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All Ireland Senior Hurling Championship 2022

All roads lead to Croke Park next week-end for the eagerly awaited clash between Kilkenny and Clare in the first of the weekends two semi-finals. The match will be on Saturday with a 5.30pm throw in with Limerick and Galway playing the following day with a 3.30pm throw in. The sides will battle it out for a place in the All-Ireland final in Croke Park on Sunday, 17 July.

Leinster Senior Hurling Champions 2022



Captain Richie Reid lifting the Bob O'Keefe Cup.

Congratulations to the Kilkenny SH players, squad members and coaching/backroom team on winning the Leinster hurling champions for a third year in succession. 2022 saw the Cats lifting the Bob O' Keefe Cup for the 74th time and marked the 18th Leinster title for Kilkenny under Brian Cody.

Mikey Butler was awarded the man of the match in the 5pt win over Galway at Croke Park on a score-line of 0-22 to 0-17 which saw Kilkenny lead from the fourth minute to the final whistle.

All Ireland U20 Hurling Champions 2022

Congratulations all to the U20s on their victory over Limerick in Semple Stadium on May 22nd, their 12th win of the competition. After beating Wexford by a single point to win the Leinster Final (1-13 to 0-15) the Cats, inspired by man-of-the-match Billy Drennan, defeated the Treaty Men, again by the narrowest of margins (0-19 to 0-18) to win the final.

All-Ireland Junior Football Championship

Best of luck to the Kilkenny senior football team who now stand to have a chance of reaching a final in Croke Park. Their semi-final opposition will be London with a 7pm throw in at Abbotstown, the GAA's Centre of Excellence in Dublin, on Friday July 8th. The other semi-final, between Warwickshire and New York, is scheduled to be played the same evening at 5pm at the same venue.

Camogie News



The Kittens have won all four of their Group 2 matches to date in the Glen Dimplex Senior All Ireland Championship after last weekend's victory over Offaly which saw Kilkenny leading by 12 points at the interval on the way to a 3-18 to 2-7 triumph at UPMC Nowlan Park.

Next up is a clash with Galway on July 16th in FBD Semple Stadium to determine who will top Group 2 with an automatic All-Ireland semi-final spot on the line.

Bereavements

Sincere condolences from the Committee and members of the Supporters Club to Clare and all the Burtchaell family on the passing of Paddy. Paddy served as a longstanding committee member and devoted considerable time, energy and passion into supporting his beloved Kilkenny GAA.

Condolences also to John Mackey of the Kilkenny Supporters Club on the sudden passing of his brother in law Pat White from Ballyragget and to the families and friends of all who recently passed.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this sad time. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

Membership Drive 2022

The Kilkenny GAA Supporters Club (Dublin Branch) has been in operation for over 25 years. The club exists primarily to generate funding to support the Kilkenny county teams and provide a social dimension to its members.

As a committee, we are extremely grateful to all our loyal members for their continued support and thanks to those who have already renewed their membership.

The membership rate for 2022 remains €25. Online renewal is once again possible via the Following link:

https://member.clubforce.com/memberships_cart_m.asp?LL_ID=175&intMF_ID=10071#Anchor

Results

For all County and Club Fixtures lists & Results visit the Kilkenny GAA Website

<https://kilkennygaa.ie/fixtures-results/>

Club Golf Classic

Our annual Golf Classic took place at Killeen Golf Club on Friday 20th May. Again a hugely enjoyable day was had by all and Eddie Nolan, John Nolan and Willie Grant as the organising committee would like to thank all those who participated in making the day so successful. A huge thank you to those who organised teams for the day and also to those who for various reasons could not be with us on the day but nonetheless contributed to the event.

Thanks to Killeen Golf Club for their help and co-operation in organising the event and for ensuring that the course was in pristine condition on the day.

Also a huge thank you to Luke Bird for his management of participating teams on the day.

Winning teams were as follows:

1st (90 points) **LUKE BIRD's Team** of Luke Bird, Seamus Fennelly, Tony O'Keefe and Luke Bird jnr.

2nd (88 points) **SECURITY CENTRAL Team** of Rory McCarthy, Wayne Uzell and Michael Murphy.

3rd (84 points) **MICHAEL DILLON's Team** of Aidan Genocchi, Willie McLoughlin, Eddie Connaughton, and Michael Dillon.

Nearest the Pin went to **Wayne Uzell** while **Eddie Connaughton** hit **The Longest drive**.

Hurlers Co-op Draw 2022



The Hurlers Co-op Members Draw was recently launched by Leinster GAA Chairperson Pat Teehan. This year marks the 40th Anniversary of what has been an exceptionally successful draw.

The Hurlers Co-op draw has generated significant sums of money for clubs and county facilities over the past 40 years. The Supporters Club has an allocation of tickets to sell and the Committee are asking members to support the draw.

Tickets are priced at €50 for 5 draws and entrants are in to win prizes up to and including cars. This year there is a total prize fund of €125,000.

To purchase a ticket please contact your committee member or email kilkennyfan@gmail.com

Kilkenny Hurlers Co-Op Draw 2022 are also available online via the following link and to help ensure that our club directly benefits from your ticket purchase, please select Kilkenny Supporters Club Dublin from the drop-down box.

https://member.clubforce.com/tickets_m.asp?LL_ID=175

The Bob O' Keeffe Cup



Bob O'Keeffe

Bob O'Keeffe was born in the townland of Glengrant in South Kilkenny on August 18th 1880 and played at club level with Mooncoin. His work as a teacher then took him to Co. Meath where he twice won the Poc Fada championship for Dunboyne and where he hurled for St Peter's. Bob then hurled with Kilcotton in Laois after taking up a teaching post in Borris in Ossory.

He was later selected to play on the Laois senior hurling team for the 1914 and 1915 championships. In these two years the Ballygeehan team, as County Champions, represented Laois (Leix) to win back to back Leinster titles. In 1914 Bob and his team mates lost out to Clare in a one sided All Ireland Final. In 1915 however, he was picked to play on the victorious Ballygeehan side representing Laois that overcame Redmonds from Cork in the final (6-2 to 4-1) to win the county's one and only All-Ireland hurling title.

After he finished his playing days Bob served as a referee before then becoming involved in GAA administration, first at local level. As Secretary of the Laois Co Board he drove the purchase of O'Moore Park in Portlaoise. From 1935 to 1938 Bob served as Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael and finally, Secretary of the Leinster Council until the time of his death in 1949.

The original Bob O'Keeffe Memorial Cup was bought in his memory by the GAA in the year of his death for the sum of £700. To be presented each year to the winners of the Leinster SH Final, this cup was very large and ornate and boasted elaborate Celtic decorations. It was reputed to be the biggest trophy in Irish sport, weighing in at almost 16kg (2 st 7 lbs 4oz), standing 112 cm (3'8") in height, and boasting a capacity of almost 23 litres (6 gallons). The cup was first presented in 1950 to a victorious Kilkenny team captained by Mick Kenny of Graigue Ballycallan and was awarded for the last time in 2004 to John O Connor of Wexford after which it was retired to the GAA museum due to wear and tear after 55 years of 'service'.



In 2005 a new Bob O'Keeffe Cup was unveiled by the GAA and presented for the first time to Peter Barry who captained Kilkenny in their Leinster SH Final victory over Wexford.

An antique trophy of Victorian silver, it had been sourced by the GAA in a jewellers' shop in the Temple Bar area of Dublin. This 'new' silver trophy had been made in London in 1894 but it had lain idle since 1920 after many years of use and having previously been presented as a racing trophy. Although smaller and less ornate than the original trophy, it remains a most sought after prize.

World GAA

The GAA plays a key role in the social and cultural life of Irish communities abroad and underpins and promotes Irish heritage and identity across the globe. The GAA is the largest Irish organisation abroad with over 400 GAA clubs outside the island of Ireland and with 50 of those clubs affiliated across 20 European countries. The remainder are spread worldwide with a sizeable number in the U.S.A.



Since the 1870s, the GAA has been the most important Irish cultural organisation in the U.S. with the GAA intrinsically linked to the story of Irish emigration to America.



Hurling and Gaelic football have been played in North America ever since Irish immigrants began landing on North American shores. The earliest games of hurling in North America were played in St. John's, Newfoundland in 1788 with records of football being played in San Francisco in the 1850s. There are long established clubs in cities such as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Boston, a nod to their tradition of a large Irish population.

Shortly after the founding of the GAA its Central Council decided to send a selection of hurlers and athletes to America with the intention of promoting and developing the games in the States. The 'U.S. Invasion' as it was called in 1888 received an enthusiastic welcome with tremendous media coverage. The All Ireland Championships here in Ireland were not finished on that year due to the numbers of players that travelled to the U.S. That has been followed over the years by countless teams from the GAA community but it hasn't always been one way traffic. Many clubs and Divisional teams from the

U.S. routinely travel to play in Ireland. As far back as 1910, eleven hurlers from Chicago with a similar number from New York played matches in Ireland against the best from Kilkenny, Tipperary, Limerick, Dublin and Wexford. In 1986 the Wild Geese Club made a foray to Ireland and achieved success in the Junior grade at the Kilmacud Crokes 7's making them 7-a-side Champions of Ireland that year.

The GAA in America has had to survive the effects of a major depression, World War II and restrictive U.S. Immigration laws during the 1930s and '40s. After World War II, thousands of young Irish immigrants flocked to U.S. cities that offered employment opportunities. They brought with them their natural love of sportsmanship and games leading to reactivation of the GAA. The Immigration Act of 1965 served another blow to Immigration from Ireland and which stemmed the flow of young players until the late 1970s.

When the North American County Board was formed in 1958, it included Canadian clubs in its area of control. However these clubs are now under the control of the Canadian County Board.

USGAA

Founded in 1959, the United States Gaelic Athletic Association (USGAA) is one of the county boards of the Gaelic Athletic Association outside Ireland. It is responsible for Gaelic games in the United States (outside of the New York Metropolitan Area, which is administrated by the New York GAA). Principal USGAA grounds include Gaelic Park - Chicago, IL, Irish Cultural Center - Boston, MA, Limerick Field Complex - Philadelphia, PA and Páirc na nGael - San Francisco, CA.



Gaelic games are now being played in around 50 cities throughout all 12 months. Clubs participate in local competitions, city leagues, regional tournaments and the USGAA Finals. Clubs are organised regionally by Division with some Divisions holding Championship competitions to determine who qualifies for a place at the USGAA Finals. The USGAA, with over 5388 affiliated members and 123 clubs, also maintains a close relationship with GAA units in the neighbouring regions of Canada, New York and the Caribbean.

Clubs are at the heart of the USGAA and exist within a regional, divisional structure comprising 10 separate divisions. The Northwest Division covers the largest area, 400k square miles but the North East Division has the largest number of clubs (21), teams (37) and players (1000+). Large territories inevitably leads to long distances with teams and their supporters often travelling hundreds of miles for divisional games. The GAA was first organized in Chicago in 1890 with the first game, a hurling match between Innisfails and Grattans, played on Independence Day 1891. By 1893, there were fifteen clubs in what's now the Central Division with a total membership of over 2000 in the city.

Many men and women from Ireland have demonstrated resilience and determination by continuing to devote their time and energy to the promotion and development of GAA across the U.S. Among those of note was Rev. John Fielding, a Kilkennyman and a skilled hurler, who was President of Chicago GAA in the club's early years. Another man from Kilkenny who went on to become chairman of Chicago GAA was Pat Hennessy. Pat is featured on the following link to the excellent GAA oral history series <https://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/oral-history/pat-hennessy/>. In the 1hr 54min interview Pat talks about growing up in Co. Kilkenny in the 1920s and playing for the Kilkenny Minor hurling team in the 1930s. He gives an insight into the GAA scene of Chicago over the years and discusses the strong Irish community there. Geoff Butler from Windgap served as Chairman of the North American County Board in the 1970s and was elected Chicago Divisional Board Chairman in the early 1990s. He played both hurling and football.

While divisions such as Central have existed for over 100 years, the thriving Divisions of Midland and Heartland were founded as recently as 2016. Philadelphia GAA is among the oldest GAA Divisions in

the U.S. with games being played as long ago as 1928. The Southeast Division spans an eight state region from Virginia in the north, all the way to southern Florida, and west into Louisiana. And it includes one of the most remote clubs – the Cayman Islands GFC in the Caribbean, south of Cuba.



Cayman Islands GAA



Indianapolis GAA



Pittsburgh GAA



UC Berkley GAA

The GAA in North America became the victim of two major developments in the early 21st century. One was the security clampdown that followed the 9/11 terror attacks and the other was our own Celtic Tiger economy. These two factors led to a reduction in the number of people travelling from Ireland to the U.S. a country where it now became extremely difficult for people to stay illegally. Such factors led to a reduction in the number of people playing GAA in larger U.S. cities.

However, this downward trend was partially offset by growth in smaller cities in recent years, as evidenced by the establishment of the Milwaukee Hurling Club in 1995 and later the Twin Cities Hurling Club (MN). Other clubs include the Indianapolis Hurling Club, the St. Louis Gaelic Athletic Club, the Denver Gaels, the Greenville Gaels, the Orlando Hurling Club and the Seattle Gaels. Hurling and Football have also grown throughout universities, with Hurling clubs in colleges such as Purdue, Stanford, California State, Monterey Bay and UC Berkeley since 2008. Interest in Gaelic Football has also developed amongst universities in America. Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia is the first school to have an officially recognised program after running independently since 2011.

This growth of Youth Gaelic Games has led to the formation of a National Collegiate body (NCGAA) which hosts their annual National Championships. Grassroots development is taking on a life of its own. Youth programs are springing up across the country and in particular are experiencing huge growth thanks to the success of the Continental Youth Championship (CYC), an annual event for all ages below U-18, which includes teams from USGAA, New York GAA, Canada GAA and invitational teams from Ireland and the UK. This exponential growth since the turn of the century has seen a major demographical change in members.

As of 2018 more than 51% of registered adult USGAA players were born in the United States, and with the continued growth of new clubs in "green field" areas, this number is set to increase significantly over the next 5 years. The 2014 Boston GAA season saw a team mainly comprising of US Army soldiers playing the ancient game of hurling. In 2005 a group of New Hampshire National Guard servicemen enjoyed a stopover in Shannon Airport whilst en-route home from Iraq. A hurling game on the TV galvanized them to take up the sport. The team is based in Concord, New Hampshire has over 45 active members and new recruits from local Police and firefighters.

In August 2021 UPMC became official Healthcare Partner of USGAA. By co-incidence, and two years previously, UPMC launched its 10-year partnership with Kilkenny GAA, with Nowlan Park, the home of Kilkenny GAA renamed UPMC Nowlan Park in 2019.

As a follow on to the article on USGAA, the following is a Q&A with Ciaran Hynes who is based in Boston and runs a technology investment firm specialising in Blockchain and Digital Assets. He is a lifelong Kilkenny hurling supporter and a founding member of the Boston Friends of the GPA:

What part of the country do you hail from?

A: I was actually born in Dublin but my Grandfather, John Sheehy was from Farnoge, Mullinavat and he lived with us until he passed in 1980. His brother in law, Pat Aylward made my first hurl and his sons Andy and John Joe are stalwarts with the club there to this day.

Did you play sports at school or with a local club?

A: Yes I played football and hurling with my school Oatlands College and my club Kilmacud Crokes.

How long are you in the U.S.A.?

A: 11 years.

Any honours or notable sporting achievements (IRL or U.S.)?

A: I played Minor and Senior hurling with Dublin and underage Table Tennis for Ireland.

What best describes your involvement/ role in USGAA?

A: I am a founding member of the Boston Friends of the GPA.

What stands as a GAA highlight across your time in the US?

A: Being involved with the first Fenway Hurling Classic at Fenway Park was an incredible experience. It gave all of us in Boston a chance to share the game of hurling with a U.S. audience and they loved it! We have also run events that raised a lot of money for player well-being and mental health programmes.

Tell us something you are proud of?

A: Captaining Kilmacud Crokes to a county U21 Championship in 1989, Managing our U14 team with my Dad, Michael to a county championship in 2007 and winning the Dublin 'A' Colleges Hurling Final against all the odds in Croke Park in 1984.

What's the best advice anyone has given you

A: My mother had great sayings and bits of advice but my favourite is "You have two ears and one mouth, and for a very good reason" It has always served me well.

What do you see as the main challenges to Gaelic Sports in the U.S.?

A: It is difficult to compete with local sports as kids including my own gravitate to Baseball, American Football or Basketball. We need to get more live televised coverage of our games here in the U.S.

How do you help promote involvement by persons of 'non Irish origins'?

A: We invited a lot of people to the Fenway Classic and the Boston Friends of the GPA run events that highlight our games to a very broad and new audience.

Give us three words that describe you?

A: Loyal, Passionate, Determined.

Name your Favourite:

Person? Enda Carolan, my hurling mentor at school, unfortunately no longer with us.

Meal? Indian or Rib Eye.

Song? Irish Ways and Irish Laws (Christy Moore).

Holiday destination? Anywhere in the Caribbean.

Name your Favourite sporting:

Occasion? All Ireland Hurling Final.

Venue? Fenway Park.

What's your earliest All Ireland related memory?

A: My Grandfather and Uncle brought me to the All-Ireland Final in 1973. I remember being lifted over the stile, sitting on their knees and that the result was not a good one!

From what era would your favourite team be drawn?

A: I idolised Ger Henderson growing up and loved that era but it is hard not to pick the incredible four in a row team.

If you could meet any person, past or present, which one would it be?

A: Padraig Pearse.

Name something that's on your bucket list?

A: Play a round at Augusta National Golf Club.

Final question – Name your greatest sporting personality of all time?

A: **Irish:** DJ Carey - the most skilful hurler I have ever seen.

International: Tiger Woods – the greatest and most resilient golfer of all time.

Image from the Archives – Fennelly brothers from Ballyhale – The Magnificent Seven

Mick, Kevin, Liam, Brendan, Ger, Sean and Dermot (Centre front)