Leitrim 1-17	New York 3-29	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	C. Quinlan
Cup Final	Saturday 7th January	Galway 1-25	Roscommon 1-20	UG/Connacht GAA AirDome	M. Connolly

2024 Connacht GAA Club Fixtures

NB: ALL DATES ARE SUGGESTED DATES ONLY. EXTRA TIME & FINISH ON THE DAY, IN ALL GAME

AIB CLUB SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

Quarter-Final A	Sat 9th/Sun 10th Nov	London	v	Mayo
Quarter-Final B	Sat 9th/Sun 10th Nov	Galway	v	Roscommon
Semi-Final 1	16th/17th November	Sligo	v	Winners A
Semi-Final 2	16th/17th November	Leitrim	v	Winners B
FINAL:	30th Nov / 1st December			
		AISF 7th /8th January 2024. C v M; L v U.		AIF 20th/21st January 2024

AIB CLUB INTERMEDIATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

Quarter Final A	Sat 9th/Sun 10th Nov	Sligo	v	Leitrim
Semi-Final 1	16th/17th November	Galway	v	Mayo
Semi-Final 2	16th/17th November	Roscommon	v	Winners A
FINAL:	23rd/24th November			
		AISF: 7th /8th January 2024. C v M; L v U.		AIF: 13th/14th January 2024

AIB CLUB JUNIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

Quarter-Finals A	Sat 9th/Sun 10th Nov	Sligo	v	Leitrim
Semi-Final 1	16th/17th November	Winner A	v	Roscommon
Semi-Final 2	16th/17th November	Mayo	v	Galway
FINAL:	30th Nov/1st December			
		AISF: 7th/8th January 2024. C v M; L v U.		AIF: 13th/14th January 2024





2024 Connacht GAA Club Fixtures – continued

AIB CLUB INTERMEDIATE HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

Quarter-Final	Sat 26th/Sun 27th Oct	Roscommon	v	Mayo	Athleague
Semi-Final 1	Sat/Sun 9th/10th Nov	London	v	Roscommon/Mayo	Athleague
Semi-Final 2	Sat/Sun 9th/10th Nov	Galway	v	Roscommon/Mayo/London	Athleague
FINAL:	23rd/24th November				

AISF: 16th/17th December 2023. AIF: 13th/14th January 2024

AIB CLUB JUNIOR HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

All Games Extra Time & Finish on the Day if necessary

Semi-Final 1	Saturday 2nd November	Leitrim	v	Sligo	Sligo Venue
Semi-Final 2	Saturday 2nd November	Galway	v	Sligo/Leitrim	COE
FINAL:	16th /17th November				

AISF: 16th/17th December. AIF : 13th/14th January 2024

CONNACHT CLUB U-17 A & B FOOTBALL 2024

Quarter-Finals	Friday 25th October
Semi-Finals	Tuesday 29th October
Finals	Friday 1st November

CONNACHT CLUB U-16 Hurling 2024

A	Sligo	v	Leitrim
B:	A	v	Mayo
C:	B	v	Roscommon
FINAL:	C	v	Galway Winners

2023 Connacht GAA Club Results

Connacht GAA Club Senior Football Championship 2023

Round	Date	Team 1	Team 2	Venue	Referee
Quarter-Final 1	Sat 11th Nov 23	Ballina Stephenites (3-11)	v (0-5) Fulham Irish	MacHale Park	Christopher Ryan
Quarter-Final 2	Sun 12th Nov 23	Coolera/Strandhill (1-3)	v (0-13) St Brigid's	Dr Hyde Park	Thomas Murphy
Semi-Final 1	Sat 18th Nov 23	Corofin (0-16)	v (0-12) Ballina Stephenites	Pearse Stadium	Barry Judge
Semi-Final 2	Sun 19th Nov 23	St Brigid's (1-7)	v (0-8) Mohill	Dr Hyde Park	James Molloy
Final	Sun 3rd Dec 23	St Brigid's (1-13)	v (2-5) Corofin	Dr Hyde Park	Barry Judge

Connacht GAA Club Intermediate Football Championship 2023

Quarter-Final	Sun 12th Nov 23	Kilmeena (4-18)	v (0-8) Annaduff	Hastings Insurance MacHale Park	Aaron Clogher
Semi-Final	Sat 18th Nov 23	Castlerea St Kevins (2-6)	v (0-9) Easkey	Markievicz Park	Paul Lydon
Semi-Final	Sun 19th Nov 23	Monivea-Abbey (1-8)	v (0-10)	Kilmeena	Tuam Stadium
Michael McGirl					
Final	Sat 25th Nov 23	Castlerea St Kevins (2-4)	v (0-8) Monivea-Abbey	Tuam Stadium	Michael McGirl

Connacht GAA Club Junior Football Championship 2023

Quarter Final	Sat 11th Nov 23	Menlough (1-13)	v (0-10) St Michael's	Tuam Stadium	Shane Corcoran
Semi-Final	Sun 19th Nov 23	Owenmore Gaels (0-14)	v (1-8) Glenfarne-Kiltyclogher	Connacht GAA Centre	Ian Monaghan
Semi-Final	Sun 19th Nov 23	Lahardane MacHales (5-12)	v (4-9) Menlough.	Hastings Insurance MacHale Park	Ronan Hynes
Final	Sat 2nd Dec 23	Owenmore Gaels (1-12)	v (3-10) Lahardane MacHales	MacHale Park	Christopher Ryan

Connacht GAA Club Intermediate Hurling Championship 2023

Quarter-Final	Mon 30th Oct 23	Four Roads (2-14)	v (2-23) Tuairín	Athleague	Shane Hynes
Semi-Final	Sun 12th Nov 23	London (0-0)	v (0-0) Tuairín		
Final	Sun 26th Nov 23	Ballinderreen (0-19)	v (0-21) Tuairín	Athleague	Johnny Murphy

Connacht GAA Club Junior Hurling Championship 2023

Semi-Final	Sat 4th Nov 23	Easkey (2-20)	v (1-8) Carrick Hurling Club	Avant Money Páirc Seán Mac Diarmada	James Judge
Final	Sat 25th Nov 23	Ballinasloe (2-12)	v (1-18) Easkey	Connacht GAA Centre	James Judge





Comhairle Connacht CLG Bye-Laws 2023

1. In accordance with Riail 3.29, T.O. 2022 Comhairle Connacht shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary (without voting rights), Treasurer and Public Relations Officer, Patron (without voting rights) and two representatives from each of the Connacht counties. The immediate Past Chairperson of Comhairle Connacht shall be an ex-officio member for the year following his termination of office. It shall also consist of the Provincial Referees Administrator and one representative each of the Connacht Handball Council, Connacht Higher Education Council, Connacht Primary Schools' Committee and the Connacht Post-Primary Schools' Council, all without voting rights. Coiste Iomána Connacht and the Connacht Coaching & Games Development Committee may be represented at meetings, without voting rights.
2. In accordance with Riail 3.32, T.O. 2022 Comhairle Connacht shall appoint the following sub-committees whose functions and powers shall be as outlined in R. 3.32, T. O. 2022 and in these Bye-Laws.
3. Except where stated in rule or in these Bye-Laws all members of Committees and Sub-committees shall have voting rights.

(i) Management Committee

There shall be a Management Committee which shall consist of the Chairperson of the day, Secretary (without voting rights), Vice-Chairperson, P.R.O., Treasurer, the immediate Past Chairperson for the year following his termination of office plus an elected representative from each county not represented at officer level.

- It shall be responsible for the running of day-to-day affairs Comhairle Connacht between Provincial Council meetings. These will include Discipline (non-games related), and the implementation of policies determined by Comhairle Connacht.
- It shall have before it, when necessary, reports of other sub-committees for consideration and action.
- It shall be responsible for all budgetary control and make recommendations to the Council when necessary.
- It shall nominate the Provincial Referee's Administrator.
- It shall have authority to appoint Work Groups to deal with delegated matters/ activities.
- It shall furnish a report on its activities to each meeting of Comhairle Connacht.
- All decisions of the Management Committee must be ratified by Comhairle Connacht.

(ii) Competitions Control Committee

There shall be a Competitions Control Committee which shall consist of the Vice-Chairperson of

Comhairle Connacht (as Chairperson), Secretary (without voting rights), the Provincial Referees' Administrator, appointed in accordance with R.3.30 (g), T.O. 2022 and an elected delegate from each of the counties of Comhairle Connacht.

Subject to the overall jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.

- It shall be responsible for all arrangements (including the appointment of Referees and Officials for non Inter-County Senior Championship Games) and control of games under the jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.
- It shall deal with transfers under the jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.
- It shall hear objections and counter-objections arising from games under the jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.
- It shall deal with referees' reports and matters arising from same other than those that are reserved for the Provincial Hearings Committee. Matters arising from referees' reports in respect of Senior Inter-county Championships are reserved for the Central Competitions Control Committee or the Central Hearings Committee as appropriate.
- It shall investigate and process matters relating to the Enforcement of Rules and Match Regulations except where these are matters for the Central Competitions Control Committee or the Central Hearings Committee.
- It shall control all grading or regrading in respect of County and Club Championships.
- It shall have the right to alter venues at which fixtures have been made when the Planning and Physical Development Committee deem such an alteration be in the best interests of public safety.
- It shall be responsible for making decisions on applications for Inter-County transfers within its jurisdiction.
- Coiste Iomána Chonnacht which shall consist of a Chairperson, Secretary and one Delegate from each county shall be a Work Group of the C.C.C.

(iii) Provincial Hearings Committee

There shall be a Provincial Hearings Committee which shall consist of a Chairperson and Secretary, appointed by Comhairle Connacht, and 15 other delegates which shall include the county delegates that are not members of the C.C.C. or the Provincial Management Committee save that the Provincial Secretary may act as a non-voting Secretary to the Hearings Committee only when dealing with appeals.

- It shall adjudicate on all disciplinary matters where a hearing is requested relating to the Enforcement of Rules arising from games under the control and jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.
- It shall hear requests for a Hearing and appeals lodged by individuals or units against decisions





of committees from counties under the jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.

(iv) Planning & Physical Development Committee

There shall be a Planning & Physical Development Committee which shall consist of the Chairman, Secretary (without voting rights), Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, P.R.O. of the Council and an elected delegate (other than those appointed to C.C.C.) of each of the counties of Comhairle Connacht who shall be nominated by their respective counties.

Subject to the overall jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht the Planning & Physical Development Committee shall be responsible for Grounds' Development, Club Development, Club and County Administration and Grounds' Safety. It shall have the authority to examine venues, at which fixtures are to take place to assess their suitability and safety standards and give directions accordingly.

(v) Audit & Risk Committee

The A&R Committee shall consist of no more than five members including a Chairperson nominated by the Management Committee, and approved by the Provincial Audit and Risk Committee or Central A&R Committee, as appropriate; and up to four other members nominated by the Management Committee. The Treasurer shall not be a member. The Committee shall provide reports to the Provincial Audit and Risk Committee and the Central Audit and Risk Committee when requested and at least once per year. Appointments should be skills-based with member.

(vi) Referees' Administration Committee

There shall be a Referees' Administration Committee, appointed by Comhairle Connacht, which shall consist of the Chairman of CCC, Secretary of CCC and the Provincial Referees Administrator.

It shall be responsible for examination of Referee assessments, and Fitness and Rules tests and shall make recommendations to CCC on Referee Appointments and Classification.

● Referees' Work Group

There shall be a Referees' Work Group, appointed by Comhairle Connacht, which shall consist of the Provincial Referees' Administrator, as Chairman, a representative of the Tutor Group, and the Referees' Administrators of the 5 Connacht Counties.

The Secretary of this Committee may be one of the County Referees' Administrators or an additional person appointed by Comhairle Connacht.

The duties of this committee shall be the organisation of the recruitment, training, tutoring, assessment, classification and mentoring of referees under the jurisdiction of Comhairle Connacht.

(vi) Coaching & Games Development Committee

It shall consist of a Chairman appointed by Comhairle Connacht, Provincial Games Manager, as Secretary, Hurling Director, Coaching Officer from each of the counties in the Province, and the 5 County Games Managers.

It shall be responsible for the Promotion, Development and expansion of Gaelic Games within the Province. It shall be responsible for recommending the allocation of Finances which accrue in this area, to the Management Committee.

(vii) Cultural Committee

There shall be a Cultural Committee, appointed by Comhairle Connacht, which shall consist of the Vice-Chairman of the Council, or a nominee of Comhairle Connacht, as Chairman, a Rúnai and Cisteoir and 2 representatives of each of the Connacht Counties (one of whom shall be the Oifigeach na Gaeilge).

It shall be responsible for (a) Irish Language, (b) Scór and (c) other cultural activities.

(viii) Public Relations/Marketing Committee

There shall be a Public Relations/ Marketing Committee, appointed by Comhairle Connacht, which shall consist of a Chairman, Public Relations Officer, Provincial Rúnai and 5 other elected members.

It shall be responsible for Publicity, Marketing and Publications and the Management Committee may appoint Work Groups to assist in this area.

(ix) Fixtures Monitoring Committee

In accordance with Rial 3.31 T.O 2022 there shall be a fixtures monitoring committee comprising of the Uachtarán, Leas Uachtarán, Rúnai and a Secretary appointed by the Council.

It shall monitor the fixtures' programme of each county under its jurisdiction on a monthly basis and make a report or take action as appropriate.

(x) Finance Committee.

There shall be a Finance Committee, which shall consist of the Officers of Comhairle Connacht and the Council Accountant.

Subject to the overall authority of Comhairle Connacht it shall be responsible for advising the Management Committee on all matters relating to the finances of Comhairle Connacht.

(x) Post-Primary Schools Committee.

It shall consist of Cathaoirleach, Leas-Cathaoirleach, appointed, on a rota basis from the sectors, by the Provincial Council Chairperson, two delegates to Comhairle Chonnacht one vocational, one college, two representatives from each county (one Vocational, 1 College) and 2 joint treasurers (1 Vocational, 1 College) plus the Secretary (Servicing Officer) who shall not have voting rights.

- It shall have a C.C.C. consisting of the Chairperson, Secretary, Assistant Secretary (Colleges) Assistant Secretary (VS) Hurling Subcommittee chair and secretary and at least 5 other members elected by the schools body.
- Requests for a Hearing and appeals against decisions/recommendations of its C.C.C. shall be heard by the Provincial Council Hearings' Committee.





NOTES:

Lined area for notes, consisting of two columns of horizontal lines.





CONNACHT

GAA



29 October 2023:: St Thomas captain Conor Cooney lifts the cup after the Galway County Senior Club Hurling Championship final match between Turloughmore and St Thomas at Pearse Stadium in Galway.
Photo by Ray Ryan/Sportsfile

