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Kilkenny Senior and Minor hurlers having claimed Leinster titles, have both bowed out from this year's All Ireland championship at the semi-final stage. In the century since Michael Collins threw in the ball to start the 1921 Leinster Final, (*coincidentally contested by Kilkenny and a Dublin team represented by Faughs GAA club*) much has changed. In this month's newsletter we chart the evolution of the hurl or Camán, also called a hurley in counties that can't hurl!

Camogie News



The seniors fought bravely but lost their All Ireland Senior Championship Semi Final v Cork by just a single point (0-15 to 1-11). Kilkenny Intermediates will play Antrim and Kilkenny juniors will play current champions Armagh in their respective All Ireland finals. Both matches are set to be played in Croke Park on September 12th

Results

For all County and Club Fixtures lists & Results visit the Kilkenny GAA Website
<https://kilkennygaa.ie/fixtures-results/>

Bereavements:



On behalf of the membership the Committee extend sincere sympathies to the family of Liam 'Chunky' O'Brien. Predeceased by his loving wife Judy, we send our heartfelt condolences to his children Derek, Mark, Nicola and Liam and to all the O'Brien family. As the winner of four Senior All-Irelands (1972, 1974-75, 1979) Chunky was multi-talented and was skilful across a wide range of sports. He was a true hurling legend. Three successive All Stars from 1973 to 1975 and Texaco Hurler of the Year in 1975 were fitting acknowledgements of his supreme centre-field skills and marksmanship.

One of Chunky's finest Kilkenny performances was at wing forward v Galway in 1979 where he scored a goal and seven points to claim his fourth All Ireland inter county medal and fourth All Star Award. He won the RTÉ man-of-the-match award twice, after the 1975 and 1979 All-Ireland finals.

Individual honours extended to seven Leinster SH (1971-75, 1978-79), a NHL medal (1976) and three Railway Cup medals (1973, 1975, 1977). With James Stephens, Chunky won a Club All Ireland in 1976 and played a key part in 3 of the club's senior county title wins, especially in 1975 (when his majestic display drove a defeat of the Shamrocks in the second replay of the semi) and in 1976, (as captain).

The late Joe McDonagh, who captained the defeated Galway '79 team said, on being elected president of the GAA in 1996, that he hadn't prepared a victory speech since the one effectively "torn up by Chunky O'Brien".

R.I.P. Chunky, we are all so glad you chose hurling.

Condolences also to the families and friends of all those who passed away recently. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Hurlers Draw

There are still some **Hurlers Co Op (Piltown) Draw 2021** tickets available. There will be five draws over five weeks from Tuesday September 21st with a total prize fund of €115,000, (which includes three cars). Tickets are available through the Supporters Club (Dublin branch) committee or email kilkennyfan@gmail.com.

Golf Classic 2021 - Results

1st Prize with total of 94 points - **ACADEMY HOTEL TEAM**

Nicky Walsh, John Brennan, Peter Mulhall and Liam Lawlor.

2nd prize with total of 89 points (Back 6) **EDDIE NOLAN'S TEAM**

Eddie Nolan, Seamus Brennan, Robert Brennan and John Dowling.

3rd prize with a total of 89 points **NIALL BUTLER'S TEAM**

Colm Maher, Sean Maher, Patrick Feron and Niall Butler.

Longest drive - *Seamus Brennan.*

Nearest the pin - *Jimmy White.*

We wish to take this opportunity to thank all those who helped in this hugely successful classic especially all who sponsored a team and those unable to attend who made financial contributions. Also a special thanks to Killeen Golf Club and especially Luke Bird for their valued help and support on the day.

Eddie Nolan, John Nolan and Willie Grant (Organising committee).

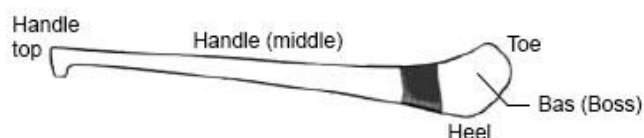
The Hurl



History and legendary tales chronicle the sport of hurling as a part of the martial arts training of the young Irish warriors during medieval times. The hurl of course is an integral part in the playing of one of the world's oldest, most skilful and fastest field games.

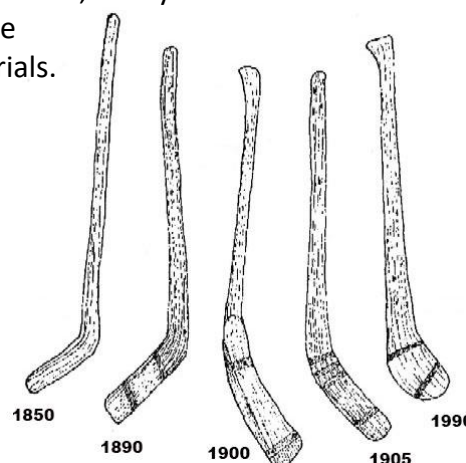
The hurl (hurling stick, hurley, camán or stick) in the above image was found preserved in a bog near Edenderry, Co. Offaly in April, 1981 and is part of the National Museum of Ireland collection. Honed from alder, this example has been carbon dated to AD 1467-1635.

Historically, there have been countless varieties of sizes, weights and materials used to form the hurling stick over the centuries coupled with different styles used in different areas of a county, across the country or by individuals. Traditionally carved from ash, today's hurls have evolved as more curvaceous than earlier sticks with a growing percentage these days made from bamboo, composite or synthetic materials.



Parts of a hurl

It is undoubtedly the case that the continuous evolution of the hurl over the centuries has contributed to the high quality and exciting spectacle of the modern game.



In the early years of the GAA sticks had a much narrower bas and without tapered edges. Also, as one size fits all, they sported a straight cut at the handle top as opposed to the now familiar rounded shape of a modern hurl. Geographical location also dictated the popular style/shape with hurls in Leinster for example much different to those used in the Province of Ulster, which were reputed to be more akin to Shinty sticks.

As a young fellow in Piltown I often marvelled at the shape of the hurls used by our neighbour, John T Power, an All-Ireland winning goalkeeper for Kilkenny in the early 1900s. His weighty but thin keeper hurls paled by comparison with the hefty Bas employed by the then modern day goalkeepers of the 80s.



Goalkeepers were the first to buck the trend of 'one size fits all' electing for individually crafted hurls with oversized bias. In an apparent effort to stem this growth the GAA in their Official Guide introduced Rule 4.5 under Equipment which states: *The bas of a 'hurl' at its widest point shall not be more than 13cm.* Manufacturers' standard templates of today will typically vary between 15cm and 17cm with the Equipment regulation size applying, more or less, to just juvenile sticks. Metal bands or hoops are now banned up to and including U12s.



Along with physical characteristics and the position played, today's hurler will typically select a hurl based on a preferred shape, weight, material, feel, county or regional style or perhaps a preferred manufacturer. Most top players have honed their requirements in the form of individual design templates coupled with exacting specifications. However, amongst the 450,000 hurls produced annually, there are growing requests in recent years for bespoke hurls with a larger bas and a shorter handle.

R&D is leading to continuous innovation with a growth in popularity of bamboo, composite and synthetic hurls. At least one manufacturer is incorporating a piece of laminate glued through the bas of an ash hurl for strengthening. One of the first non-ash hurls was produced by Wavin in the 1980s. Since then there has been a steady growth in the number of manufacturers producing sticks which are reputed to be stronger, as flexible as and have a longer lifespan than ash – most promise enhanced shock absorption in addition to other enhancements - some even offer a range of colours. All with varying degrees of success to date, it remains to be seen how modern innovations pan out.

To accompany the nail in the top of the handle some roughened or sticky tape might have been applied to the handle by many of us in the past for shock absorption and grip, that's of course if a nail or tape could be got. Today, brightly coloured and well cushioned grips are designed to do this job better with a number of companies having developed and marketing this specialist product.



Although 80% of our hurls are now made from imported ash, the best hurls are undoubtedly made from the root of an Irish ash tree where the grain follows the curve of the bas.

One thing for sure, there's more than a morsel of sadness attached to breaking your favourite hurl.

Image from the Archives



Michael Collins throws in the ball to start the 1921 Kilkenny V Dublin Leinster Final.
Same opposition this year except Kilkenny were the victors!

?



As a follow on to the query in the May Newsletter if the hurler in a photo was Bill Kenny?

Joe Kenny got kindly in touch after he made contact with Bill's son Nicky in Lisdowney. Joe sent on an actual photo provided by Nicky which serves to confirm that Bill is not the hurler in the photo. So the question remains, who is the Kilkenny hurler shown above?



Michael Collins talks with the Kilkenny team 1922 All Ireland Final



Above: *Michael Collins talks with the Kilkenny All Ireland final winning team in 1922, a photo which includes Bill Kenny.*

Left: *Bill Kenny in 1922.*

Both photos courtesy of the Kenny family.

This month we are delighted to feature a 'Meet the Committee Member' Q&A with Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman of the club.

What part of the county do you hail from? *Johnstown.*

Did you play sports at school or with a local club? *I played Gaelic Sports at every level starting under 10 in National School, and later with the local Club.*

I continued in that vein through Secondary and 3rd level except I developed a proficiency at Gaelic Football which rather reluctantly I employed at Senior Club level in both Tipperary and Cork, winning and losing a S.F.C. in each County respectively.

Any honours or notable sporting achievements? *Honours at club level were unrewarding despite contesting county finals at Under 14 and Under 16 (in a replay v The Village) Secondary school level equally unproductive but memorable.*

Won a LEINSTER Minor Championship with Kilkenny (with E Keher, S. Cleere and M. Coogan).

*I joined Thurles Sarsfields as a raw member and while still eligible to play Junior 1 and 2 - found I was selected to play centre forward v Glen Rovers in a Cork Churches tournament Final at the old Athletic GAA Grounds in the **SENIOR FINAL**.*

The following three Sundays I was selected to play No. 2, No. 1 and Senior in the Tipperary Championship.

Won a few Senior Hurling Championship medals with Sarsfields as well as 3 Mid Tipp and a Senior County before joining KILMACUD CROKES and helped them to win their first Senior Hurling Championship.

Winners Medals with Clandestine teams from other Provinces---Wicklow, DERRY and Leitrim !!!!! On a work promotion I found myself in Midleton and was quickly told by a certain C. Ring --" there's only one Team to play for here Boy " - no discourse allowed!!

Won two Senior Hurling Championship medals with the GLEN and was a defeated finalist with sister club (St. Nicholas) in the Senior Football Final v U.C.C. (Moss Keane RIP at Full Back)

Threw in my lot with Midleton and were beaten in the MARDYKE v the Rockies in a League Final. Time to wind down !!! Had a thumb break v CLOYNE !!!!!

Managed two Senior Clubs Dungourney in Cork and Shamrocks (Waterford).

Back to Kilmacud Crokes – I managed Minors for many years and we rose from bottom 2 division to LEAGUE AND CHAMPIONSHIP DOUBLE (first ever).

I also served 20 years on the GAA Executive of Kilmacud Crokes plus FOUR as a Finance Director of the Overall Community Centre.

Are you working or retired? *Am retired from a lifetime of Financial and Accounting affairs at every level in a P.L.C. with subsidiaries.*

Give us three words that describe you? *Honest, Trustworthy and Loyal.*

Do you have a particular hobby or pastime? *Reading, Music and Gardening.*

What are your main interests? *Global Economics, Climate and Recreational Sport.*

Name your Favourite:

Person? *Betty Leahy-Houlihan.*

Holiday destination? *Australia*

Meal? *A Rib-Eye Steak,*

Song? *Pearl Fishers Duet by Bizet.*

Name your Favourite sporting:

Occasion? *The All Ireland Hurling Final.*

Memory? *Kilkenny v Cork 1947 (Sketchy)!*

Venue? *Croke Park.*

Sports personality of all time? *Jesse Owens.*

Who is your favourite hurler of all time? *Christy Ring.*

What's your earliest All Ireland related memory?

All Ireland in 1950 v Tipperary.

From what era would your favourite team be drawn?

Kilkenny Seniors 2000 - 2015.

Is there something you wish you were better at? *Maybe Golf.*

Tell us something you are proud of? *Pride is a dangerous attribute but I'm happy to have fought the good fight until now.*

What is the most memorable place you have visited? *Sydney.*

If you could meet any person, past or present, which one would it be? *Daniel O'Connell.*

If you could change something in the world, what would it be? *How long have you got ???? Elect people who know what the World is about.*

Name something that's on your bucket list? *There are many and I'll mention just two! - Return to SINGAPORE and to visit LA SCALA in Milan !!!!!(Spectator only !!!)*

Q1. Following their introduction in 1971, who was the first Kilkenny hurler named as an All Star Award winner?

Q2. What player won an All Star in both hurling and football that year?

Q3. Name an Offaly player who has won an All Star in both codes?

Q4. Offaly won a hurling All Ireland in 1994, who was their manager and who did they beat?

Q5. What former Wexford manager won three senior county hurling titles with Newmarket on Fergus in Clare?

Q6. Who was hurler of the year in 1998?

Q7. Just one All Star Award was presented in 2020, name the recipient?

Q8. Who is the most successful All Ireland Club winning manager in hurling and for what club?

Q9. What college won their first and only Fitzgibbon Cup in 1953?

Q10. Mayo won their last All Ireland football title in 1951, who won the hurling final that year?

Q11. Clare won a hurling All Ireland in 1995, how many years was it to their previous win,
a) 81 years, b) 78 years or c) 88 years?

Q12. What was the gap in years to Clare's last All Ireland appearance previous to 1995?

Q13. What county team is nicknamed the Ardsmen?

Q14. The black and amber striped Naoimh Moninne Hurling Club are 22 times winners of what county championship?

Q15. What year did Cillian Buckley captain Kilkenny Minors to All Ireland success?



GAA Quiz - Answers

Q1. Jim Treacy.

Q2. Ray Cummins of Cork.

Q3. Liam Currams – Hurling 1981 and Football 1982.

Q4. Eamonn Cregan (3–16 to 2–13).

Q5. Liam Griffin. In The club won county titles in 1967, 1968 and 1969. Liam later played with the Clare Under- 21 team.

Q6. Tony Browne, Waterford.

Q7. Mícheál Ó Muirheartaigh was awarded the one and only All Star presented during 2020. The 2020 PwC All-Stars Award winners were not announced until the 19th of February 2021 on account of Pandemic related delays.

Q8. Pad Joe Whelehan – Birr – 3 wins 1998, 2002 and 2003.

Q9. Queens University Belfast.

Q10. Tipperary. They defeated Wexford 7-7 to 3-9.

Q11. 81 years - this is the longest gap between successive All Ireland titles.

Q12. 63 years. (1932 -1995).

Q13. Down - From the Ards peninsula, a stronghold of hurling in the county,

Q14. The Louth Senior Hurling Championship.

Q.15 2010.

.....and finally, a gentle reminder that membership renewal time is upon us!

Have you renewed your club membership yet? As a committee, we are extremely grateful to all those who have already renewed their membership. The extended range of membership options now on offer seeks to provide for family, multiyear and overseas diaspora, with a number of introductory package options to include "Hurlers draw", 'Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club merchandise' and social events. Please renew your membership by direct debit or alternatively on line. via the following link...

https://member.clubforce.com/memberships_addcart_m.asp#Anchor

Alternatively you can email Kilkennyfan@gmail.com for further details of the membership packages mentioned above.

Thank you.

