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INTO THE WEST



Quarterly magazine of the Connacht GAA Council

'A season of joy'



Carnacon and Claregalway crowned All-Ireland club champions



Connacht GAA Council wish all Gaels a very Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year



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President's Note

A CHAIRDE GAEL,

It is a great pleasure and with a sense of satisfaction that I look back on 2013 reflecting on the terrific displays on the pitch from numerous teams representing their clubs, counties and province.

What an occasion St. Patrick's Day was with St. Thomas' and St Brigid's both winning their first All-Ireland club titles on the same day. That, added to Ballinasloe's win in the junior All-Ireland club final shows the true strength of GAA sports in the province.

We had a very competitive U-21 Connacht championship with Galway emerging winners and they went on to capture their second All-Ireland title within three years. Surely on this basis there is a tremendous pool of talent that should emerge in the coming years.

One of the most memorable occasions in Croke Park was the All-Ireland Camogie Final day when Galway, under the same management team, captured both the senior and intermediate All-Ireland titles. This was a huge achievement and great credit is due to all the people who have worked so hard to bring the game in the county to this level. How glad I am to see Therese Maher getting her medal after such warrior-like service to the county over the years.

The Connacht championship took on a life of its own – no one anticipated the huge gap that Mayo has created between themselves and the rest. Firstly they outclassed Galway, then Roscommon and subsequently London in the provincial final.

The 2013 championship will be remembered in particular for the march of London footballers. Firstly, when they defeated Sligo, then they took Leitrim to a replay and after a hugely impressive first half display they claimed victory. They were worthy of their place in their first ever Connacht Final and I congratulate them on what was truly a special year for them.

Mayo continued their march with improved displays against Donegal and Tyrone, and in contesting a second All-Ireland final in a row, they did Connacht proud. With the expertise, determination and the meticulously planned programme that James Horan will continue



with, their sights are firmly set on making that elusive step further.

All-Ireland Final Day was very special for Mayo with two teams in the finals. Mayo minors bridged the gap with 1985 when they defeated

Tyrone after a most impressive display. Great credit is due to Enda Gilvarry and his management team on this great achievement. It looks good for Connacht football that Mayo got very keenly contested games from Galway and Roscommon.

I congratulate Carnacon and Claregalway Ladies Football clubs on winning All-Ireland Ladies titles in recent weeks. And also to the Galway Ladies football minors, who had a sensational 2013 with their All-Ireland title. Their wins are a huge boost to the game in the west.

We recently concluded very entertaining and highly competitive club championships, with defending All-Ireland champions St. Brigid's eventually being dethroned after extra-time by Castlebar Mitchels. The Mayo champions have had a long wait for the successes enjoyed this season and I know they will cherish the opportunity to represent Connacht.

I have been very impressed all season with the quality of football, strength and momentum of intermediate side Kiltane and I won't be surprised if they bring further glory to their club. Fuerty overcame Headford in the Junior Final and they too have been very impressive on their way to picking up their county and provincial titles.

The intermediate hurling championship saw the return of Tooreen to the Connacht final and they put up a gallant display against the eventual winners Kilnadeema/Leitrim, and I know they will cherish their opportunity to represent Galway and Connacht.

Great progress has been made in hurling in Sligo and for the second year in a row Calry/St Joseph's were crowned provincial junior champions. I wish all the teams representing the province the very best in their competition

Beannachtaí na Nollag oraibh go léir agus athbhliain faoi mhaise.
Is mise,

**Frank Burke,
President,
Connacht Council GAA**

Secretary's Note

BRINGING 2013 to a close, it has to be said what an enjoyable and successful year of football and hurling it has been for the province.

At one stage there was a chance that Connacht teams would hold all of the major honours in football: St Brigid's were the senior club champions; Galway were the All-Ireland U-21 champions and Mayo minors won the All-Ireland. For a couple of hours the chance was there, but unfortunately the Mayo seniors fell narrowly shot for the second year in a row. They'll be back though.

As usual in the GAA, there is very little time to relax and come the first week in January, all focus will turn to the Connacht GAA FBD League again as the new season starts.

We'll all be looking for indications to assess the counties in the New Year and with teams back to collective training earlier than ever and challenge games popping up already, it will be very interesting to see the standard of play in the early weeks.

For many of the clubs it will soon be time to start planning for their upcoming league and championship campaigns, but a few teams will still be focusing on last year's competitions, as Castlebar Mitchels, Portumna, Kiltane, Kilnadeema/Leitrim, Calry/St Joseph's and Fuerty go on to the All-Ireland Series to represent Connacht in the club semi-finals, and hopefully, finals. You all have the full support of the province and it would be great to see a similar return to last year.

At this stage, we have been a year in the new Connacht GAA Centre and what a pleasure it has been to witness its growth. It is terrific to see teams of all ages playing on the pitch and I think the facility has proven a great relief to club grounds, especially in the long winter months. Hopefully in the year ahead the Centre can be put to an even greater use by everyone.

Finally, I want to wish all of our GAA people a very Happy Christmas, and a very enjoyable 2014.

Is mise, le meas

**JOHN PRENTY
Runai, CLG Cuige Connachta**



'Into the West'



Keep yourself in the loop. Sign up today for your free electronic copy of the magazine - emailed directly to your Inbox. To sign up, email magazine@connachtgaa.ie

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Cover Photos - Main Picture: Castlebar Mitchels captain Donal Newcombe celebrates Mitchels' AIB Connacht Senior Club Football Championship Final win. Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE
Inset: Claire Egan celebrates Carnacon's All-Ireland win. Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE
Inset: Claregalway's Marian Moran and Emer Joyce celebrate their win in the All-Ireland Ladies intermediate final after their victory over Thomas Davis. Photo: Brendan Moran / SPORTSFILE

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Connacht Man of the Match Awards, 2013



Corofin U-21s complete fine year with county title



Bohola Moy Davitts - Mayo County U-21 A champions



Super season for Castleconnor GAA



Carnacon's finest

Carnacon (Mayo)..... 1-6
Donaghmoyme
(Monaghan) 0-8

By **MIKE FINNERTY** Mayo News

THE sight of the entire Carnacon team defending en masse, protecting their own goal, preserving their lead in the dying seconds of last Sunday's All-Ireland club final is an image that will stand the test of time for their loyal supporters.

It was a powerful snapshot of what has made this remarkable group of women so successful over the last 15 seasons. All for one, and one for all.

They hassled, harried, tackled, blocked, chased and ran themselves into the ground in pursuit of victory, shutting Donaghmoyme out for the last fifteen minutes to snatch a famous victory that was as hard-fought as it was deserved.

Carnacon won the Dolores Tyrell Cup for the fifth time because they worked together, backed each other up, and refused to give in, even when swimming against the tide in the first half, in particular.



Carnacon's Cora Staunton celebrates with her team-mate Aoife Loftus at the end of the game.



Claire Egan celebrates Carnacon's All-Ireland win. Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

Donaghmoyme, the team that stripped the Mayo champions of their title last year, threatened to over-run their old foes in the first period but failed abysmally to convert territory and possession into scores, and paid the ultimate price.

The Monaghan ladies, a fine side in their own right, will have huge regrets this week, and their 13 wides in the first half will haunt them in the months ahead.

In contrast, Carnacon were ruthlessly efficient and, crucially, they struck for the only goal of the day five minutes into the second-half when Cora Staunton smacked home a penalty.

The score rejuvenated both the player and her team, and they were much more formidable opponents from there on.

The sides were level at the end of an

absorbing, yet disjointed, first half (0-3 apiece) as Carnacon hung on grimly in the face of relentless pressure and wave after wave of Donaghmoyme attacks.

The 'full-court press' approach of the Monaghan ladies caused Carnacon huge problems in terms of winning possession from their own kick-outs, but a litany of wides and missed opportunities meant that they were unable to pull away.

They led on three occasions in that opening half, but each time Cora Staunton hit the target (including twice from frees) to reel the holders back in.

Carnacon were out-of-sorts, overall, but hanging on in there.

By the interval an arm wrestle was in prospect.

Cathriona McConnell (who was well



hour



Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

contained by the excellent Caroline McGing) converted a free after the restart to nudge Donaghmoyne ahead, but the fun was only starting.

There were five minutes on the clock when the lively Aoife Brennan was brought down in the square, and Cora stepped up to drill a penalty down the middle of Linda Martin's goal.

Carnacon were ahead for the first time, against the head.

Their two-point lead lasted only three minutes as Rosemary Courtney and Majella Woods nailed quickfire scores to level the match for the fourth time.

Carnacon's policy of running at the heart of Donaghmoyne's defence was starting to pay off though, and Staunton lost both her 'shadow' Sharon Courtney

and friends, to break through and fire over the lead score again.

Inside four minutes, the Ulster champions were ahead once more after Cathriona McConnell kicked a couple of frees in quick succession. It seemed that Carnacon had met their match.

The winners saved their best football though for the last fifteen minutes as, all over the field, they upped their game.

Goalkeeper Michelle Higgins marshalled her troops impressively, while the full-back line of Caroline McGing, Noelle Tierney and Sharon McGing shut up shop, and Marie Corbett led by example in the half-back line.

Claire Egan, Doireann Hughes and Martha Carter also got a grip around the middle while Michelle McGing rolled back the years on the 'forty'. Around them, Fiona McHale and Cora went to work again too.

The tireless Michelle McGing levelled the match for the sixth and final time on 47 minutes and Cora swung over what turned out to be the winning score less than sixty seconds later.

The last quarter of an hour saw Carnacon under siege but they refused to surrender. They got what they deserved.

CARNACON: M Higgins; S McGing, N Tierney, C McGing; M Corbett, E Flannery, A Loftus; C Egan, M Carter; D Hughes, M McGing (0-1), F McHale; A Brennan, C Staunton (1-5, 1-0 pen, 2fs), M Corbett.

DONAGHMOYNE: L Martin; J Geoghe-

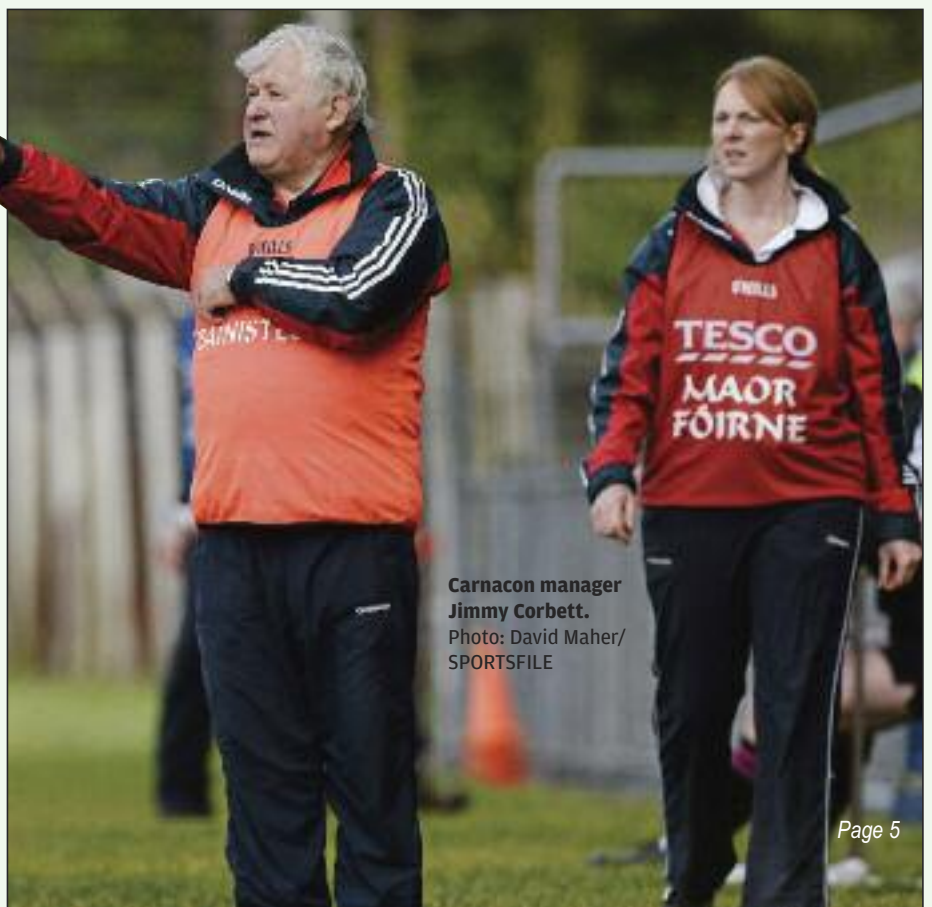


Carnacon captain Marie Corbett lifts the Dolores Tyrrell Memorial Cup.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

gan, F Courtney, H Kingham; L Kingham, S Courtney, J Courtney; A Casey, C Courtney; E McElroy, F Lafferty, R Courtney (0-1); C McConnell (0-4, 4fs), M Woods (0-2), N Callan (0-1). Subs used: S McConnell for J Courtney.

REF: P Kehoe (Carlow).



Carnacon manager Jimmy Corbett.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



Mighty Mitchels are



Neil Douglas beats St Brigid's goalkeeper Shane Curran to score his side's second goal from the penalty spot.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

Castlebar3-13
St Brigid's2-12

(After extra-time)

By **MIKE FINNERTY** Mayo News

WHEN it mattered most, one of Castlebar Mitchels' key men seized the moment. Just like they had done throughout the course of an epic test of mental and physical endurance that had masqueraded as the Connacht Club Championship Final.

A remarkable game at Dr Hyde Park had been won by the Mayo champions, the Shane McGettigan Cup had been presented, but the winning captain, Donie Newcombe, still had the presence of mind to mention some absent friends in his speech.

Ger Feeney and Donie McEllin, two Mitchels stalwarts who lost their lives the week before the Mayo SFC Final in 2010,



Richie Feeney celebrates after scoring his side's third goal.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



High Kings again

were fittingly remembered in the club's finest hour.

It was another example of both the minor details and the big picture being utmost in Castlebar minds.

Their ability to think clearly, especially in pressurised situations, was a hallmark of Mitchels' latest landmark success. They never panicked, kept their composure at all times, and in the end prevailed after more than ninety minutes of an old-fashioned shoot-out.

After 20 years of hurt, they ended the wait for a Connacht club title in style. They won a classic.

The story of this topsy-turvy contest is not easily told.

In the end, four points without reply in the second period of extra-time turned out to be the decisive scores as Castlebar subs James Durcan (2) and Cian Costello, along with Danny Kirby, kicked the points that won the day.

St Brigid's, who were down to 13 men at that stage after red cards for Dar-

ragh Donnelly (two yellows) and Richie Blaine in extra-time, were unable to respond and surrendered their Connacht and All-Ireland titles in the process.

But these are only a handful of the facts and figures that shaped a match that will live long in the memory.

Mitchels prevailed in the end because they refused, point-blank, to be beaten. Even when the odds were stacked against them, and defeat seemed the most likely outcome.

This mindset was epitomised by men like Alan Feeney, who delivered a master-class in defensive excellence and bent the game to his will with a display that was as defiant as it was inspirational. Each and every one of his colleagues followed his lead.



Castlebar Mitchels captain Donal Newcombe celebrates Mitchels' AIB Connacht Senior Club Football Championship Final win.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



St Brigid's goalkeeper Shane Curran in action against Neil Douglas.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE



Castlebar Mitchels players and supporters celebrate at the end of the game.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

The Mitchels recovered from a standing start (falling 1-2 to no score behind after seven minutes) but still trailed by 1-6 to 1-1 at the first change of ends.

Senan Kilbride lashed in St Brigid's goal and the specialists were so well-organised defensively that it looked for quite some time that Tom King's eighth minute free was all Castlebar might manage to score in the first half.

However, a well-taken goal from Danny Kirby, after Ray O'Malley's surging run, on 21 minutes proved crucial as it gave Mitchels a glimpse of what was possible.

An unpredictable game to begin with, it took on a life of its own in the third quarter as Castlebar caught fire, gunning 2-5 in the space of thirteen terrific minutes of football.

Three quickfire points from Tom King (two frees) in the four minutes after the restart gave the match a completely different complexion, but it took another turn soon after when Barry Moran was red-carded by the inscrutable Marty Duffy after he had collided with St Brigid's Karol Mannion.

Down to 14 men against a team as well-coached and drilled as the All-Ireland champions, Castlebar seemed to be in a tight corner.

Instead, they threw off the shackles and rattled off a further 2-2 in the space of

five minutes, as if annoyed by Moran's dismissal.

Their first goal came on 40 minutes when Neil Douglas swept a penalty past Shane Curran after the elusive Tom King had been fouled, to give Mitchels the lead for the first time.

Three minutes later Richie Feeney swooped to palm in another trademark goal after King's perceptive pass. It was 3-6 to 1-7 and the tide had turned.

The energy expended during this purple patch, especially with only 14 men, started to take its toll though and Brigid's came roaring back.

They preceded to rattle out 1-4 in eight minutes themselves; points from the indefatigable Frankie Dolan (3, two frees) and Senan Kilbride supplemented by a well-taken goal from Richie Blaine in the 52nd minute.

Castlebar were two points down heading for stoppage time but up popped the nerveless Neil Douglas to guide over a fine score from play, allied to a free three minutes into added time to level the game for the first time.

Perhaps the less said about the confusion and chaos that unfolded at the final whistle as the referee appeared to signal for full-time, before awarding Castlebar a free, and then sending off St Brigid's Ian Kilbride, the better.

Extra-time was a war of attrition; the teams still all square at half-time before Castlebar's superior fitness and mental sharpness started to tell and they kicked for home in style.

In a year that they will remember forever, this was their day.

CASTLEBAR MITCHELS: C Naughton; D Newcombe, T Cunniffe, A Feeney; R O'Malley, E O'Reilly, P Durcan; B Moran, A Walsh; N Douglas, T King, G McDonagh; N Lydon, D Kirby, R Feeney.

Subs: F Durkan for McDonagh (52); S Hopkins for Walsh (56); D Joyce (start of extra-time); J Durcan for O'Malley (70); C Costello for Lydon (76); A Walsh for O'Reilly, 78 inj).

ST BRIGID'S: S Curran; R Stack, D Donnelly, J Murray; N McInerney, G Cunniffe, N Grehan; K Mannion, G Ahern; I Kilbride, G Dolan, P Kelly; F Dolan, S Kilbride, C McHugh.

Subs: A Gleeson for McHugh (29); R Blaine for G Dolan (half-time); D O'Connor for Kelly (58); R Kelly (start of extra-time); P Kelly for Grehan (65); M O'Carroll for Mannion (68); S Mannion for Curran (73, inj).

REF: Marty Duffy (Sligo).



Corofin well beaten

Castlebar2-8
Corofin1-10

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

THE GAA cycle is never-ending and now, 20 years after playing a pivotal role in Castlebar Mitchels' only provincial success, Pat Holmes is on the cusp of leading the club back to glory as a manager.

Castlebar have failed to come out of Mayo since that success in 1993, but at Tuam Stadium they looked like an outfit revelling in being liberated from their county; they were worthy winners over a Corofin side bidding to reach their fifth Connacht final in eight years.

Maybe the bookies, who priced Castlebar as 3/1 outsiders, paid a bit too much heed to history.

Corofin, even with the infusion of a lot of youth, have always had a battle-hardened shell that makes teams earn their victory and Castlebar were pushed to the wire before they escaped from Tuam with victory in a cracking contest despite the wind and rain.

Castlebar can now end Mayo's year on a high and for all the recent dominance by the Green and Red at inter-county level, no club from the county has come out of Connacht since Ballina Stephenites in 2007.

Holmes said Mitchels paid little heed to the bookies and that the two goals they nabbed in the second quarter, from Ritchie Feeney and Neil Lydon, were the key scores of the game, helping them lead by 2-4 to 1-5 at the break despite playing against the wind.

"The two goals were crucial - goals win games, and they brought us right back into it and gave us a cushion at half-time. We knew Corofin were going to have to come out after half-time and try and carry the ball against the breeze," he said.

"They played all the football in the first quarter, they got the goal and it looked like the bookies had got it right; but we knew there is great character in this side and we knew they would dig deep and they did dig deep in the last 15 minutes of the first half and came out after half-time and continued it."

Favourites ousted from Connacht championship by rampant Mitchels



Barry Moran goes flying as Kieran Comer of Corofin wins possession in the Connacht senior club semi-final.

Photo: David Maher / SPORTSFILE

Corofin's early dominance yielded a goal from their best player all season Gary Sice, who collected a high ball and blasted home after eight minutes.

Castlebar goalkeeper Ciaran Naughton kept his side in the game when he denied Alan O'Donovan moments later, but the Corofin man pointed the resultant '45' and Sice landed a free to give the Galway champions a 1-3 to 0-1 lead after 14 minutes.

But then the game was turned on its head. Castlebar worked a series of handpasses up the field against the wind and gaps opened in a Corofin defence badly missing the influence of former Tribesmen defender Kieran Fitzgerald, who was injured.

and one point from play, put four between them with 12 minutes left, although Castlebar failed to score after that.

Corofin piled on the pressure but the Castlebar defence was solid, with Tom Cunniffe, who had a great second half, scrambling one ball off the line.

Corofin got the margin down to a point deep into stoppage-time but they couldn't save the day to set up another battle with old rivals St Brigid's.

Instead, that honour will fall to a Castlebar side who are revelling under the guidance of Holmes as much now as a manager as they did two decades ago when he was leading matters on the field.

SCORERS - Castlebar Mitchels: T King 0-5 (4fs), R Feeney 1-1, N Lydon 1-0, R O'Malley, J Durcan 0-1 each. Corofin: G Sice 1-3 (0-2fs), I Burke 0-4 (3fs), A O'Donovan ('45'), R Steede, J Canney 0-1 each.

CASTLEBAR MITCHELS: C Naughton; D Newcombe, A Feeney, T Cunniffe; R O'Malley, E O'Reilly, P Durcan; A Walsh, B Moran; N Douglas, G McDonagh, T King; J Durcan, R Feeney, N Lydon. Subs: S Hopkins for J Durcan (55), D Joyce for Douglas (59).

COROFIN: T Healy; M Comer, P Kelly, A Lawless; B O'Donovan, G Higgins, L Silke; R Steede, K Comer; G Sice, A O'Donovan, M Farragher; I Burke, J Canney, R Burke. Subs: A Burke for B O'Donovan (30), D Burke for R Burke (30), M Lundy for A O'Donovan (42).

REF: P Neilan (Roscommon).

Castlebar would probably have been content with a point but as each pass was slipped inside, the opportunity of a goal arose and Neil Douglas handpassed across goal for the excellent Feeney to fist home after 17 minutes.

Corofin suffered another massive setback four minutes later when Donal Newcombe soloed through to crack an effort off the crossbar before Lydon pounced to dispatch the rebound to the net to leave the Mayo champions leading by 2-4 to 1-5 at the interval.

Sice pulled back a point three minutes after the restart but Castlebar won the third quarter by 0-3 to 0-2 as the conditions deteriorated.

Tom King, who kicked four frees



Kiltane capture first Connacht club crown

Kiltane3-10
Boyle2-4

By **MIKE FINNERTY** Mayo News

AFTER 51 years of honest endeavour, hard work, and blood, sweat and tears, often without any great reward, Kiltane GAA club have blazed a trail through Mayo and Connacht this year. They are writing their own history.

A first county Intermediate title for four decades was followed by an historic first Connacht club championship title, and this group of ambitious, dedicated and focused young men show no sign of stopping just yet.

Their latest success story followed a familiar pattern; Kiltane playing an attractive brand of football, a number of talented individuals catching the eye, and, ultimately, the team getting the job done. Nine championship games and counting now have won since last May.

And just like they've done all year long, Kiltane took care of business here with style, panache and goals.

The team that Martin Barrett has painstakingly assembled have developed a knack for breaking teams with decisive goals, and Boyle were their latest victims.

The swashbuckling Seán Gaughan got the ball rolling on eleven minutes (with a little help from a deflection) and Martin Gallagher and Mikie Sweeney both finished flowing moves to the Boyle net during the second half.

All three goals epitomised just how comfortable Kiltane players are on the ball, and how capable they are of retaining possession, and making ground, at the same time.

The Mayo champions could even afford to see the mercurial Mikie Sweeney smack a penalty wide ten minutes into the second half, and still end up freewheeling to the title.

That luxury was made possible by the herculean efforts of their defence, a unit that has had its fair share of criticism in recent weeks after big leads were lost due to unforced errors and basic mistakes.

This was different though, as goalkeeper, Michael John Reilly, pulled off a string of saves in the first half to frustrate Boyle's marquee marksmen, and Kiltane's



Kiltane's Tommy Conroy in action for Mayo during their All-Ireland minor final win.

Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

back six of Kevin Ginty, Dara Carey, Rory Corrigan, Martin Gallagher, Tony Gaughan and Seán Gaughan worked in unison to shut up shop.

Believe it or not, this magnificent sextet restricted Boyle's toothless attack to just one point (from a free) in a 45-minute period either side of half-time. Enough said.

The signs were ominous for the Roscommon guests from an early stage as Kiltane, playing their sixth successive game in Castlebar, settled quickly and eased into a 1-3 to 0-1 lead.

Jason Healy thumped over the opening score from distance with John Reilly (free) and Mikie Sweeney also hitting the target before Seán Gaughan arrived from deep to goal.

Boyle's response suggested that they would be a lot closer than they actually were at the end.

They played their best football during the second quarter, and Mark O'Connor fired in a 13th minute goal that reeled Kiltane back in.

It was a short-lived state-of-play though as Kiltane kicked on with three unanswered points in five minutes from Shane Lindsay, Tommy Conroy and PJ Gaughan to set themselves up for a big second half display.

Ahead by 1-6 to 1-3 at the break, the Mayo standard-bearers tagged on a further 2-3 without reply after the restart and closed the game out in the process.

Mikie Sweeney helped himself to 1-2 of that tally, despite having to dig deep into his box of tricks to wear down corner-back Colm Brennan.

There was no shortage of perspiration from a well-drilled Boyle outfit, but they were woefully short of inspiration up front.

Their scoring issues were underlined by the fact that Roscommon forward, Donie Smith, failed to score from play and none of his colleagues were able to take up the slack.

Boyle's perseverance was rewarded when team captain, David Callaghan, palmed in a consolation goal in the dying moments.

But this was merely a footnote on the story of Kiltane's day, and the bonfires were already being prepared long before the final whistle sounded.

KILTANE: MJ Reilly; K Ginty, D Carey (0-2, '45, f), R Corrigan; S Gaughan (1-0), T Gaughan, M Gallagher (1-0); J Reilly (0-1, 1f), J Healy (0-1); U Corrigan, E Barrett, PJ Gaughan (0-1); T Conroy (0-1), S Lindsay (0-1), M Sweeney (1-3). Subs: S Gallagher for M Gallagher (56); S Carey for Lindsay (56); O Munnally for Barrett (60); C Carey for Ginty (60); J Scanlon for D Carey (60).

BOYLE: T Lowe; C Brennan, D Callaghan (1-0), C Cox; M Hanmore, S Purcell, T McKenna; C Cox, E Smith (0-1); M O'Connor (1-1, 1f), C Smith, J Sufin; D Smith (0-1, 1f), D O'Connor, M O'Donoghoe. Subs: R Hannon (0-1) for C Smith (46); A Sharkey for Hanmore (54); C Beirne for Cox (55); M Goldrick for O'Donoghue (59).

REF: Michael Duffy (Sligo).



Holders have it easy in last four

St Brigid's (Roscommon)5-15

St Mary's, Kiltoghert (Leitrim)1-5

By DECLAN ROONEY Media West Ireland

IT'S fair to say All-Ireland champions, St Brigid's, were never in trouble as four second-half goals and an unanswered 1-11 in the first-half saw them ease past Leitrim winners St Mary's and into a seventh Connacht final in nine years.

Manager Benny O'Brien was delighted with his team's performance as they seek a fourth Connacht crown in a row, but he conceded that yesterday's walk in the park will do little to help them prepare for Castlebar Mitchels.

"This is a huge achievement for a small, rural club. We'll be going there to put up a good show to win it.

"Traditionally we would struggle down here in Carrick, as Roscommon teams tend to do. We were expecting a tough task and the challenge...we would have hoped to have had a tougher game, but you play what's in front of you.

"But Castlebar are a superb team, we played them a few months ago down there and they were missing their county players. They are a real town team, plenty of movement, full of skill and very pacey. Hopefully it will be a good game of football," said O'Brien.

Brigid's were untouchable at Pairc Sean McDi-

armada and long before the start their hunger for the challenge was evident. Two hours before throw in the entire panel was outside the locked gates of the Carrick-on-Shannon venue. Their 42-year-old goalkeeper Shane Curran anxiously paced the carpark, desperate to begin his pre-match routine. And once the ball was thrown in they tore a poor St Mary's to shreds.

Raymond Mulvey actually kicked St Mary's into the lead in the first minute, but from there on their challenge took a dramatic nosedive as St Brigid's splendid movement proved too much for the helpless Leitrim side.

Karl Mannion, Senan Kilbride and Frankie Dolan all rattled off quick points to give their team control, but once Kilbride's audacious flick sent Frankie Dolan in for the opening goal on nine minutes, St Mary's quickly retreated into their shells.

Another eight unanswered points arrived for the Roscommon champions before the break as they led by 1-11 to 0-1 at half-time, a lead that in no way flattered them.

Nothing barring a miracle would save St Mary's and they needed a lot more than shooting two of the first three points of the second-half.

And when man of the match Pdraig Kelly goaled for St Brigid's in the 39th minute to put 15 points between the side and Karl Mannion's penalty soon followed, plans were being hatched for the Connacht final.

Mulvey was far and away St Mary's best player on the day and five minutes from time he hit a de-

served goal when he latched on to a quick free from skipper James Glancy. But that score barely impacted the occasion.

Substitutes Richie Blaine and David O'Connor both hit the net in the last 11 minutes for St Brigid's, but at that stage a punch-drunk Mary's were unable to halt continuous counter attacks.

It was easy pickings for the Roscommon champions, but a sterner test awaits in the Connacht decider.

SCORERS - St Brigid's: **F Dolan 1-3 (1f, 1'45), R Blaine 1-2, S Kilbride 0-4 (2f), K Mannion 1-1, (1-Open), P Kelly 1-1, D O'Connor 1-0, G Dolan 0-3, N McInerney 0-1.**

St Marys: **R Mulvey 1-3, A Doherty 0-1, N McWeeney 0-1.**

ST BRIGID'S: S Curran; R Stack, D Donnelly, J Murray; N Grehan, G Cunniffe, N McInerney; K Mannion, G Ahern; A McInerney, D Dolan, P Kelly; F Dolan, S Kilbride, A Gleeson.

Subs: **G Dolan for D Dolan 11, R Blaine for A McInerney 42, R Kelly for Cunniffe 42, I Kilbride for Ahern 50, D O'Connor for F Dolan 54.**

ST MARY'S: B Flynn; R Kennedy, J Glancy, J Cassidy; J de Lacey, C Farrell, N McWeeney; D Lowe, C Cunniffe; A Doherty, M McWeeney, B O'Donnell; N Commerton, R Mulvey, R Lowe.

Subs: **Conor McWeeney for de Lacey 17, D Turley for O'Donnell 42, Colin McWeeney for Doherty 45, D Crowe for Farrell 54.**

REF: Jerome Henry (Mayo).

Brigid's account for Sligo champions

St Brigid's (Roscommon)2-10

Tourlestrane (Sligo)0-9

By LEO GRAY Sligo Champion

TOURLESTRANE'S provincial campaign came to a premature end at Dr Hyde Park, Roscommon, as reigning Connacht and All-Ireland club champions, St Brigid's of Kiltoom, overpowered them to record victory in their AIB Connacht Club quarter-final meeting

Early on there appeared cautious grounds for South Sligo optimism as - playing against a howling wind in the opening-half - an experienced Tourlestrane defended in numbers to restrict Frankie Dolan and co. to three points in the game's opening quarter (0-3 to 0-0).

Having said that, though, it was already apparent that the Sligo side were being outgunned in centre-field - despite the rotating presence of a deep-lying John Quinn and Brian Egan in that sector also at times - and, worryingly, St Brigid's attacks looked eye-catchingly more threatening on each occasion.

Two little cameos that, on reflection, sum up the difference between the sides on the day came on 16 and 21 minutes respectively.

Firstly, when - in a rare first-half Tourlestrane foray upfield - John Kelly's terrific long diagonal pass found Quinn it didn't subsequently reach the oncoming Brian Egan swiftly enough and Egan was forced to shoot wide.

Against that, at the other end five minutes later - and following a well-despatched 18th

minute Frankie Dolan free also - when Tourlestrane's amassed backs looked to have quelled a St Brigid's attack, that man Dolan intuitively pulled on a spilled ball for his side's opening goal to put clear daylight between the sides (1-4 to 0-0).

Further pre-interval points from St Brigid's Eoin Sheehy and Karol Mannion piled the pressure on a, by now, beleaguered looking Tourlestrane and a first-half added time Egan free - his side's only score in that opening-half - did little to hide the size of the task already facing the Sligo representatives (1-6 to 0-1).

Indeed, any glimmer of hope for Tourlestrane was ended three minutes into the second-half when the Kiltoom outfit decisively notched a second goal - Garvan Dolan blasting past Seamus Gildea from close-range following some slick build up play - to leave St Brigid's with an insurmountable eleven point advantage (2-6 to 0-1).

Although points in quick succession from Tourlestrane's John Kelly and Alan Dunne put a faintly better gloss on the scoreboard by the 35th minute, frees in response from Dolan (his second free) and Senan Kilbride - with a 38th Gary Gaughan point for the South Sligo side sandwiched in between - ensured the gap was still an overwhelming ten points at the end of the game's third quarter (2-8 to 0-4).

That was back up to eleven again when St Brigid's substitute Adrian Gleeson claimed a 46th minute point and, only for Gildea's amazingly instinctive repelling of a Ronan Stack shot, the defending All-Ireland club champions would have claimed a third goal on 48 minutes (2-9 to 0-4).

When Stephen Henry made a belated appear-

ance for Tourlestrane on 49 minutes, it signalled the beginning of a late rally from the Sligo champions - with Henry himself clipping over from close-in less than a minute after replacing Alan Dunne (Alan Dunne 2-9 to 0-5).

Senan Kilbride did respond quickly for St Brigid's but, on 55 minutes, Cathal Henry forced former Roscommon goalkeeper, Shane Curran, to terrifically tip his shot over the bar and Kelly, Egan (free) and Stephen Henry again (with an excellent effort from distance) all helped add respectability to their side's tally (2-10 to 0-9 at the end).

Overall, however, their seven point losing margin somewhat flattered Tourlestrane on this occasion and they'll be hugely disappointed at their display this time out.

TOURLESTRANE: S. Gildea; B. Walsh, B. Kennedy, D. Dunne; S. Dunne (capt), N. Gaughan, J. Leonard; E. O'Hara, A. McIntyre; J. Marren, J. Quinn, A. Dunne (0-1); G. Gaughan (0-1), B. Egan (0-2, 2f), Jo. Kelly (0-2) Subs: C. Henry (0-1) for Marren (28);, D. Durkin for Kennedy (40); S. Henry (0-2) for A Dunne (49); J. F. Carr for S Dunne (54).

ST BRIGID'S: S. Curran; R. Stack (0-1), R. Kelly, N. Grehan (capt); N. McInerney, D. Donnelly, E. Sheehy (0-1); K. Mannion (0-2), G. Ahern; G. Cunniffe, G. Dolan (1-0), P. Kelly; F. Dolan (1-3, 2f) S. Kilbride (0-2), C. McHugh. Subs: A. Gleeson (0-1) for McHugh (H-T); A. McKiernan for Grehan (53); J. Murray for R Kelly (53); D. O'Connor for G Dolan (55), E. Egan for F Dolan (57).

REF: Eamon O'Grady (Leitrim).



Kiltane escape to a narrow win

**Kiltane2-12
Drumcliffe/ Rosses Point ..4-5**

By MIKE FINNERTY Mayo News

THE hardest part of trying to tell the story of a game like this is finding the best place to start.

Five minutes into the second-half it seemed like Kiltane's supporters could start painting Bangor, Doohoma, Mount Jubilee, Geesala, and everywhere in between, blue and gold in anticipation of the club's first Connacht Club Final.

Martin Barrett's driven and focused group of players had just gone 11 points clear, courtesy of a second goal from Mikey Sweeney, a young man who is in the form of his life these days.

At 2-11 to 1-3 down, Drumcliffe/Rosses Point seemed just about ready to begin the trip back to Sligo. All that remained was for the referee to blow it up early, and let us be on our way too. There was nothing to see here.

Or so we thought.

Less than half-an-hour later and Kiltane were hanging on for dear life, just a point up deep in injury-time, when Drumcliffe/Rosses Point substitute, Colin Ginty, flashed a shot wide that would have sent this semi-final into extra-time had it hit its intended target.

The final whistle blew seconds later, leaving plenty of issues to be debated.

Ironically, the only issue Kiltane had in the first half was that they didn't have enough time to rack up more scores.

With Mikey Sweeney in one of 'those' moods, the Erris lads had engineered a 1-10 to 1-2 lead by the change of ends.

Sweeney helped himself to 1-4 before the break, all from play, and between his outrageous angled points, sharp movement, cushioned, defence-splitting passes, and well-taken 'soccer style' goal, it was hard to know where to look.

He was on fire.

The other half of Kiltane's dynamic duo in the full-forward line, Tommy 'Goals' Conroy, was also leading Drumcliffe/Rosses Point a merry dance.

Truth be told, the visitors from Sligo were in dire straits at that stage. Their first score came in the 15th minute when Kevin Davey ghosted in to flick a delivery from John Harvey past a flat-footed MJ Reilly, and a couple of frees from Paul Logan was all they managed in the second quarter.

They were unable to break down Kiltane's well-organised defence and couldn't cope with their freestyling attacking flair, and Sweeney's trickery and touch, in particular.

Things went from bad to worse in the opening minutes of the second half as Ultan Corrigan fired over a point before Sweeney goaled in style again in the third minute. Drumcliffe/Rosses Point were being taken apart.

Over the next twenty minutes though, everything changed, changed utterly.

Kiltane hit the snooze button, relaxed their grip on the game, and the Sligo lads upped the ante, their pride hurt and egos bruised, perhaps.

There were 43 minutes on the clock when Neil Ewing slalomed his way through the Kiltane cover before thumping a low left-footed shot past MJ Reilly.

Eight minutes later and Niall Colleary did likewise, rippling the Kiltane net from close-range to leave just three points between the sides.

By that stage Kiltane's Stephen Sweeney

and Drumcliffe's John Bellew had both been red-carded; Sweeney for a high challenge on Bellew, and the latter for retaliation.

The extra space on the field meant that the last ten minutes were wild and loose, but Mikey Sweeney restored some order when he won a free that Ultan Corrigan converted to end a 21 minute wait for a Kiltane score.

That looked like it might break Drumcliffe/Rosses Point's resolve but, instead, they held a nervous-looking Kiltane scoreless for the last ten minutes and plundered a fourth goal at the other end.

Corner-forward Niall Colleary bundled the ball over the line in the 60th minute after Alan O'Dowd's flick cannoned off the post, as the Sligo standard-bearers thundered towards the finish line.

Kiltane were fading fast, but just managed to see it through.

KILTANE: MJ Reilly; D Carey, R Corrigan, S Sweeney; PJ Gaughan T Gaughan, M Gallagher; J Reilly (0-2, 2fs), J Healy; U Corrigan (0-3, 1f), S Carey (0-1), E Barrett (0-1); S Gaughan, T Conroy (0-1), M Sweeney (2-4). Subs: **S Lindsay for Barrett (37m); S Gallagher for M Gallagher (40m, inj); J Scanlon for R Corrigan (43m).**

DRUMCLIFFE/ROSSES POINT: B Holland; C McLoughlin, C Kivlehan, S Payton; J McGowan, G Feeney, J Harvey; B Og Murphy, M Horkan; N Ewing (1-0), P Logan (0-5, 5fs), P Gallagher; K Davey (1-0), J Hester, N Colleary (2-0). Subs: **J Bellew for Gallagher (23m, inj); D Long for Kivlehan (34m); C Ginty for Murphy (45m); N Canning for Hester (55m); A O'Dowd for Davey.**

REF: M Flaherty (Galway).

pointed free from close range less than a minute in from the boot of midfielder Robert Hughes.

His opposite number John Reilly levelled the game up seven minutes later also kicking a free into the Bacon Factory end of the ground. The north Mayo men pushed themselves into the lead a minute later, when Martin Gallagher, galloped up the pitch from his wing-back berth, before driving the ball over the bar from distance.

Hughes responded again from a placed ball to tie the contest up just after the ten minute mark, but the next time a flag was raised by an umpire it was a green one for Sweeney's major.

Hughes did kick his third point of the game shortly after Sweeney's goal, but Martin Barrett's side swiftly went through the gears and pushed home for victory early on and kicked six unanswered points before the break.

Sweeney, who picked up the official man-of-

Kiltane keep up winning ways

**Kiltane1-15
Menlough0-9**

By COLM GANNON Mayo Advertiser

KILTANE booked their place in the final four of the Connacht Intermediate Football Championship with an impressive display in MacHale Park.

The north Mayo men ran out six point winners over the Galway champions Menlough, thank in no small part to Mikey Sweeney's goal 12 minutes into the first half.

Sweeney swept the ball to the net after Jason Healy intercepted a poor clearance from Jason O'Neill in the Menlough goal and fed the ball to Sweeney who made no mistake from close range.

The goal put Kiltane into a 1-2 to 0-2 lead and got their tails up, after an even-even opening ten minutes of the game. It was the Galway side who opened the scoring with a



Boyle stroll past Eslin challenge

Boyle4-22
Eslin1-5

By IAN COONEY Roscommon Herald

FARCICAL fare on a beautiful winter's day in Carrick-on-Shannon as Boyle routed Leitrim side Eslin to reach the Connacht club final against Mayo's Kiltane.

Boyle were professional but they will hardly thank the opposition for providing such a feeble effort. David O'Connor's men were as well off back in the Abbey Park testing each other out in an A v B match.

Eslin were beaten in the Leitrim county final six weeks ago. In their own minds, that's where their season ended because it was blatantly obvious that they had done precious little since.

The Roscommon champions did as they pleased from the first whistle to the last. Leading by 3-13 to 0-1 at the interval, David O'Connor took off marquee forward Donal Smith. By the 40th minute, all five substitutes were used. In truth if Boyle changed their entire team at the break, it wouldn't have made any difference. Eslin were just that bad.

Enda Smith's performance at midfield was noteworthy. He controlled the game for Boyle in this sector. His high energy levels saw him bomb forward at every opportunity. He was through on goal at least five times, netting once. In the other instances, he saved Eslin from further humiliation by simply fisting the ball over the bar.

Mark O'Donohoe and Donal Smith were given the leeway they thrive on to kick some eye-catching scores. Mark O'Connor enjoyed a productive second half and sub-

stitute Ray Hannon made a positive contribution, kicking three points from play.

Further back the field, Seán Purcell's attacking option from centre-back was utilised on numerous occasions and the Roscommon defender helped himself to two goals. The full-back line, especially David Callaghan, was very solid. Indeed Callaghan easily won his battle with Conor Beirne and the Leitrim forward, exiled by the county alongside his brother Tomás and two other players as a result of a breach of discipline last season, hardly influenced the game apart from a fine goal four minutes from time.

Boyle kicked four points inside the opening five minutes through Cian Smith (2), Donal Smith and Mark O'Donohoe before Joseph Stenson opened Eslin's account in the ninth minute.

But the respite for the Leitrim side was short-lived as another glut of scores arrived. O'Donohoe found the range spectacularly to the right of goal and he added another in the 12th minute.

Jim Suffin was unlucky to see his ferocious low shot come back off the post but it didn't take long for the first green flag to be raised. Cian Smith and Darren O'Connor combined before Enda Smith had the simplest of tasks to flick the ball into the empty net.

Donal Smith landed a fine score from 40 metres before O'Connor had all the time in the world to fist a score. The second goal arrived in the 21st minute when O'Donohoe held off his marker to find Donal Smith and the Roscommon forward fired spectacularly to the net.

A third green flag followed inside a minute when Purcell fastened himself to another flowing move to pick his spot. There was still time for Cian Smith (a free),

O'Connor, Enda Smith (2) and Purcell to find the target to give their side a staggering 21-point lead at the break.

Boyle enjoyed the luxury of making changes in the second half. The scoring rate dropped but the North Roscommon side, driven on by Enda Smith, still held the edge. Ray Hannon announced his arrival with a few fine points. Mark O'Connor also tagged on three points, including two from play. Purcell grabbed his side's fourth goal in the 51st minute when he was picked out by O'Connor after Smith started the move.

Boyle goalkeeper Tadhg Lowe, who had made a smart save minutes earlier, couldn't keep out Conor Beirne's stinging drive in the 56th minute but it mattered little. Boyle had been home and hosed a long time ago.

BOYLE: T. Lowe; C. Brennan, D. Callaghan, M. Hanmore; A. Sharkey, S. Purcell (2-1), T. McKenna; C. Cox, E. Smith (1-4); M. O'Connor (0-3, one free), C. Smith (0-4, one free), J. Suffin; D. Smith (1-2), D. O'Connor (0-2), M. O'Donohoe (0-3).

Subs: R. Hannon (0-3) for D. Smith (half-time), M. Goldrick for Hanmore (half-time), C. Beirne for Brennan (half-time), D. Kelly for Donohoe (37 mins), K. Feighan for Suffin (40 mins).

ESLIN: E. Turbitt; P. Kilcrann, C. Reynolds, R. Reynolds; P. McNulty, E. Stenson (0-1), B. Bohan; T. Beirne, J. O'Flynn; J. Stenson (0-2), D. Ward, B. McLoughlin (0-2, one free); A. McCaffrey, C. Beirne (1-0), S. Beirne. Subs: T. McLoughlin for McCaffrey (half-time).

REF: L. Devenney (Mayo).

the-match award followed up his goal with a close in effort after the ball was worked across the 21 yard line. Nine minutes before the break John Reilly powered the ball over the bar from out on the right to register his first score from play. Then Ultan Corrigan got in on the act, with an arcing effort that went over the with aid of the inside of the post, before Pat Joe Gaughan cut across the ball with the outside of his boot to put his side six points to the good, three minutes before the break.

Kiltane kept the foot down for the final few minutes of the half with Sweeney's hard work resulting in another fine score. The Kiltane number 12 chased down a ball that looked to be going wide, kept it in play and from a tight angle swung the ball over the bar expertly. The final word on the half was left to Edmund Barrett who pointed a free to send his team in at the break leading by 1-8 to 0-3.

The Galway champions came out for the

second half with a lot more bite in them than they showed in the opening 30 minutes and twice in the opening ten minutes Michael John Reilly was called on to pull off top drawer saves to keep the ball out of his side's net.

The first time he was called into action after four minutes, Menlough centre-half forward Kevin Reilly found space for a shot close in and Reilly saved well with his foot. The Menlough attacker could possibly have been better off passing to his full-forward Hugh Keeley who was in a better position unmarked.

Nine minutes into the half, Reilly was forced to pull off a diving save to stop an effort from Mark Costello after the Menlough wing-back had cut in from the wing.

The Galway champions kept chipping away at the Kiltane lead during the early stages of the second-half, but only ever brought it as close as six points at any stage and Kiltane were able to hold them away at distance.

It was a comfortable afternoon in MacHale

Park for the Bangor Erris based club who eased their way into the Connacht semi-final.

KILTANE: MJ Reilly; D Carey (0-1,1 45), R Corrigan, S Sweeney; M Gallagher (0-2), S Gaughan, T Gaughan; J Reilly (0-3,2f), J Healy; PJ Gaughan (0-2), S Carey, M Sweeney (1-3); U Corrigan (0-1), T Conroy, E Barrett (0-1 ,1f). Subs: S Lindsay (0-1) for S Carey, S Gallagher for E Barrett, D Conroy for D Carey, B McAndrew (0-1) for T Conroy, J Scanlon for U Corrigan.

MENLOUGH: J O'Neill; Con Lucey, S Lawless, B Laheen; M Costello, T Mannion (0-1), J Glynn (0-1) ; R Hughes (0-4,4f), D Reilly; C O'Brien (0-3), K Reilly, J Craughwell; B Costello, H Keeley, D Costello. Subs: P Kelly for J Craughwell, P Quirke for H Keeley, C Kenny for S Lawless.

REF: M Duffy (Sligo)



Kilnadeema/Leitrim take Connacht title

A cut above the rest



Tooreen (Mayo)0-16
Four Roads2-9
(Roscommon)

A LAST-MINUTE converted sideline cut by Tooreen's Stephen Coyne propelled the Mayo Senior Hurling Champions to the Connacht GAA Intermediate Club Hurling final as the blues held out to win by the minimum against Roscommon champions Four Roads.

Playing with the strong breeze in the opening half, Tooreen led by 0-10 to 1-4 at the break with the Four Roads goal coming from close range by Johnny Coyne. Tooreen's scorer in chief on the day, Kenny Feeney, registering 0-8 of his side's first half total.

Four Roads drew level in the 45th minute when a Micheal Kelly penalty found the back of the Tooreen net, but a late surge of Tooreen points from Paul Hunt, Fergal Boland and Feeney again kept the East Mayo side in front before Stephen Coyne justified his return from Australia with his second converted line ball of the day to win the game for Tooreen.

Tooreen now go forward to play Kilnadeema-Leitrim of Galway in the Connacht GAA Intermediate Hurling Final.

TOOREEN: Adrian Hession; Ciaran Finn, Shane Morley, Ciaran Charlton; Stephen Coyne (0-2s), Michael Morley, Brian Delaney; Gary Nolan, Cathal Freeman; David Kenny, Ray Larkin, Joe Ganley; Fergal Boland (0-2), Paul Hunt (0-1), Kenny Feeney (0-11):
Subs: Conor English for Larkin, Sean Markham for Kenny.

FOUR ROADS: D Dowd; S Curley, P Kelly, D Fallon; J Rogerson, B Donnelly, C Coyle; M Kelly (1-0 pen), J Moran (0-1); J Laylor (0-2), S Beirne (0-1), C Dolan; D Dolan (0-3f), J Coyne (1-2), E Rogerson;
Subs: B Kelly, R Kelly, M McLoughlin.



Tooreen Captain Shane Morley (Right) congratulates his team-mate Stephen Coyne (left), who returned from Australia for the summer to help the Tooreen side, and turned in a Man of the Match performance as he converted two line balls.

CONNACHT CHAMPS: Kilnadeema/Leitrim had plenty to celebrate as they added the Connacht intermediate club hurling title to their Galway title. Photo: Joe Keane.

Kilnadeema/Leitrim ...1-14
Tooreen2-9

By **BILL KIELY** Media West Ireland

THE free-scoring of Brian Molloy and Davie Tierney's first-half goal ensured Kilnadeema/Leitrim were able to fend off a late comeback from Tooreen to take the Connacht intermediate club hurling title.

Two late Kenny Feeney goals in the second-half almost saw the Mayo winners take their first Connacht title, but thanks to Molloy's 11-point haul, the Tooreen recovery fell slightly short.

In blustery first-half conditions Tier-

ney's goal was all that separated the sides as Kilnadeema/Leitrim took a 1-4 to 0-4 lead in at the break.

Despite his large final tally Molloy only managed two first-half points, but he still linked up well with Tierney for their goal on eight minutes, with the former county player rattling the net from distance.

But in the second period Kilnadeema/Leitrim upped their efficiency and with Molloy and Shane Lawless – who hit three points – in better form they pulled well clear with time running out.

However, Mayo senior Feeney goaled from a close-range free late on, before he hit his second in added-time to pull Tooreen within two points, but the clock halted their spirited recovery.

SCORERS – Kilnadeema/Leitrim: B Molloy 0-11 (9f), D Tierney 1-0, S Lawless 0-3.
Tooreen: K Feeney 2-3 (2f), F Boland 0-3 (2f), C Freeman 0-2, R Larkin 0-1.

KILNADEEMA/LEITRIM: K Boyle; P Deely, D O'Donoghue, P Stapleton; D Tierney, E Hyland, A Spaight; M Kelly, D Herlihy; A Mitchell, L Geraghty, T Tierney; B Molloy, S Lawless, M Donoghue. **Subs:** D Donoghue for M Donoghue 54, G Winters for Herlihy 55.

TOOREEN: A Hession; C Finn, S Morley, B Delaney; S Coyne, M Morley, G Nolan; C Freeman, C Charlton; D Kenny, R Larkin, F Boland, K Feeney, P Hunt, J Ganley. **Subs:** S Boland for Ganley 39, S Markham for Hunt 49, C English for Larkin 53.

REF: T Carroll (Offaly).



Kilnadeema/Leitrim captain Tom Tierney is presented with the Connacht intermediate hurling title by Connacht GAA President, Frank Burke. Photo Joe Keane.



Fuerty too strong in extra-time

Fuerty0-18
Headford0-12

AFTER EXTRA-TIME

By **DECLAN ROONEY** Media West Ireland

FUERTY picked up their first Connacht junior club football title thanks to some blistering scoring from Niall Kilroy and Gearoid Ennis at Pearse Stadium.

Headford looked sure to pick up the provincial honours for Galway for a third year in succession when a late comeback gave them the lead approaching full-time, but Niall Keenan's injury-time score forced extra-time and the Roscommon men took the initiative from there on.

Fuerty started with great intent and by the 11th minute they had opened out a 0-3

to 0-1 lead with two Kilroy scores either side of a free from Ennis giving them the upper hand.

But Headford soon found their feet and they hit five points in a row before half-time, from Sean and Niall Meenaghan saw Headford led 0-6 to 0-4 at the break.

Headford then failed to score until the 51st minute and in that time Fuerty hit six points without reply and looked certain to take the title. But five points in seven minutes gave Headford the upper hand after an Aaron McDonagh-inspired comeback was halted as Kennan forced extra-time.

And four points from the Roscommon men in the first period of extra time sealed a first provincial football title of the year for Roscommon clubs as Fuerty took a deserved win.

SCORERS – Fuerty: G Ennis 0-8 (5f), N Kilroy 0-6, N Keenan 0-2, P Leahy 0-2,

Headford: N Meenaghan 0-7 (6f), S Meenaghan 0-5 (1f)

FUERTY: J Fallon; P Neilan, P Kelehan, M Keaveney; S Melia, T Bannon, D Delaney; E Bannon, F Hanlon; N Keenan, N Kilroy, P Leahy; G Ennis, G Fallon, R Fallon. Subs: A Moore for M Keaveney 26, N Connolly for G Fallon h-t, E Whyte for Delaney 60, M Connaughton for Hanlon 68, M Keaveney for Melia 78.

HEADFORD: N Walsh; J Leahy, R O'Toole, F Joyce; P Joyce, K Carey, B Carey; D Bane, E McHugh; N Meenaghan, C Sullivan, P Walsh; S Meenaghan, A Meenaghan, E Flynn. Subs: A McDonagh for Flynn 40, E Hannon for Walsh 46, D Corbett for Bane 46, D Moran for F Joyce 50, N Cunningham for Sullivan 58, P Walsh for A Meenaghan 68.

REF: Liam Devenney (Mayo).

Cill Chomain fail at final four stage

Headford1-11
Cill Chomain1-7

By **COLM GANNON** Mayo Advertiser

THE first of a double header in MacHale Park saw heartbreak for the north Mayo club looking to book a spot in the Connacht final, as Cill Chomain came up short against Galway champions Headford.

Ciaran Moran's side who had played with such vim and verve in the Mayo final, failed to reach the same heights on Sunday as a smart and strategic Headford side under the guidance of Mayo man Tom Flynn ran out four point winners.

The Headford full-forward line of Meenaghan's Sean and Niall along with Padraic Pat Walsh were instrumental to the Galway sides win.

Headford started the game brightest and mounted a number of attacks, but skewed their efforts either wide of the posts or short into Aaron Healy's hands in the Cill Chomain goal. The scoring was opened seven minutes in by the Mayo men with Terrence Moran slotting over a free. Sean Meenaghan levelled the game up a minute later when he cut in down the right hand side to make some space for a left footed effort from close range.

The mounting Headford pressure on the Cill Chomain back line paid even more dividends when Padraic Pat Walsh found the back of the net after 11 minutes. The ever dangerous Niall Meenaghan played the ball across the face of the Cill Chomain goal and Walsh went in bravely to get the vital touch to send the ball to the back of the net.

The game was held up for a lengthy period of time not long after when Cill Chomain captain David Coyle received a hefty challenge and needed a lengthy period of treatment on the field before he was taken off. Coyle did return to the action in the second half once given the all clear. But the incident did turn bizarre as the referee stopped play for treatment to be allowed for the injured Coyle, but restarted the play with the player still receiving treatment on the field only to call a halt to play again shortly afterwards.

When play resumed, Cill Chomain cut the gap back to two points when Rory Ginty kicked a placed ball between the posts. Niall Meenaghan kicked Headford's second point with a fine effort to establish a the three point lead. The Galway men pushed that lead out to five points at the break with Sean Meenaghan and Niall once again adding on scores before the break. The Galway champions went in leading 1-4 to 0-2 at the turnaround.

Cill Chomain kicked the first two points of the second half as they charged back into the action. James McAndrew with a booming effort and a Terrence Moran free closed the gap back to three points, but a nerve settling Sean Meenaghan free kept the north-Galway men in front. Both sides exchanged scores for the next 15 minutes, with Headford keeping their noses in front and at one stage pushing the lead pack out to five points. With Niall Meenaghan kicking two frees and Padraic Pat Walsh adding another. While John F Coyle launched one from way out the country over the bar for Cill Chomain and Terrence Moran kept the free count ticking over. With ten minutes left in the game, Headford were 1-8 to 0-6 up and Cill Chomain badly needed a goal. A long ball in by the now returned David Coyle

bounced around inside the small rectangle and a mass of bodies pounced on the ball. Referee John Gilmartin saw some infringement by one of the Headford defenders and awarded a spot kick to the Mayo side, which was duly dispatched to the back of the net by Derek Moran with some style to cut the gap back to two points and what looked like game on for the final ten minutes. Cill Chomain really needed to get the next score to really test the metal of the Galway men, but it was Sean Meenaghan who raised the white flag next to push the gap out to three points once again. James McAndrew did respond for Cill Chomain with an effort that was tipped over the bar by Neil Walsh in the Headford goal, but it was as close as Cill Chomain got as two late points from Sean Meenaghan and Enda Hannon booked the Galway sides place in the Connacht final and ended the Mayo sides interest in the competition.

CILL CHOMAIN: A Healy; J F Coyle (0-1), M Burke, D Fahy; J Healy, D Coyle, A Murphy; B Moran, D Moran (1-0, 1 pen); R Ginty (0-1,1f), James McAndrew (0-2), M Irwin; G Ruddy (0-1), M Geraghty, T Moran (0-3, 3f). Subs: Alan Nolan for D Coyle, D Murphy for G Ruddy, D Coyle for T Moran, Jamie Cox for D Murphy, D McSweeney for J F Coyle.

HEADFORD: N Walsh; B Carey, J Leahy, K Carey, F Joyce, R O'Toole, P Joyce; E McHugh, D Bane; A Watters, A Meenaghan, E Flynn; S Meenaghan (0-5,4f), N Meenaghan (0-4,3f), P Walsh (1-1). Subs: A McDonagh for E Flynn, C Sullivan for A Watters, R Higgins for F Joyce, E Hannon (0-1) for A Meenaghan.

REF: J Gilmartin (Sligo).

Memories that will never fade

THE journey through life brings one into contact with many great people and one of those legendary figures passed away recently when Noel McHale slipped beyond the clouds. The McHales from the village of Garracloon in Knockmore have been rattling around in my head for as long as I can remember.



The Knockmore football jersey caught my eye many years ago when they'd come to play in the old pitch by the river in Ballycroy and the spirit and desire that was encased in that saffron and blue garment always appealed to me.

Chief among the Knockmore warriors would be the McHales and the most prominent of the brothers, in my view, was the man with the red hair – Noel.

He played with great skill and style and had the balance and evasive abilities of an eel. In those days, the ability to avoid big Ballycroy men was crucial for teams coming into our kingdom and Noel was an expert in this regard.

On one visit, my father, Pat, was lining out at right corner-back for the home side, while his good buddy and partner in crime, Sean Murtagh was on the other wing. Noel was causing all sorts of problems for the home defenders in the opening minutes, so the two boys came up with a plan – they'd give him a taste of their shoulders the next time he tried to waltz through and that'd be the end of him.

So, the next time the ball came to McHale the two friends were ready. Gallagher approached at speed from the left, Murtagh came like a tiger from the right. McHale jinked his way up the middle with the ball, seemingly oblivious to the impending disaster. The ground was shaking as the defenders approached like rugged hyenas after a little sinewy antelope and then, just on the point of impact, McHale stepped aside and the two great friends smashed into one another.

That moment, well-recalled recently, said a lot about Noel McHale. He brought great spirit and style to the Knockmore jersey and he didn't shirk a challenge when it was presented.

You could see the sparkle in his eyes when his team was on the pitch. He was immediately immersed in the game, in the wonderful web of intrigue being fought out on the grass and you could almost see him banking away moments, which he would recall again long after the final whistle.

I've always liked the McHales. They're real people. There's a great love of life running through their veins. Unfortunately, we won't encounter Noel again on this earth, but he left behind him memories that will never fade as long as style, grace, determination and spirit play a part in Gaelic football.

Michael Gallagher.

An Spidéal denied by late surge

Calry/St Joseph's (Sligo) 2-12
An Spidéal (Galway) 2-10

By **LEO GRAY** Sligo Champion

ANY day that a Sligo team captures a Connacht title is a day to be remembered. Any day that a Sligo team wins a Connacht title for the second time in succession, and defeats Galway opposition on both occasions, is one for the history books.

It was Calry/St Joseph's, the kingpins of Sligo hurling over the past ten years, who did just that last Saturday afternoon at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, as they historically retained the Connacht club Junior Hurling Championship title, courtesy of a two point defeat of An Spidéal of Galway.

In what was a topsy-turvy affair, yet still of a high quality, the hour's action served up excellent entertainment for the crowd at the Ballyhunis venue, with both sides playing an attractive brand of hurling.

The Galway champions had little time to prepare for this encounter, having only won their county championship last weekend, but still looked fresh over the course of the hour, and indeed a sustained period of pressure early in the second half looked to have paid dividends, as they held a one point lead after 39 minutes.

However, Calry/St Joseph's experience proved to be crucial, and though at times An Spidéal found themselves in the ascendancy, the winners remained composed, with an assured performance over the final twenty minutes key to this victory.

Kevin Gilmartin, who was outstanding at wing forward and a unanimous choice for the man of the match award, scored 1-1 for his side, and his three-pointer could not have come at a better time. At that point, An Spidéal had drawn level after Seán Ó'Curraoin's excellent 38th minute goal, but Gilmartin responded with an equally impressive effort two minutes later to ensure Calry/St Joseph's three point lead had been restored.

Keith Raymond soon added a point from long range to extend the lead to four, but Fergal Ó'Mannín

pointed four frees in quick succession to wipe out the Sligo champions advantage. However, the resilience of Calry/St Joseph's came to the fore late on, with Eolan McCarthy and the impressive Conor Griffin pointing to ensure the title was to remain with the Sligo men for another year at least.

And that was most definitely the correct result, based on the game as a whole. Over the course of a fast-paced first half, Calry/St Joseph's, though into the breeze, worked hard and raced into a three point lead through Kevin Gilmartin and Conor Griffin(2). An Spidéal were slow to start but soon found their feet - Fergal Ó'Mainnín, outstanding for the Gaeltacht side throughout, scored four first half frees, while Cillín Ó'hEochaidh also added a point in the opening period.

Indeed, it was Ó'hEochaidh who set up teammate Ciarán Breathnach for the Galway outfit's first goal, after some terrific build up play from the full-forward. However, it was only a matter of seconds later when Calry/St Joseph's hit back with a goal of their own, Eolan McCarthy the man on target in first half injury-time.

Two points ahead at the break, Calry/St Joseph's, though troubled at times by a valiant An Spidéal outfit, kept their composure over a frantic second half, and created significant hurling history in the process.

SCORERS – Calry/St Joseph's: **K Raymond 0-5 (2f, 2'65), K Gilmartin 1-1, E McCarthy 1-1, C Griffin 0-3, D Burke 0-2.**
 An Spidéal: **Fergal Ó Mainín 0-10 (10fs), C Breathnach 1-, S Ó Curraoin 1-0.**

CALRY/ST. JOSEPH'S: C Madden; F Keown, M Larkin, N Treacy; F Coyne, L Reidy, J Kenny; R Cox, K Raymond; C Griffin, D Cox, K Gilmartin; D Burke, D Coltery, E McCarthy.

AN SPIDÉAL: M Ó Duinn; D Ó Flatharata, T Ó Caoimh, P Ó Mainín; S Ó Fatharta, M Ó Curraoin, M Breathnach, S Ó Curraoin, L Ó Conghaile, P E Ó Curraoin, F Ó Curranigh, F Ó Mainín, A Ó Curraoin, C Ó hEochaidh, C Breathnach.
 Subs: E Ó hEochaidh for L Ó Conghaile 36.

REF: J McGrath (Westmeath).



All-Ireland **glory** for Claregalway Ladies

Claregalway
(Galway) 1-9
Thomas Davis
(Dublin)..... 0-9

By **FRANK KEARNEY** Media West Ireland

CLAREGALWAY captured the Tesco Homegrown All-Ireland Intermediate Ladies football club title when they defeated an experienced Thomas Davis side from Dublin at St Lomas Park, Mullingar.

Ten minutes into the game the clash was still delicately poised, but a Ciara Newell goal from the penalty spot proved the decisive score that would eventually separate the sides at the end.

The penalty was awarded when goalkeeper Louise Curran took down Charlotte Cooney when bearing down on goal and Thomas Davis were reduced to 14 players when goalkeeper Curran was sin binned.

At that stage the Dublin side had taken a one-point advantage when midfielders Olwyn Carey and Miriam Liston had replied to Michelle Dunleavy's opening pointed free for Claregalway.

After the goal Claregalway received a confidence boost and Deirdre Brennan and Michelle Dunleavy added points in a game where scores were hard to come by with both defences working solidly.

The Dublin side replied with two points before Ciara Burke and Sinead Deegan swapped points before the break to leave Claregalway leading by 1-4 to 0-5 at half time.

This was very much a case of youth versus experience and the younger Claregalway side tore into the second-half with fire and purpose, chasing every ball and harassing their opponents at all times. Ciara Burke and Deirdre Brennan swapped points with Ciara McGuigan and the outstanding Dublin centre back Siobhan McGrath.

The game was still very much in the melting pot eight minutes from the end as Claregalway led by 1-6 to 0-7, but once again indiscipline cost the Dublin side when Karren Sweeney Lynch was sin binned after a needless foul on Deirdre Brennan that saw Ciara Burke point the resulting free.

Within two minutes Burke had landed two further points from play and Claregalway were on their way to victory. The



Claregalway's Marian Moran and Emer Joyce celebrate their win in the All-Ireland Ladies intermediate final after their victory over Thomas Davis.

Photo: Brendan Moran / SPORTSFILE

daughter of former Corofin stalwart Gerry Burke who had picked up the Hall of Fame award the previous night at the Claregalway Hotel had given her side a five-point advantage five minutes from the end.

From there the Dublin side needed at least a goal and although they piled on immense pressure there was no getting through a defensive line where Emile Gavin starred getting tremendous support from captain Fabienne Cooney, Ellie Glynn, Karen Dowd, Amy Rohan and player of the match award winner Michelle Glynn. Late scores from Miriam Liston and Amanda Shiels were too little too late deep in injury time as Claregalway captured All-Ireland honours.

CLAREGALWAY: H Coen; F Cooney, E Gavin, E Glynn; K Dowd, A Rohan, M Glynn; O Dixon, S Gavin; T Hession, C Newell (1-0 pen), C Cooney; M Dunleavy (0-2frs), D Brennan (0-2), C Burke (0-5, 3frs).

Sub: L Brennan for Dunleavy (27).

THOMAS DAVIS: L Curran; K Sweeney Lynch, M Shiels, S Roche; L Fennelly, S McGrath, N Kirby; O Carey (0-1), M Liston (0-2); A Shiels (0-1), S Deegan (0-2), K Fitzsimons; C McGuigan (0-2fs), C Collins McGinty, L Deasy.

Subs: M Liston for Deasy (22), D Brennan for Fitzsimons (40), J Sweeney Knott for Collins McGinty (52).

REF: S Joy (Kerry).



CHAMPIONS: Claregalway captain Fabienne Cooney lifts the All-Ireland Ladies intermediate cup after their victory over Thomas Davis.

Photo: Brendan Moran / SPORTSFILE

Byrne ready to splash the cash

By DECLAN ROONEY
Media West Ireland

GALWAY'S top hurling official has admitted they need to put their hands in their pocket if the Tribesmen are to end their All-Ireland famine.

The chairman of the Galway hurling board, Joe Byrne, has warned that Anthony Cunningham's side will be left behind if they do not invest in the team in the coming years.

Byrne, in his annual report to the Galway hurling board convention, promised to financially weigh in behind the Tribesmen for 2014, but also called on his three managers to 'show leadership' in their roles.

Byrne also called for a unified Galway hurling to improve on a disastrous 2013, that saw a Leinster final defeat to Dublin and subsequent defeat by eventual winners Clare in the knock-out stages.

"The demands to fund our county senior team is challenging, but if we don't invest we will be left behind, and I know the wishes of every Galway hurling supporter is to achieve that ultimate success," said the chairman.

"In 2014 we look forward to our inter-county teams performing to the best of their ability. We have entrusted Anthony



Joe Byrne, chairman of the Galway Hurling Committee. Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

Cunningham, Johnny Kelly and Matt Murphy to show leadership with their respective teams and offer management solutions which will ensure performance.

"In this regard we strongly support their requirements, we will not or have not in the past refused any request for support, be it monetary or otherwise.

"And of course we do this taking cognisance that we do not wish to spend beyond our means, but of course there is nothing wrong with getting value for money. We should leave no stone unturned in this regard," he said.

Byrne will again be Galway's top hurling official in 2013 as he is once more not being opposed for the chairman's role. He vowed to continue the good work that he has overseen for the past few years, with Galway last year historically winning the Leinster title and coming so close to capturing the first All-Ireland senior title in almost a quarter of a century.

Byrne said if they were looking for an example of how to transfer underage success into adult glory, they had look no further than the county's Camogie teams, who won the senior and intermediate county titles in 2013.

"Perhaps the wonderful exploits of our Camogie teams this year can be the catalyst to drive on Galway hurling in 2014. Didn't their wins at senior and Intermediate give the whole county a lift," he said.

Hurley motion set to face Congress

By DECLAN ROONEY
Media West Ireland

AMOTION to outlaw the use of goalkeeper's hurleys for scoring has been forwarded to the Galway County Convention to be prepared for the GAA national congress.

The motion was initially proposed by the Clarinbridge club for the Galway hurling convention, but chairman Joe Byrne has decided to refer it to the County Committee, who prepare all motions for the national stage.

The motion states: "All scores from play and placed balls in hurling can only be scored from the standard size hurl and not from an oversized goalkeeper's hurl, in accordance with the Official Guide 2013 Part 2 – Rule 4 Equipment 4.5. the bas of a hurley, at its widest points shall not be more than 13cm."

Cork goalkeeper Anthony Nash is one of the leading exponents of the 21m free in the game of hurling – he scored two goals in this year's All-Ireland finals – but he has been criticised for his technique, which sees him lift the ball closer to goal before striking.

Nash also employs the use of his oversized hurley when striking for goal, and according to Clarinbridge delegate, Donal Walsh, both issues could be eradicated if their motion is passed.

"There has been a lot of talk about where the free is being struck from, but the reality of it is that it's a major advantage for the goalie to use a bigger hurl. It is a lot easier to (lift the ball closer) with a goalie's hurl because he has a greater margin for error.

"The top free takers rarely take more than half a step forward before their strike with a regulation hurley. If everyone uses the same hurley I think the travelling forward issue would probably disappear as well," he said.

The hurling board chairman confirmed he will be sending the club's motion forward to be prepared for congress.

"We have decided to send it on to the Galway County Convention so that it will be sent forward as a motion for the GAA's national congress. I imagine there will be good support for it there too," said Byrne.



If everyone uses the same hurley I think the travelling forward issue would probably disappear as well.

NUIG championship future up for debate

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

THE continued participation of NUIG in the Galway SFC is to be examined as part of a review aimed at reducing the number of teams playing in the championship each year.

Galway football secretary Seamus O'Grady urged that the number of teams taking part in the senior championship be reduced from 21 to 16 in a bid to improve the standard of football in the county.

But the NUIG Gaelic Games officer, Michael O'Connor, appealed for the college to be allowed remain in the championship, pointing out that the likes of CIT, UCC and UCD made big contributions in Cork and Dublin.

O'Connor said that if the Galway championship was run off over a particular schedule then might be easier for NUIG to make an impact.

"If championship matches were played in April then no one would want to take us on," he said.

He said that the college fielded six adult football teams, three of them at Fresher level, and that the moment there were 120 players from Galway playing on the college teams.

NUIG won the Galway senior championship three times, back in 1933, '34 and '37 when they were known as UCG, but they have not reached the final since 1973.



... when most of the students have departed Galway for the holidays, they are recalled to play in the Galway SFC.

The NUIG hurlers do not participate in the Galway senior club hurling championship.

Football secretary Seamus O'Grady stressed that he was not trying to get rid of NUIG but wanted their inclusion to be considered as part of an overall review.

"We should look at NUIG's participation in the senior championship and what purpose it serves. They have their own Higher Education Leagues at this time of year, in January they participate in the

FBD League and then they have Sigerson at the end of February.

"Then five or six months later, when most of the students have departed Galway for the holidays, they are recalled to play in the Galway SFC, many of them having already played a game with their own home clubs," said O'Grady.

He said that the standard in Galway would rise if the number of clubs was reduced to 16 and this could be achieved by relegating an extra team over the next four years.

O'Grady pointed out that none of the Galway teams who won the senior, intermediate and junior county titles went on this year to win the Connacht title in their grade.

The matter is to be discussed in the coming weeks when delegates get an opportunity to digest a report drawn up by a sub-committee.

Tommy Kelly, a delegate from city club St Michael's warned that the plan to reduce the number of senior clubs would be vehemently opposed.

Hynes eyes cost cutting measures

By **JOHN FALLON**
Media West Ireland

A LEADING Galway GAA has warned that they will have to 'cut their cloth' in 2014 after a big drop in income this year.

John Hynes, the full-time Galway GAA secretary, said they would have no choice but to continue cutting costs as income was continuing to fall.

The Galway football committee suffered a loss of over €54,000 this year

after income fell from €754,939 to €696,027.

The drop for the Galway hurling committee was much greater but they managed to stay in black after cutting costs.

Income of €1,233,431 in 2012 fell to €1,048,929 this year but the board recorded a profit of €17,776.

This was down from a profit of over €82,000 last year and was achieved by reducing expenditure.

Hynes told delegates at the county committee convention that they would have to continue cutting costs in 2014.

"A review of our 2013 revenue and costs shows clearly that an increased focus on cost reduction and cost avoidance is needed.

"We have no option but to 'cut our cloth to measure' to ensure that we can sustain our activities and remain self-sufficient in the future.

"In evaluating where we spend, and what we spend 'value for money' needs to be a key consideration in all of our decisions, and if necessary, difficult decisions should be made to ensure that we get a return on all of our investments," he said.



The price for Mayo reaching the All-Ireland final for the second year leaped by €170,000.

Photo: Ray McManus / SPORTSFILE

Mayo GAA count the costs

By **DANIEL CAREY**
Mayo News

THE cost of preparing the Mayo senior football team jumped by almost €170,000 last year, it was revealed at the County Board Convention held in Breaffrey House Hotel.

The increase was largely attributable to the team holiday, treasurer JP Lambe told delegates, adding that the trip to Miami last January had cost 'in the region' of €156,000. Later, the Garrymore clubman clarified that that figure includes a grant of €80,000 from Croke Park, meaning the cost to the County Board was €76,000.

Travelling expenses in 2013 ran to more than €405,000, compared to just under €271,000 in 2012. Catering and medical expenses for the senior football team also rose, while the cost of sports-gear was slightly down. That left total expenses for the senior team for 2013 at €646,440, compared to €480,334 last year.

Bord na nÓg secretary Seán Mac Éil noted the huge cost of preparing 'one team for one year' when he backed a motion calling for extra coaching personnel. He recalled comments made some years ago by RTÉ pundit Colm O'Rourke, who noted on a visit to Mayo that if 'a fraction' of what was spent on inter-county teams went on coaching, it would make a big difference.

Mac Éil added that set in the context of such a 'serious' increase in senior team

spending from 2012, savings should be made 'within the existing system of expenditure' so that €30,000 to €40,000 could go towards hiring an additional coach. Motions seeking additional coaching personnel were passed and will be referred to the Coaching and Games Committee. The amount spent on coaching and games development in Mayo fell by almost €40,000 in 2013 to €277,498.

The County Board's overall income and expenditure both topped the €2 million mark in 2013, with treasurer Lambe reporting a small surplus of €69,155 for the financial year of October 31, 2013. Commercial income and fund-raising activities brought in considerably more than in 2012.

Minor football expenses topped €102,000, but as Lambe pointed out, 'the minors won the All-Ireland'. The board 'tried to cut back on all teams', he added, noting that the reduction of €26,000 in spending on the county hurlers was largely explained by the fact that they had made two trips to London in 2012.

Gate receipts were down almost €20,000, with Lambe explaining that was down to a combination of increased Cárde Mhaigheo sales plus a number of underage games played under lights in October.

In his first report as secretary, Vincent Neary noted that finance had 'dominated' the County Board's agenda "all year long". He admitted that the debt on MacHale Park in Castlebar is 'a constant struggle to keep serviced in economic times like this', but noted that the board had 'managed' to

do so with the help of clubs. The pitch and stand at the county ground are valued in the board's balance sheet at almost €18 million, but the stand is calculated as having depreciated in value by €150,000.

Mayo are due to travel to New York for the Connacht Championship opener on May 4. Asked by Ballaghaderreen delegate Con Moynihan about the financial implications of the transatlantic trip, chairman Paddy McNicholas replied that there is a grant for travelling to 'the Big Apple' and the board hope that fund-raisers 'will take care of any shortfall'.

The Kiltimagh clubman noted that the season tickets and County Board Development Draw had been 'very successful', but added that there had been a 'very disappointing' response to other fund-raising initiatives.

JP Lambe confirmed there were 'no payments' made in grants and subscriptions to Cumann na mBunscol, Mayo Colleges, Mayo Vocational Schools, Mayo Colleges, the promotion of Irish or Mayo Scór in the last year. This prompted a question from post-primary representative John Horan, who asked: "If clubs are levied [for schools], surely that should be passed on?"

Replying to Seán Duignan (Moygownagh), the treasurer said the €1,000 levy that gave clubs access to extra All-Ireland tickets was included 'under Cárde Mhaigheo' in the accounts. Auditor Michael McHugh confirmed that there was 'no club money' in the sundry debtors list, which increased by over €140,000 during the last financial year.

2014 will be 'difficult' year for fixtures, warns Connelly

By **DANIEL CAREY**
Mayo News

NEXT year will be 'even more difficult' than 2013 for scheduling fixtures, Competitions Control Committee Chairman Mike Connelly told a recent meeting of Mayo GAA Board.

Noting that Mayo manager James Horan had signalled

his intent in an interview with The Mayo News to go 'after' the National League 'big time', Connelly told delegates that success in that competition would reduce the number of weekends available for club matches. He added that the trip to New York in May would also take 'one or two weekends' out of the calendar.

The Hollymount/Car-

ramore clubman noted that they were considering playing the Michael Walsh Leagues early in the year and the divisional cups during the summer.

"While this year was difficult, next year will be even more difficult," said Connelly, who appealed for the clubs' co-operation. "The Michael Walsh is disappointing ... clubs seem to be losing heart

and faith in it. It's an important competition and gives the opportunity to play during the summer, but clubs seem to be happier going outside the county to play challenges."

The CCC's success in having matches played in 2013 were praised by County Board Chairman Paddy McNicholas and Bord na nÓg Secretary Seán Mac Éil.

Going through the motions

By **DANIEL CAREY**
Mayo News

ALL-IRELAND tickets and 'starred' league games dominated the motions submitted by clubs for Mayo GAA Convention at Breffy House Hotel.

No fewer than six motions related to the controversial issue of All-Ireland final tickets, a hot topic after Mayo GAA Board discovered that their allocation in 2013 was lower than in 2012, despite the involvement of both the senior and minor teams on the big day.

Ballintubber called for current members of the Mayo Ladies football team to be given the option of purchasing All-Ireland tickets, more tickets for the families of Mayo minor players, and the allocation of tickets in the lower decks of the Hogan and Cusack stands to elderly people.

Moygownagh proposed that in future, no GAA club be levied in return for All-Ireland tickets, presumably a response to the decision that clubs who raised €1,000 for the County Board in the run-up to the last two finals got the option to buy 20 additional tickets. The North Mayo club also suggest that the extra allocation for clubs who sell large number of County Board Draw tickets be split into the top two senior, intermediate and junior clubs.

Four motions related to so-called 'starred' league games, whereby clubs play without their county players. Three rounds of the league were 'starred' this year, and motions from Ballaghaderreen, Swinford and

Knockmore call for an increase to five or six, with Ballaghaderreen suggesting one round in June, one in July, two in August and two in September depending on the progression of the Mayo senior team through the championship.

Meanwhile, the Ballintubber club called for 'starred' games to be abandoned, insisting that the league 'clearly has no value when not played with full-strength sides'. The West Mayo side, who had five Mayo senior panellists and three minor panellists in 2013, propose dividing the top two divisions into three groups of eight, and offering a training weekend away for the winners of the Michael Walsh Summer League.

Westport, meanwhile, have suggested having three leagues - senior, intermediate and junior - dependent on championship status, with no relegation.

Ballycastle have revived the idea of exclusive junior clubs entering combined teams in the Mayo Senior Championship under the banners of North, East and West Mayo. A slightly different version of that proposal comes from Moygownagh, who have suggested that Ardagh, Ballycastle, Kilfian, Lacken and Moygownagh be allowed to enter a combined team in the Intermediate Championship.

Ballaghaderreen want to see divisional boards abolished, home advantage in the Mayo championship quarter-finals given to the teams that top their groups, a calendar finalised by the end of January 2013, and the under-21 championship played over an eight-week period commencing in November.

Clubs call for more coaches

By **DANIEL CAREY** Mayo News

MOTIONS from Kilmeena and Breffy calling for more coaching resources were carried at Sunday's Convention, and will now be referred to the Coaching and Games Committee.

Introducing a motion calling for more coaching personnel to be made available to clubs, Willie Keaveney (Kilmeena) said: "If your coaches aren't up to a good standard, you're goosed". Other codes were sending coaches into schools and providing gear, while 'our coaching is not what it should be', he added, and called for more coach education in clubs' own local areas.

Seán Hallinan (Ballintubber) supported the motion, noting: "It's a long way from Moygownagh to Shrule and from Bonniclonlon to Louisburgh ... I know finances are tight, but Dublin have something like 100 coaches. We should have at least one in each division by the end of 2014."

Bord na nÓg secretary Seán Mac Éil said the Mayo coaches were 'doing phenomenal work' and the activities involved in the role had multiplied.

"I see the treasurer cringing because the addition of one or two extra full-time coaches means more money and, quite frankly, it isn't there. But ... if you can spend almost €700,000 on one team for one year [the senior inter-county squad], this area - which is the building blocks of the future - [does] not proportionally have as much money spent. And I'm just beginning to think we may be on the wrong track."

Calling on the board to 'cut and trim' in certain areas and 'spend' in others, Mac Éil suggested hiring an extra coach wouldn't cost 'a huge amount' of money, maybe €30,000 or €40,000.

Con Moynihan said the coaches were doing 'Trojan' work, but needed help.

Kevin McDonnell (Kilmaine) also commended their efforts, but noted that much of their work is done with elite squads. "We also need to work smarter," he said, calling for the formation of a committee to assist clubs and 'make it easier' in terms of cost. There was a need for 'joined-up thinking' and 'a coaching plan'.

Jim O'Shea, whose Breffy club had a motion calling for employing a full-time coach in each division, said: "The Academy is doing great work, but three guys can't cover the whole county ... If we had a divisional coach going into clubs, we'd have a greater pool of talent coming through ... I know there'll be a cost in this, but with a bit of creative thinking, we can cover the cost very easily'.

County Board chairman Paddy McNicholas noted that Mayo currently employs three coaches on a full-time basis, two part-time, plus a number of others who do ten-week stints in schools. He called on club coaching officers to make contact with Eugene Lavin, Billy McNicholas and Pádraic Carolan.

Three motions up for discussion at Leitrim convention

By **JOHN CONNOLLY**
Leitrim Observer

LEITRIM clubs have submitted just three motions for this year's County Board Convention.

With top table elections taking centre-stage as Mohill's Stephen Flynn challenges incumbent Diarmuid Sweeney for the position of Secretary, only three motions are down for discussion in what must be a record for the smallest amount of motions ever submitted.

In their motion, Allen Gaels are seeking "That the derogation allowing teams to field with less players than the stated competition number be removed". This would eliminate the situation that occurred this year where an U-16 11-a-side Final was actually played as a nine-a-side final as one of the teams did not have enough players.

Mohill have two motions in for discussion, one seeking that all League finals to be played within two weeks of the finalists being known and another asking that in the event of Division 5 having only eight teams or less, it should be played on a home and away basis as to give teams a meaningful competition.

However, both motions may not be in order as the Convention is not allowed make rules which could impinge on the duties of the Competitions Control Committee although they could go forward as recommendations for the CCC to implement.

In elections, there are only two contests, the battle for the Secretary is the main item of interest although Stephen Flynn is also nominated for the position of Central Council delegate, challenging Kiltubrid's P.J. Meehan for the post

Roscommon secretary dismayed by Hyde snub



By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

ROSCOMMON secretary Brian Stenson said he was disappointed to see Hyde Park rendered unfit to host this year's Connacht final after successfully hosting the event in 2012.

In his final secretary's address to convention – Stenson has completed his five-year term in the role – he also said he was saddened not to see the development of the Roscommon town ground further along the road to completion.

"Having successfully hosted all provincial finals in 2012 it is very disappointing that this year Dr Hyde Park has been declared unfit to host a senior provincial final," said Stenson.

"Everyone is aware that the venue needs to be upgraded both in terms of the

playing field and the facilities available, but why now deny Roscommon the possibility of hosting a final when there has never been a problem at the venue in its 40-year history?

"When I took over as secretary I was naive enough to think that when my five years were completed the re-development of Dr Hyde Park would be well underway. Unfortunately this has not happened and as yet we still await the completion of the ownership issue.

"There is some dissatisfaction out there with the pace of negotiations which is understandable but I am well aware that this is through no fault of the personnel presently involved on either side. Croke Park officials and solicitors insist that every minute detail must be in order before it is signed off.

"Who can argue with this when one looks back on the history of previous hasty developments," he said.

Stenson buoyed by Qualifier display

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

ROSCOMMON secretary Brian Stenson said everyone involved in Roscommon GAA took great encouragement from their side's display against Tyrone in last year's Qualifiers – despite their ultimate exit from the championship.

John Evans' side had earlier exited the Connacht championship after a heavy defeat at the hands of All-Ireland finalists Mayo, but Stenson believes their ability to test Mickey Harte's side to their limits bodes well for the future.

"After the encouraging Allianz Football League campaign a first round championship game away to the winners of Mayo versus Galway was the challenge ahead. "Preparations and training went well and

after a number of worthwhile challenge games the indications were that we could at least match what Mayo had to offer in Castlebar, despite their easy victory over Galway. Unfortunately on the day Mayo proved much too strong and ran out easy winners.

"This was a huge disappointment to everyone involved and was a very serious challenge to players and management as they headed to the qualifiers.

"Tyrone provided the opposition in the qualifier game and after a gallant effort we were very unlucky to exit the championship by two points.

"This display against one of the top teams in the country helped to erase the memories of the 12-point defeat in Castlebar and should prove to both players and management that with continued effort success at senior level is not far away," said Stenson.

Sligo Centre of Excellence back on track

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
Media West Ireland

SLIGO County Board secretary, Gerry O'Connor, told delegates at the county's recent convention that their controversial training centre in Scarden should be ready for use in the New Year.

Work at the €3.2million Centre of Excellence has ground to a halt for more than a year, but finally after getting their finances in order, the final stages of phase one of the project are due to be completed.

A 22-acre site near Sligo Town was purchased for €560,000 in 2010 and despite the sod being turned by former GAA President Christy Cooney in April 2011, phase one of the development has still to be finished.

Work on the construction of three grass pitches, underground works, floodlights and perimeter fencing was due to be completed by June last, but no work has been seen on the site in the last 12 months.

However, the secretary underlined the County Board's determination that the project be brought to a successful conclusion, because he says, the centre is 'a necessity, not a luxury'.

"The finance committee in January were faced with circumstances that did not allow for any further work to be commissioned at our new training facility at that time. I am optimistic that the first phase of the project will now be completed and should be in use in the new-year," said the secretary in his convention report.

"The decision to purchase land in order



to develop a training and administrative centre to serve the whole County was undoubtedly the correct one as these facilities are a necessity not a luxury.

"The Finance Committee was prudent in not making plans to recommence work on the Scarden project until adequate funds were in place. The decision not to

avail of more funding from our commercial lender was taken and the indebtedness to Connacht Council was ascertained and a schedule of repayments arranged.

Importantly Connacht Council and the National Finance Committee were kept informed of developments at all times," he said.

MEDIA WEST — IRELAND —

'The Whitethorns', Clybawn Road, Galway, Ireland

Office: +353 91 527 314 Mobile: +353 86 242 8796

Email: desk@mediawestireland.com Web: www.mediawestireland.com

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JOHN FALLON
Managing Editor

'Fundamental right for every child to get an opportunity to play'



Connacht Coaching & Games Manager, John Tobin, third from left, and John Prenty, Secretary, Connacht GAA, pictured at the Connacht GAA Centre, with an Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, Ann-Marie Earley, and Mary Earley (daughter and widow of the late Dermot Earley).

Apart from the programme of games that are scheduled for all ages and grades, there are many other ongoing events and coaching projects that are provided to support the player and the coach.

By Coaching & Games Manager, John Tobin



Under Chairman, Denis O'Boyle, and his Provincial Coaching Committee the Coach Education courses are now well embedded and attract large attendances in all counties. All counties and clubs need to be aware of the



Coaching Qualification Policies and Objectives for 2016.

In 2013 alone, the Connacht Coaching and Games organised 12 courses where 2,121 participants availed of the courses.

By 2016 every inter-county team must have access to an Award 2 Coach of the appropriate type. By 2016

every club team must have access to an Award 1 Coach of the appropriate type.

In order to meet these targets it is imperative that firstly, all the clubs are informed about the requirements and subsequently that they put in place a mechanism that will ensure that their clubs and teams are supported by appropriately qualified coaches.

With the assistance of the Provincial Master Tutors, 36 coaches are currently taking the Award 2 Youth and Adult Coaching Courses in the Connacht Centre. It is very rewarding to see some of our most senior managers and coaches making the effort and displaying the willingness to engage in the Coach Education process. This year we

saw the introduction of the first on-line course. This particular course is designed at Foundation Level and to date the reports from the counties is that there is already a significant demand for this new format. To achieve certification, all the academic material is delivered on line and the practical aspects of the course are then conducted in a workshop format.

It is the intention of the Coach Education Department that all other courses will take this path in the coming years.

Most the Provincial Primary Schools continue to avail of the part-time coaching service provided by the county boards. Connacht Council are completely supportive and committed to

Counties continued to strive to provide the best programmes for 2013

promoting all our Games in the primary sector.

We believe it is a fundamental right for every child to get an opportunity to play our 'National Games'. We also hope that the positive and enjoyable environment that is created by teachers and coaches will pre-dispose all of our pupils to make a lifestyle choice to play and stay with the GAA. Another model in Coach Education that is proving to have a very positive impact is the Transition Year Course. As part of this course the students are given the choice of taking a Foundation Level and the Code of Best Practice.

Having learned the various skills and gained the necessary competencies the students then embark on coaching missions in their primary schools and local clubs.

This is an invaluable experience for the students as they learn many skills sets and accept new responsibilities that make a great contribution to their personal development.

It is also a vehicle that fosters relationships between the schools and the clubs. Many clubs have recognised the benefit of this programme and are subsequently active stakeholders in its promotion.

Whilst our 2nd level schools continue to make strenuous efforts to promote our Games, there is no denying the fact that the landscape in schools is rapidly changing. We continuously try to be pro-active in addressing the current issues.

To be of more assistance to the smaller and lower division schools, we calendared a number of Blitz Days at the Connacht Centre. To date a significant number of schools have participated and the feedback is very positive. The six pitches available at Began, gives us an opportunity to play multiple games at the same time. We do recognise the difficult challenges that teachers of games are facing



Minister Michael Ring, T.D., Minister for Sport, talking to Brendan Collieran and Billy McNicholas

and our Provincial Schools Committee under the Chairmanship of Paddy Naughton continue to audit and monitor the ongoing situation. At the beginning of the year, we did target three specific objectives:

1. To acquire a Sponsor for Second Level Schools
2. Play our Flagship finals at county grounds
3. Attempt to get T.V. Coverage

We are delighted to announce that NUI Galway have come on board as the sponsors for 2014.

We also hope that the fi-



nals will be played in County Grounds and currently we are in negotiations to provide TV coverage.

We sincerely thank all those who are engaged in promoting our Games in Schools and acknowledge the relentless commitment of teachers to the GAA.

The transition of the Cul Camps sponsorship from the V.H.I. to Kelloggs has been seamless and might in some ways be more beneficial to the promotion of the Camps. In an uncertain and turbulent economic climates the continued growth is remarkable. This year the number of participants increased by 13% in Galway, 6.2% in Roscommon and a staggering 19.1% in



Mayo.

Apart from the fact that the quality of the camps is of a very high standard, it would appear that the clubs have embraced the significance of these camps and are very active in their promotion.

I would also like to acknowledge the part played by the Cul Camp Co-Ordinators in all counties and also the contribution of the part time coaches.

This year the Play & Stay Days in Croke Park took place in October. We awaited the day in trepidation, expecting the weather to be a major disincentive. Instead we got two glorious days where 48 Teams had a wonderful and memorable experience. To us, in Coaching and Games, it is one of the most rewarding events of the entire year. To experience and witness the unfettered joy and jubilation of the kids and their families is an absolute pleasure.

It is also great to see how clubs have promoted the day to become a wonderful Family Day. Hundreds of parents and family and club members take the time to attend and support. This support gives the event an even greater status.

I would like to pay tribute and thank all of the club mentors for the way they have accepted the ethos of the day, 'fun and enjoyment' and how they by their actions have created a very special, friendly and co-operative atmosphere.

Also a most sincere thank you for all of the complimentary emails that we received from the clubs after the event.

Next year will see the completion of the cycle and all Connacht GAA Clubs will have played in Croke Park.

To promote the skills of the game we piloted a Club Skills Star Challenge competition in 2013.

This was aimed at the U-12 age group. The tests were also designed on a team for-

The Coaching and Games Department in Connacht and all of the Connacht



Coaching & Games Manager, John Tobin, pictured addressing the large gathering in the skills of Gaelic Games.

mat with four in each team. Each County conducted their own trials and eventually produced four winning teams. The twenty winning teams from the Province convened at the Connacht Centre in October to display their skills in an event that proved to be an outstanding success and on the night attracted a very large attendance.

No doubt, there is a future for this concept and we will continue to grow this at other ages. It is a great tool for developing individual skills and hopefully more Clubs will participate in 2014.

Pride and Satisfaction were common feelings when the Toiseach Enda Kenny, in the presence of Mary Earley and Family spoke to over 300 players at the Dermot Earley Day. Hundreds of parents turned up and expressed their delight with the facilities. It was certainly a sight to behold to see all the six pitches populated with our future stars.

Not to be outdone, the Minister for Sport, Michael Ring was our guest at the Seán Purcell Day and he ad-

ressed all of the players. Needless to say the content of the messages that he conveyed was extremely sincere and meaningful and had a visible impact on the players.

We sincerely thank both Enda and Michael for their support and commitment for the Connacht Centre.

Our other competitions like the Ted Webb and the

Connacht U-17 Development Squads competition were all keenly contested and they will produce the elite players to ensure a better future in Connacht for our Games.

Under the stewardship of Damien Coleman, Connacht Hurling Direc-



Coaching & Games Manager, John Tobin, pictured welcoming Michael Ring, T.D., Minister for Sport, to the Centre of Excellence, Began.

tor, there is also an excellent programme of Coaching and Games for the Hurling Academies and Development Squads. All Counties are currently producing an Annual Calendar of events for all Academies and Development Squads, so that the County C.C.C.'s can organise the 2014 Club Fixture Plans to facilitate the important work that goes on at development level.

It is heartening to witness the promotion of the Respect Initiative at Provincial and County level. The sequence of events that take place at all Club and Connacht Championship Days are having a healthy and positive effect. Hopefully, we will continue to give this the importance that it deserves for 2014.

To date, the Recreation Game appears to lack traction within the Clubs. If introduced properly this can play a significant role in Club Development.

Apart from the fact that it can be a significant fund raising project it is also an avenue for recruiting and retaining past players.

In another context it promotes the integration within the Club that may in turn build the support for future basic administrative structures.

For 2014 the intention at National Level is that there will be a greater impetus to promote this Game.

The success of the Teacher Training Service course unabated. All courses are overbooked well before the Closing Date.

Courses were made even more teacher friendly this year when the new On Line course was rolled out in Mayo. Feedback from the teachers is always very positive. While one could assume the law of diminishing returns might apply, in this instance, there was an actual increase in numbers.

I would like to thank Billy McNicholas, Tom McManus and all of the tutors who

Counties continued to strive to provide the best programmes for 2013

worked on this project.

After the initial honeymoon period we are now only settling in to our new residence and beginning to appreciate the importance that it will have for all G.A.A matters in the future. For coaching and games activities it is a dream facility. It has become the established focal point for all coach education courses. During the year we also welcomed the appointment of Cathal Cregg as the Strength and conditioning coach for the Province. He was very quick to establish himself and is presently in the final stages of producing an on-line course that will be of benefit to all coaches. It is always challenging to get uniform agreement in an organisation as diverse as the G.A.A. To compete at the highest level we need to keep current in our practises and also to avail of cutting edge technology. This can be expensive in today's climate and it may be more beneficial to collaborate and work collectively to reduce the burden of finance on the counties.

The Connacht centre was established for this very purpose and early indications are that people are sharing that philosophy. Testament to this is the fact that all counties are now engaging with us and availing of the services, to such an extent, that all weekends are fully booked. Add to this the large volume of games that are being played here and we can safely ascertain that the Centre has firmly established itself in a short period of time.

To a certain extent the present Connacht coaching structure serves its purpose. However because of the continuous

growth in activities it is proposed that a steering committee be created to oversee the existing operations committee. It is recommended that this body be comprised of, the county chairman, county secretary, county coaching officer and the county games manager. This smaller committee will allow discussion to take place and decisions to be taken in a much more efficient and effective manner. These representatives, who are already on the county coaching committee, will continue to meet on a regular basis with the county operations committee.

Finally I would like to thank all of the following for their support and assistance throughout the past year:

Cumann Na mBunscoil
County Schools committees

Provincial Schools committee and Chairman Paddy Naughton

Provincial coach education committee under the chairmanship of Denis O'Boyle.

Provincial Coaching and Games committee under the chairmanship of Breandan O'Colleran
Coaching and games Dept. in Croke Park governed by Pat Daly.

County Games mangers: Willie Hegarty, Liam Gormley, Thomas Keenan, Tom Mcmanus, Billy McNicholas and Damien Coleman (provincial hurling director)

I would particularly like to register my thanks to Frank Burke President Connacht Council, John Prenty, C.E.O.; Adrian Hassett (Operations Manager) Cathal Cregg and Amanda Diskin, Attracta Hunt and John and Val for all of their help during 2013.



Minister Michael Ring, T.D. pictured addressing the gathering at the Connacht GAA Centre





Participating Clubs who took part in the Connacht GAA Play & Stay Activity Days in Croke Park







Participating Clubs who took part in the Connacht GAA Play & Stay Activity Days in Croke Park







**Participating Clubs who took part in the Connacht
GAA Play & Stay Activity Days in Croke Park**





Pitch Maintenance with the Rossies



Battery powered line marker.

ROSCOMMON GAA Co Board in conjunction with The Irish Institute of Sport Surfaces, www.irishsport-surf.ie, held a very successful pitch maintenance course for their 33 clubs recently in Dr Hyde Park.

In all over 70 people attended a most informative course where the theory was dealt with in the morning and then a number of practical displays were conducted in the afternoon.

Course organiser and County Development Officer Hugh Lynn stated: "In the GAA we have some of the finest facilities in the country; we have spent lots of money developing our grounds and use them as much as possible.

"That being said after it

has been developed the pitch is often the most neglected part of the club! We clean the toilets, paint the doors, feed the team, line the pitch but do we feed it? Do we spike it? How often do we cut it? Is the pitch the poor relation is it just taken for granted," he said.

These questions were dealt with in depth by Dónal Kearney from the Irish Institute of Sports Surfaces and delegates left knowing that pitches need to be fed a minimum of 3 times, cut often, so it's like shaving never noticed and aerated regularly. 10:10:20 is good for meadows but not for pitches some clubs were shocked to hear!

The course consisted of a power point presentation on various needs and requirements of pitches



Michael Brennan Boyle GAA Club tries out a line marker.

with video examples of maintenance work on pitches.

Participants also got an outdoor demonstration of aerating equipment. This was conducted by Michael Hyland of Hyland Turf-care in Gowra, Co Cavan.

Line marking equipment was shown and the various types were examined from wheel to wheel to aerosol to actual liquid spray models. Participants got an opportunity to try out the various pieces of equipment. Fertilizer spreading and calibration of the spreaders was also examined and they were also shown the proper method to do this too. All this equipment was demonstrated by Noel Walsh of white-samenity.com.

In addition to the presentation by Donal Kearney, a demonstration of some pitch mowers and tractors was provided by local Honda and Kubota dealer. JF Hanley, jfhanleygroundcare.com.

Expect to see very green fields in Roscommon over the next few years!



Multipurpose spreader.



Delegates view a Shock wave machine provided by Hyland Turf Care.



JF Hanley Mowers and Tractor.

Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013

Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Kenny Feeny (Tooreen) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Intermediate Hurling Semi-Final against Four Roads on October 28th in Athleague.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Padraic Pat Walsh (Headford) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Junior Football Semi-Final against Cill Chomáin on November 3rd in Elverys Machiale Park.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Mary Stack (St. Brigid's) accepts the award on behalf of her son Ronan from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for Ronan's performance in the Connacht Senior Football Quarter-Final against Tourlestrane on October 27th in Dr. Hyde Park.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th Dec. 2013. Dominic Connolly club manager Fuerty receives the award on behalf of Thomas Bannon from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for Thomas' performance in the Connacht Junior Football Final against Headford on November 16th in Pearse Stadium.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Paul Gallagher Chairman Kiltane GAA Club accepts two awards on behalf of Mikey Sweeney from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for Mikey's performances in this year's Connacht Intermediate Football Quarter and Semi-Finals.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Seán Martig accepts the award on behalf of Padraig Kelly (St. Brigid's) from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for Thomas' performance in the Connacht Senior Football Semi-Final against St. Mary's on November 10th in Páirc Sídh MacDíormáda.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Kevin Gilmartin (Colry/St. Josephs) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council for his performance in the Connacht Junior Hurling Final against An Spidéal on November 16th in the Connacht GAA Centre.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Sean Gaughan (Kiltane) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Intermediate Football Final against Boyle on November 17th in Elverys MacHale Park.



Keith Raymond (Colry/St. Josephs) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council for his performance in the Connacht Junior Hurling Semi-Final against Cluainín on October 28th in Markievicz Park.

Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013



Tom King (Castlebar Mitchells) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Senior Football Final against St Brigid's on November 24th in Dr. Hyde Park.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Richie Feeney (Castlebar Mitchells) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Senior Football Semi-Final against Corofin on November 10th in Tuam Stadium.



Connacht GAA Man of the Match Awards 2013 Connacht GAA Centre 7th December 2013. Brian Molloy (Kilnadeema/Leitrim) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Intermediate Hurling Final against Tooreen on November 17th in Athleague.



Emla Smith (Boyle) receives his award from Frank Burke Connacht GAA Council President for his performance in the Connacht Junior Football Semi-Final against Eslin on November 3rd in Páirc Seán.

Winners from the 2013 Cuman na mBunscoil competitions in Galway

Photos courtesy of Michael and Tony O'Hehir



Annagh Football Champions.



Ballinderry NS Football Champions.



Ballymacward Football Champions.

2013 GALWAY CUMAN NA mBUNSCOIL COMPETITIONS



Eyrecourt Football Champions.



Fhorbaca Football Champions.



Knockroon Football Champions.



Oughterard Football Champions.



Scoil Mhuire Football Naofa Champions.



Killeeney Football Champions.

Moy Sports Forum and Ballina Stephenites GAA Club working together to promote inclusion for all



Presentation by members of the Moy Sports Forum to the Connacht Inclusion and Integration Committee. (Front L-R) Cora Staunton (Primary Healthcare Coordinator, Mayo Travellers Support Group), Anne Ronayne, (Mayo Sports Partnership), John Prenty, Secretary of the Connacht Council, Vivienne Fitzmaurice, (Primary Healthcare Coordinator, Mayo Travellers Support Group), Margaret O'Connell (Sligo). (Back L-R) Cyril Feehily, (Sligo and a Member of the National Inclusion and Integration Committee), Denis O'Boyle (Chairman Connacht Inclusion and Integration Committee), Gerry Mc Govern, (Leitrim). Barry Lowe, (Roscommon), John Hopkins (Connacht GAA Council Treasurer), Pdraig Staunton (Mayo), Mattie Kilroy, Connacht Social Initiative and Secretary, Christy Tyrell, (Galway), Luke Fitzmaurice, (Secretary Mayo Inclusion and Integration Committee).

By **DENIS O'BOYLE**
 Connacht GAA Inclusion
 and Ingegration Officer



SOMETIMES great work can go virtually unnoticed within the GAA. An example of this is the joint project undertaken by Moy Sports Forum and Ballina Stephenites GAA Club.

The Connacht Inclusion and Integration Committee were made aware of the tremendous work being undertaken in Ballina, as a result of a presentation given by Vivienne Fitzmaurice Clarke, Anne Ronayne and Cora Staunton of the Moy Sports Forum. In their presentation they explained that their new initiative aimed at (1) building closer relationships and (2) encouraging involvement of Traveller children participate in Gaelic Games.

The Moy Sports Forum was formed in Autumn 2010 with the aim to increase usage of Urban Council Outdoor facilities and received excellent support from Ballina Urban Council. Mayo Sports Partnership and Mayo North East and FAI joined forces initially to bring about a possible forum encouraging all people in the local community to participate in sport and

recreational activities. The mission statement of the Moy Sports Forum is: 'To provide inclusive, safe and fun sporting/ recreational opportunities and programmes for all people in the Ballina area most especially those that are disadvantaged and hard to reach, as well as increasing physical activity and improving health, fitness and quality of living for all.'

At a recent Connacht Inclusion and Integration Committee meeting Pdraig Staunton, Co. Mayo GAA Inclusion and Integration Officer, reported on the ongoing success achieved by the Moy Sports Forum and Ballina Stephenites GAA Club.

He stated that this new initiative in Ballina was specifically aimed at building closer relationships with the area and encourage children from Parkside in Ballina, participate in Gaelic Games at their local GAA club. Parkside has been recognised as one of the areas of most disadvantage in Ballina and has a high population from the Traveller community. The Ballina Stephenites GAA Club is positioned in close proximity to the Parkside area in Ballina.

Vivienne Fitzmaurice and Cora Staunton are both Primary Health Care Co-ordinators, Mayo Travellers Support Group, and together with Anne Ronayne,

Mayo Sports Partnership, are all members of the Moy Sports Partnership. In their presentation to the Connacht Inclusion and Integration Committee, they outlined that this joint programme arose from a previous history of children from the Parkside area not engaging with the club. Representatives from the club and the Moy Sports Forum met to address the issue. A joint initiative of an outreach programme was developed.

According to Vivienne Fitzmaurice, who is also Secretary of the Moy Sports Forum; 'Both the Moy Sports Forum and the Stephenites identified a need in the Parkside area and developed a Gaelic programme with the aim of including children from the Parkside area who were not playing.

'We also aimed to build on and improve relationships between the club and Parkside residents. Having residents and club members involved from the start working together contributed to the success and sustainability of the programme. The Forum feel that this model worked really well both for the club and the children involved with feedback being very positive. We feel that this partnership model could be used again by other clubs to help ad-



Children from Parkside in action with their GAA Football Coach

dress inclusion and integration within their areas.'

This programme consisted of club coaches and members of the Ballina Stephenites senior football team supporting the programme which coached the children on how to play Gaelic football on a weekly basis for eight weeks. One of the coaches was Ballina Stephenites and Mayo goalkeeper, David Clarke, who volunteered his time and expertise to attend a number of sessions and help coach the children.

During the eight weeks children from Parkside also attended training sessions at the Ballina Stephenites GAA Club grounds. Another partner of Moy Sports

Forum are Involve Youth Club who through their youth workers Sandra Hennigan and James Maughan played a significant role encouraging the young people in Parkside to engage with the programme as well as Mayo Travellers Support Group Community Development Worker Keith Maughan.

On average 20 children came to the weekly sessions and since the completion of the outreach programme over 10 children are now registered and are playing with a number of teams at the Stephenites club. One success stories is of a 16 year old Parkside youth who now plays minor football with the club and hopes to go forward for Mayo minor trails next year.

It is intended that the Ballina Stephenites Club will continue to link with the Moy Sports Forum for further initiatives to engage the children from the Parkside area in other projects such as 'A Club Open Day' in the future. The Moy Sports Forum would like to thank Ballina Stephenites for their cooperation in developing this programme and recognise the very positive and innovative initiative that addresses the area of inclusion in the GAA in the Parkside area and look forward to developing further positive initiatives with Stephenites in the future. This is indeed a 'model of good practice' in inclusion within the GAA, which can be replicated in other GAA clubs throughout Ireland.

Connacht images highlighted in collection of GAA magic moments

ONE of the year's most eagerly anticipated GAA books, A Season of Sundays 2013, sponsored by Carroll's, celebrated its 17th year of publication as Sportsfile launched the 2013 edition.

Once again, Ireland's number one Sports Photography Agency, Sportsfile, has produced another magnificent collection of images that captures the remarkable 2013 GAA All-Ireland season that includes a selection from across a remarkable Connacht GAA season.

The book is enhanced by the Head of Media Relations for the GAA, Alan Milton's perceptive caption-writing. It would make the perfect Christmas gift for any GAA enthusiast, retailing at €29.95 from bookstores nationwide and online at www.sportsfile.com.



NOT THROWING IN THE TOWEL: Galway's efforts won't be hampered by damp shorts as a result of a wet photo bench. Gerry Moylette from the city goes the extra mile, and his attention to detail pays off as Galway claim the points against Armagh

Photo: Barry Cregg / SPORTSFILE.



The Annaghdown team that beat Killerin in the Galway Division 1 B League Final.



Milo Costello presents the Lal Fallon cup to Annaghdown captain Frankie Burke.



Gus Shaughnessy presents the Shaughnessy Cup to St Michael's captain Eddie Hoare.



St Michael's Galway Division 2 A league winners .



The Tuam Stars team who recently won the Galway Division 3 A County League title.



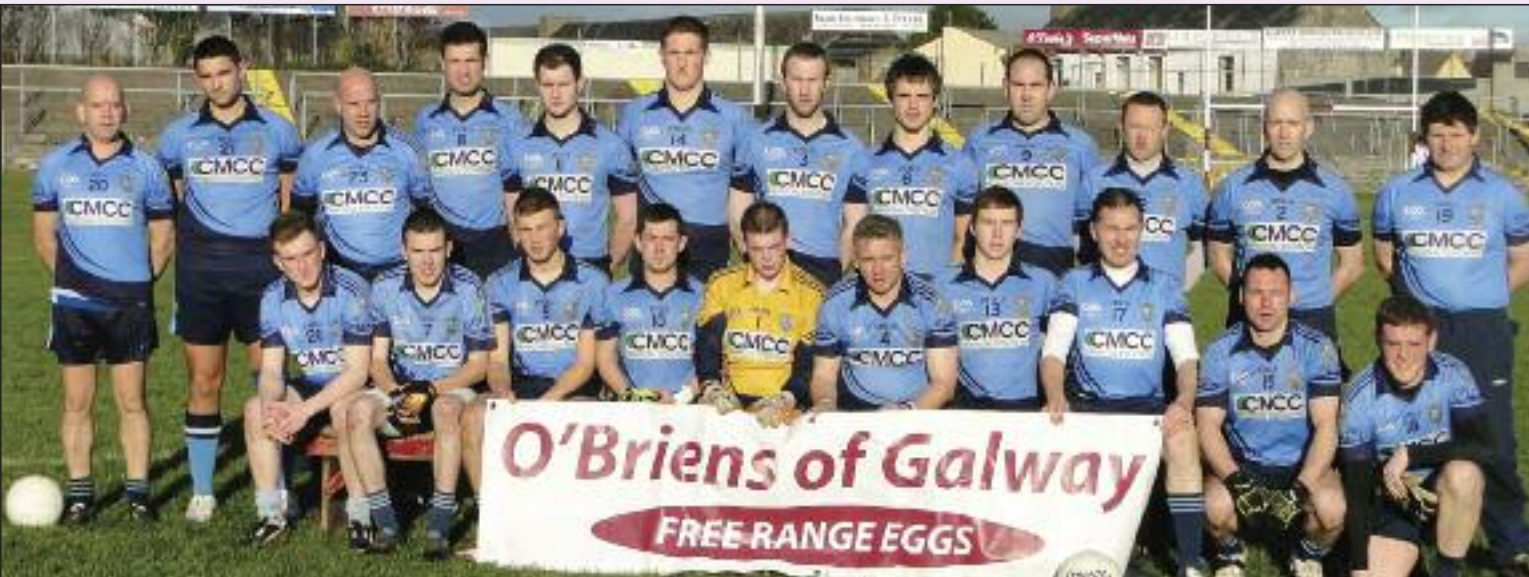
Football Committee chairman Tagh O Conghaile presents their team captain with the cup.



Sarsfields captain Eamonn Cleary being presented with the Div 4 B League Cup by Padraic Kelly North GPC Secretary.



Sarsfields North D 4 C League winners.



Headford, Division 4 B North winners.



Padraic Kelly, secretary of the North Galway Board, presents the Headford captain Justin Ryan with the cup.



Ms Marian McDermott, wife of the late Joe McDermott, presenting the Joe McDermott Memorial Cup to Shane Monaghan, captain of the victorious Corofin team that won Division 2B of the 2013 Boston Scientific Sponsored Football League.



Corofin Division 2 B League Champions, 2013.



Turlough make no mistake in replay

Turloughmore1-18
Liam Mellows1-10

By **DECLAN ROONEY**
 Media West Ireland

THE Fr Griffin Cup resides in Turloughmore for the sixth time as a Conor Shaughnessy master class at full-forward saw this replayed minor hurling decider go their way.

Shaughnessy hit 0-8 to help his side to the win and a goal from Brian Callanan in injury-time removed any doubt about the result.

Liam Mellows had actually led at half-time by 1-7 to 0-7, with the wonderful Adrian Morrissey hitting a brilliant goal just before the break. But the city side's misery was ensured by Turlough's fine second-half and a red card for Colin McDonagh late on for an off the ball incident.

After their rip roaring first game, both sides tore into each other from the start and it wasn't until Ken Lee's piercing run through the Turlough defence set Morrissey up for the goal that either side took control.

However, after the break Shaughnessy began to turn on the style and by the 38th minute Turlough had drawn level as the full-forward hit four quick points.

Morrissey edged Mellows ahead once again with a quick brace of scores, but they failed to score for the remaining 17



WINNERS: Turloughmore minor hurling captain Vincent Doyle is presented with the Fr Griffin Cup by Hurling Committee chairman, Joe Byrne. Photo: Joe Keane.

minutes as the victors ran riot for a deserved win.

TURLOUGHMORE: S Loftus; K Herwood, E Flaherty, D Joyce; D Culkin, J Holland (0-2, 1f), V Doyle; S Burke, R Doyle; U Hurney, S Linnane (0-2), C Hurney (0-2); P Kearney (0-1), C Shaughnessy (0-8, 5f), B Callanan. Subs: H Connelly for Linnane 60, C

Whelan for Kearney 60, D Holland for U Hurney 60.

LIAM MELLOWS: D Doyle; G Hughes, C Reilly, L O'Rourke; M Hughes, M Conneely, S Barrett; C McDonagh (0-1), K Lee; A Morrissey (1-9, 6f), E Fallon, E Croker; C Foy, R Elwood, S Doyle.

REF: Christy Browne.

Galway U-21 glory calendar the perfect gift

IN celebration of Galway U-21 All-Ireland football success and to fundraise for the coming season a Galway football calendar for 2014 is now on sale.

2013 was a very successful year for the Galway U-21 football team and in light of this success, and in order to alleviate some of the costs involved in preparing the next Galway U21 team, this calendar was produced to celebrate this All Ireland win and also remember the county's other All Ireland U-21 successes in 1972, 2002, 2005 and 2011.

This calendar will feature



beautiful photographs which capture the journey, excitement and triumph of the Galway U-21 football 2013 journey, from the first game against Sligo in Tuam Stadium, to the All-Ireland victory in the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick against Cork.

When you view these photographs, some of which you captured, you will be flooded with memories of the joy and emotion the year brought to so many people within the county, while you will also see through these photographs, a wider view of the effort the players put in to achieve All Ireland glory.



Are we seeing double with Michael Meehan?



Bernie O'Connor praying for rain.



Morgan and Gerry relax in Pearse stadium.



Noel Finnegan and Peter Bane working hard at match programme sales.



Seamus O'Grady sin binned because of new rules



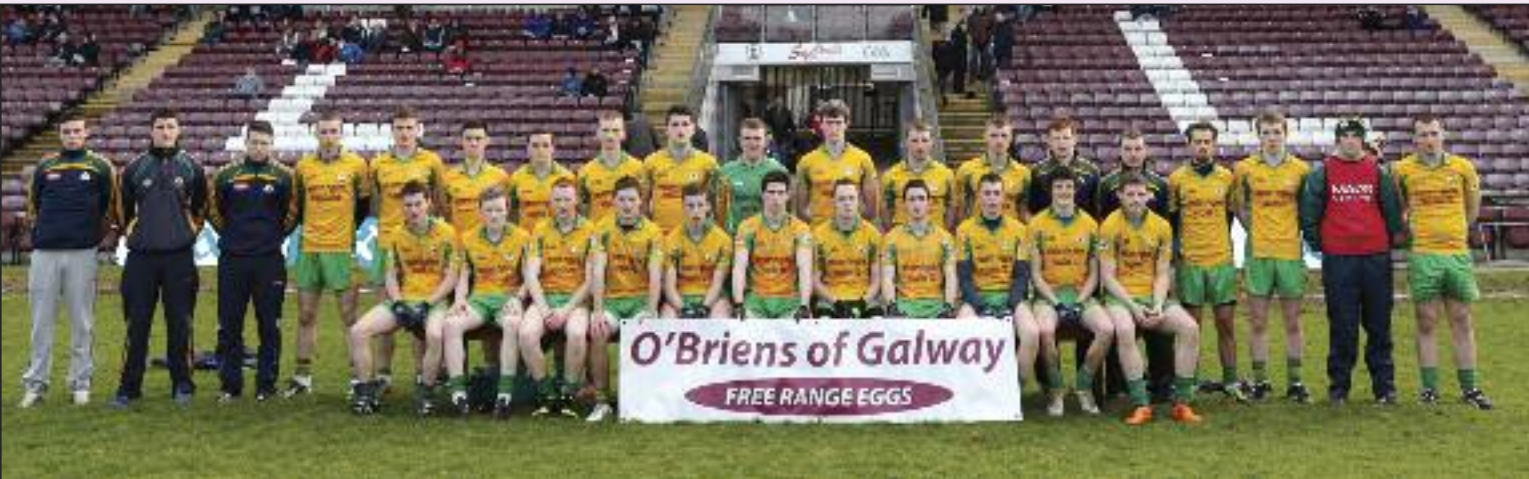
Ollie Turner and Tommy Devane of Galway Bay FM get their hands on the cup



John Joe Holleran and Padraic Kelly in control.



Corofin complete fine year with U-21 title



Corofin Under-21 panel.

Corofin3-11
Salthill-Knocknacarra1-11

COROFIN added another U-21 A football title to their substantial honours list as they prevailed in the latest instalment of their battles with city side Salthill-Knocknacarra at Pearse Stadium.

Despite perfect conditions, a poor crowd witnessed the last major football final of the year as Sean Silke, Ian Burke, Conor Keady and Martin Farragher proved the difference for Brian Silke's charges who kept a battling Salthill-Knocknacarra outfit at arm's length for the bulk of the game.

Sean Silke struck 2-2 from play for the

North Board winners and despite his brother Liam having to go off with a broken collarbone at the end of the opening quarter, the blow failed to deter the green and gold.

Burke was pulling the strings in the Corofin attack as the Salthill-Knocknacarra defence struggled to deal with his pace, movement and sharp delivery.



Corofin joint-captains Conor Keady and Conor McNamara with the County U-21 Football Cup.



Sean Silke receives the man of the match trophy from Football Committee chairman Tadhg Ó Conghaile.



Burke brace seals win for Ballyhaunis CS

The Ballyhaunis Community School Senior hurlers who defeated Rice College (Westport) in the Mayo GAA Post Primary Schools Senior hurling semi-final at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Began on a score-line of 3-13 to 1-13. The team is pictured with coach Mr Michael Lynch.



Ballyhaunis Community School3-13 Rice College Westport ...1-13

A BRACE of second half goals from Ballyhaunis Community School corner forward PJ Burke was the difference between the sides as Ballyhaunis CS qualified for the final of the Mayo GAA Post Primary Schools Senior hurling final in the Connacht GAA Centre in Began.

In perfect autumnal conditions, it was the West Mayo school who set the pace in the opening half with surging runs and points from Sean Brogan and Zack O'Toole. Rice College were first to record a major on the day as Patrick O'Malley goalied from close range in the fifteenth minute, after Kaylem Connolly's initial shot was parried by Ballyhaunis 'keeper Bobby Douglas. The East Mayo school then had a goal of their own as Jason Coyne's long range effort found its way to the back of the Rice College net with goalkeeper Michael Gallagher unsighted through a forest of hurls. This left the half time score at 1-9 to 1-6 in favour of Rice College.

The second-half of proceedings saw a change in the Tooreen defence with Sean Kenny manning the centre-back position to halt the running capabilities of Westport's O'Toole and Brogan. The employment of Bobby Douglas and Eamon Phillips in the Ballyhaunis attack also helped to steady the Ballyhaunis side as they went on to record a nine point turnaround over the final 30 minutes.

The turning point of the game came in 40th minute when Eamon Phillips found PJ Burke in the Ballyhaunis attack and the Tooreen clubman made no mistake in goaling from ten metres. Nine minutes later, Phillips and Burke combined again to raise another Ballyhaunis green flag - in what was a carbon copy of their earlier feat. Rice College pushed hard for goals in the closing stages of the game, but came across a wall of black jerseys as Ballyhaunis defenders Aiden Henry and James Lyons stood firm.

Late Ballyhaunis points from Ryan Kil-

bane and Kevin Kilbride put the tie beyond doubt before referee Michael Herr drew a halt to proceedings.

BALLYHAUNIS CS: Bobby Douglas; Adrian Boyle, Aiden Henry, Calum Gardiner; Niall Robinson, James Lyons, Michael Waldron; Davog Freyne, Jason Coyne (1-2); Sean Kenny (0-2), Kevin Kilbride (0-1), Ryan Kilbane (0-5); Stephen Ryan, Cyril Collins (0-1), PJ Burke (2-1). Subs: Cormac Phillips, Eamon Phillips (0-1), Shane Crinnegan, Sean Herr, Haza Yousef, James Murphy, Conor Lenehan, MI Freyne.

RICE COLLEGE: Michael Gallagher; James Moran, Robert Lee, Alan McHale; Cillian Browne, Shane Geraghty, Fergal Sammon; Zack O'Toole (0-7), Ronan Higgins (0-2); Sean O'Donnell, Sean Brogan (0-3), Niall McManamon; Keith Hastings, Kaylem Connolly, Patrick O'Malley (1-1). Sub: Paul Lambert.

REF: Mick Herr (Crossmolina).



The Rice College (Westport) senior hurling side who were defeated by Ballyhaunis CS in the Mayo GAA Post Primary Schools Senior hurling semi-final at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. The team is pictured with coach Mr Joe Kennedy.



The Bohola Moy Davitts U-21 that claimed the U-21 A title.

Photo: Annette Clarke

Bohola Moy Davitts County U-21 'A' Champions 2013

By **DECLAN O'BRIEN**

BOHOLA Moy Davitts reached the County U-21A Final against four-in-row-seeking Castlebar Mitchels by beating a highly-rated Ballina in the first round with an impressive display of free-flowing football and with some superb score-taking.

The highlight of the game was the Bohola Moy Davitts full forward, Brian Heneghan, hitting, 3-3.

In the quarter-final, Bohola Moy Davitts disposed of Ballintubber 3-12 to 3-4. While Ballintubber ran into an early five-point lead, Bohola Moy Davitts dominated the remainder of the game with outstanding displays from Anthony Jordan, Paul Langan, Gary and Brian Gilmartin, Pdraig Ruane and Mark Regan to run out eight-point winners.

The semi-final against Claremorris was a very different game from the previous two, with Bohola Moy Davitts having to dig very deep to win by two points on a scoreline of 3-6 to 1-10. The game looked dead and buried after ten minutes with Claremorris racing into a seven-point lead.

However great work by John Gilmore led to a Bohola Moy Davitts penalty which was dispatched by Heneghan, and a further

point before half-time left Bohola Moy Davitts five points behind at half-time.

A goal just after half-time by the marauding Anthony Jordan left two in it and game on. Moy Davitts had the upper hand in the last 20 minutes and a goal by Gary Gilmartin and a point by Sean Kelly saw Bohola Moy Davitts through to their first County U-21 final since 1998.

In the county final, Bohola Moy Davitts faced the might of Castlebar Mitchels who were going for their fourth county title in a row and a week after their senior team had captured the senior county title. With the majority of the Castlebar team on the senior panel, Moy Davitts were considered rank outsiders and the best hope was we would hold them to a respectable score. However, Bohola Moy Davitts again didn't read the script and tore into Castlebar from the start. Castlebar were first to score in the first minute but with points by Anthony Jordan, Sean Kelly, Mark Regan, Brian Heneghan and a goal by Brian Reape left Moy Davitts 1-4 to 0-3 up at half-time.

The second-half began with a point by Alan Bourke to stretch Bohola Moy Davitts lead to five points. However Castlebar then kicked three unanswered points to cut the margin to two. Anthony Jordan responded with a monster free to put three points in it again.

Brian Reape then kicked two glorious points to put five points in it. Castlebar then kicked a point to narrow the margin to four and then, when the tireless John Gilmore gained possession on his own end line, Bohola Moy Davitts strung a weave of passes the length of the field which led to Alan Burke crashing the ball to the back of the net. Castlebar hit 1-1 in reply but Sean Kelly kicked a point to ensure a four-point victory in injury time. Moments later the referee's whistle confirmed one of the most famous results in the history of Bohola Moy Davitts GAA club. County U-21 'A' title triumphs came against our neighbours Knockmore in 1987 and Swinford in 1998. Good things certainly come in threes

BOHOLA MOY DAVITTS: Jonathan McGowan, Paul Langan, Darragh Ruane, Brian Gilmartin, Gary Gilmartin, Mark Regan, Oisín Mchugh, Pdraig Ruane, Eamon Regan, Sean Kelly, Alan Bourke, John Gilmore, Anthony Jordan, Brian Heneghan, Brian Reape.

Subs: Sean Mulroy, Simon Jordan, Liam Byrne, David Kelly, Michael Bell, Conor Byrne, Keelam Moran, Max Babiarczyk. Management: Pat Clarke, Declan O'Brien, Willie Byrne, Jimmy Roache, Jimmy Byrne, Conal Quinn.



Successful year for Cill Chomáin



Chill Chomáin U-14 County League champions and North Mayo champions.



Chill Chomáin U-15 County League champions.



Chill Chomáin U-16 North Mayo, County League and County Championship winners.



GAA Club in North Mayo



Chill Chomain county Junior champions after defeating Ardnaree.

CONGRATULATIONS to all the players and management involved in what has been a very successful year for Cill Chomáin GAA Club in North Mayo for both underage players

and also the Junior team. The club would like to thank all the sponsors and supporters.

U14- North Mayo & County League Titles

U15- County League Champions
U16 North Mayo & County League & County Championship Winners
Junior Championship Winners & Mayo Comortas Winners





The Tooreen U-14 Hurling team who recently won the Suck Valley Hurling League final in Ahascragh. The team is pictured with mentors Fergal Delaney and Ger Doherty.



Pictured at the recent Connacht GAA Award 2 Hurling Coaching course is tutor Gerry Spelman from Galway as he delivers a workshop on technical proficiency with the Mayo GAA U17 Hurling Development Panel. The panel of players were also put through their paces by Shane McClearn and Fergal Healy under the direction of Connacht Hurling Director Damien Coleman. Ten advanced hurling coaches from Connacht are currently taking part in the course which is run by Connacht GAA Coaching and Games at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Ballyhaunis.



St Gers hold out in five-star performance



St Gerald's, Mayo GAA Senior Post Primary Schools.

St Gerald's (castlebar)5-4 Ballyhaunis CS2-12

A FIRST half hat-trick of goals from St Ger's Robert Comer propelled the Castlebar school to their second Mayo GAA Senior Post Primary Schools title in succession, with this one point win over Ballyhaunis Community School at the Connacht Centre in Began.

In a very unusual game in which all seven goals in this encounter came in the opening twenty-five minutes, it was St Ger's who took a commanding half-time lead by 5-2 to 2-4 to give themselves a cushion.

St Gers other two opening half majors came from captain Ronan Byrne and player/manager Abby Abbasi. Ballyhaunis CS kept in touch however with their two goals coming courtesy of Davog Freyne as he blasted low from two dead-balls in front of the Castlebar goal.

Aided by the breeze in the second-half, Ballyhaunis began to claw back their seven point deficit, with in-form Davog Freyne hitting four points in succession from play. Aided also by Sean Kenny and Ryan Kilbane, Ballyhaunis came to within a point of the winners, but couldn't muster the all important goal to snatch victory. Gers two second half points came courtesy of brothers Ronan and James Byrne, which was enough to see the Castlebar school retain their title after winning the inaugural event twelve months ago after a

replay against Ballinrobe CS.

ST GERS: Paul Howley; Noel Regan, Conor Ludden, Matthew Kelly; Kieran McManamon, Brian Murphy, Conor Murray; Ronan Byrne (1-1), Anthony O'Boyle; David Conlon, Abbi Abbasi (1-1), James Gallagher; James Byrne (0-2), Robert Comer (3-0), Brian Flannery.

BALLYHAUNIS CS: Cormac Phillips;

Adrian Boyle, Aiden Henry, Calum Gardiner; Sean Kenny (0-3), MI Waldron, Bobby Douglas; Jason Coyne (0-1), Davog Freyne (2-6); Niall Robinson, Brian Morley, Kevin Kilbride; Ryan Kilbane (0-2), Mark Phillips, Cyril Collins. Subs: PJ Burke for Douglas (inj), Mohammed for Collins, Eamon Phillips for Kilbride.

REF: Tom Killion (Roscommon Gaels).



Sponsor Christy Phillips, presents the Mayo Colleges Senior Cup to Ronan Byrne, captain of the successful St Gerald's outfit.



Breaffy minors reign supreme



Breaffy – Minor A champions.

Breaffy0-12
Claremorris0-3

By **COLM GANNON** Mayo Advertiser

BREAFFY claimed the Mayo minor A football crown with an impressive display of style, power and accuracy in Flanagan Park in Ballinrobe.

The west Mayo men blew past their southern opponents on a day where a gale



Presenting the minor football title to Breaffy captain, Daire Morrin, is chairperson of the Mayo Bond na nOg, Seamus Tuohy

bellowed right down the middle of pitch and their ability to build up a large lead with it at their back at the break was the defining point of this contest.

Breaffy were back-boned by their All-Ireland minor winning trio of Liam Irwin, Michael Hall and Matthew Ruane and went for the jugular from the get go and Irwin in particular took the game by the scruff of the neck and scored eight points over the 60 minutes, putting his strength and physicality to good use, while also showing graceful touches on the ball and from placed balls.

Breaffy hit the ground running early on and Irwin lead the charge kicking four points inside the first 20 minutes (two of them from frees), while Gareth Dunne also got on the scoreboard with two good points and Michael Hall chipped in with another after roving up from defence.

Breaffy were all over Claremorris early days, with Matthew Ruane and Gary Walsh giving them a strong footing in the middle of the park and Hall, Daire Morrin (captain), Colm Dravins and Paddy Bourke keeping things tight at the back. Keith Mulchrone and Jack Tuffy were also very busy on the ball and linked up play nicely to their other forwards.

Claremorris did try to play the conditions and carried the ball into the wind trying to break down the Breaffy defence, rather than letting the ball do the work. But they didn't find any gaps easy to come by and Stephen Donnellan's brace of points was all they could muster on the scoreboard in the opening half. The conditions for both sides were far from ideal, with underfoot conditions also causing to a lot of turnovers and mistakes by players on both sides.

Having seen what Breaffy did in the first half, using the wind to drive in the ball and let it do the leg work, it was expected that Claremorris would do the same to try and pull in the Breaffy lead. But they continued to try and work the ball in hand and got bogged down by the solid Breaffy defence and when they finally worked an opportunity to work a shot they managed to skew most of their efforts off target and wide of the posts. Claremorris only managed to add a single point to their first half tally in the second period even with the aid of the gale, while Breaffy were able to pick off the handful of scores they needed to keep their noses in front and out of danger. Breaffy could have nicked three goals in the second half two when they broke out of defence with both Matthew Ruane and Jamie Ivers seeing efforts well saved by Mayo minor goalkeeper Marc Mulligan. While Garreth Dunne nearly put the cherry on top of the Breaffy performance at the death, when he slalomed down the left touchline with the ball at his feet, beating a few players, but his finish was just off the target for what would have been a fitting conclusion to Breaffy's win.

BREAFFY: C Mitchell, E Morrin, P Bourke, C Dravins; K McDermott, M Hall, D Morrin; M Ruane, G Walsh; G Hunt, L Irwin, K Mulchrone; J Tuffy, G Dunne, J O'Malley. Subs: C Carter, J Ivers

CLAREMORRIS: M Mulligan; J Walsh, M Killeen, D Barry; D Merrick, R Finn, S Brennan; D Regan, F McCormack; D Taccos, C Gill, C Walsh; J McCormack, S Donnellan, B Walsh. Subs: S Diskin, M Ring, A Costello, D O'Brien.

REF: R Gurren (Aghamore)



Roscommon participants in the Dermot Earley Leadership Initiative with special guests Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael Liam Ó Néill, Paul Maher, Chairperson of Foróige, Prof. Paul Dolan, NUIG, Mary Earley, wife of the late Dermot Earley Snr., and Anne-Marie Earley, daughter of the late Dermot Earley Snr., at the launch of the Dermot Earley Leadership Initiative, in conjunction with NUIG, Foróige, and the Alan Kerins Projects. Croke Park, Dublin.

Photo: Pat Murphy / SPORTSFILE

Dermot Earley programme launched in Croke Park

ON the same day that Paul Earley led the Irish International Rules team to victory over Australia, 60 young GAA members arrived in Croke Park to participate in a pilot programme dedicated to the honour of his late brother, Dermot.

Brought together by the National University of Ireland, Galway, Foróige, and the GAA, the Dermot Earley Youth Leadership Initiative aims to inspire a new generation of young Irish leaders by engaging them with the values and ideals Dermot epitomised on and off the field of play.

The Earley family were represented on the day by Dermot's wife, Mary, and three of their six children, Dermot Jr, Anne-Marie, and Paula. Dermot Jr, a former Kildare inter-county All Star, said:

"Enabling young people to achieve their full potential was something my father was passionate about. We are de-

lighted to give our support to this initiative and look forward to the positive influence these young leaders will have on their GAA clubs, their communities and beyond."

The 15- to 18-years-old male and female participants represent 38 different GAA clubs across counties Roscommon, Kildare, and Galway. They will explore all elements of leadership before being asked to put their skills to work back in their clubs and communities. Volunteers from the GAA and Foróige from the three counties, who received training from NUIG, will act as programme facilitators. Those who complete all three modules between October 2013 and April next year will be eligible to graduate from NUIG with a Foundation Certificate in Youth Leadership and Community Action in October 2014.

An Uachtarán CLG, Mr Liam O'Neill, who officially launched the programme,

urged the participants to explore all potential avenues when considering how best to serve their communities as leaders. He noted that he was just eight-years-old when he decided he wanted to become the president of the GAA, and he said that he hoped at least one person in the room would have the same aspiration.

Professor Pat Dolan, NUIG and UNESCO Chair of Children, Youth and Civic Engagement, and Mr. Paul Maher, Foróige Chairperson, congratulated the participants in being selected for the programme and said they looked forward to the future contributions they would make as leaders in their own right.

All remaining session in the 50-instructional hour programme will happen in the participants' own counties. Participants will also have the opportunity to fundraise and travel to Zambia as part of the Alan Kerins Project's intercultural youth programme.



Super season for



Castleconnor minors celebrate their A2 final win

2013 has proven to be a splendid year for everyone involved in Castleconnor GAA club, especially the underage teams.

Last month, Into the West reported on this intriguing county final at Markievicz Park, with Castleconnor defeating Coolaney/Mullinabreena by 1-18 to 1-9. Congrats to the team and management of Ollie Sexton, Jim Kent and PJ Judge for their work through the year. Thanks to the team sponsors Judges Autos and Muddy Burns Bar who presented a new set of jerseys to the team for their championship campaign.

The minor Team that day was: Stephen Durkan, Conor Judge, Conor

Gallagher, Cian Barrins, Eoin Kent, Jack O'Hora, Ciarán Kilcullen, Kevin McDonnell, Shane Wright, Jason Earlis, Keith Foody, Stevie Curley, Matthew Cullen. Subs: Seán Carrabine, James Flynn, Liam Naughton, Lewis Beardshall, James Boland

In the U-16 B championship there was also glory for the club, eventually sealing a 3-8 to 3-5 win over Eastern Harps

The final was played in Tourlestrane on a wonderful Saturday afternoon with the sun beaming down making it summer hot for the players. This was a hard earned victory with a 10 minute spell just before half time the crucial scoring time for our lads.

For the first 15 minutes the exchanges were even with Lewis Beardshall strong in midfield and Jack O'Hora very dominant at full forward. At the midpoint of the half Paul Flynn came to midfield and this opened up more space for the forwards with Pauls accurate passing and Seán Carrabines running causing havoc. Micheál Cahill scored two goals coming up to half time with one a driver to the net after good work all the way from the full back line. The second was a case of never giving up and his handball skills as he palmed it over the keeper from practically the end line. A number of points from O'Hora, Carrabine and Flynn meant we lead 3-5 v 1-3.

The Harps lads put us under a huge



PJ Judge (Judges Autos) and Mark Carr (Muddy Burns Bar and Restaurant) present Bart Barrins and David Durkan (Bord na nÓg chair) with minor teams new jerseys.



Declan Flynn presenting Chairman Mark Carr (centre) and Bart Barrins (far left) with a new set of U-12 jerseys.



Castleconnor



Castleconnor U-16 B Championship winners 2013

amount of pressure at the start of the half but End Kilcullen and Cian Barrins caught and blocked many balls. Benny Foody and Stephen Durkan who both were under pressure at the start of the half came into it and had snuffed out their markers as the half went on. Kenneth Flynn still had to make two excellent saves during the half. We were more in counter attacking mode in this half with Luke Munnelly and Danny O'Hora winning the long ball and holding it for the scorers to come through or James Boland going on a long lung busting run.

We extended the lead to 6, 3 minutes into injury time and with the last attack Harps scored another goal but we held on deservedly to win. This was a real roller-coaster of a team who suffered some huge defeats but always came back for more and ended up winning a playoff to get to the semi where they defeated their league final conquerors.

Well done to management and team: Kenneth Flynn, James Boland, Stephen

Durkan, Enda Kilcullen, Benny Foody, Cian Barrins, Seán Carrabine, Lewis Beardshall, Luke Munnelly, Paul Flynn, Micheál Cahill, Jack O'Hora, Danny O'Hora. Subs: Elliot Beardshall, Kevin Howley, Odhran Quinn

The Castleconnor U-14 Team 2013 were also a fine outfit and made it to the B League and Championship finals.

A squad of very young players, who performed excellently all year reaching league and championship finals but unfortunately losing to Curry on both occasions. The quality of the team was shown with Paul Flynn, Kenneth Flynn, Danny O'Hora, Micheál Cahill, Niall Judge, James Boland and Odhrán Quinn representing West Sligo at the John Egan tournament in Kerry where they were defeated by Dr. Crokes in final.

The Club would like to thank all the new sponsors that kitted out our underage teams this year. Declan Flynn Heating & Plumbing, Gerry Curley Office PRO,

Muddy Burns Bar & Restaurant and Judges Auto's sponsored new team jerseys.

The club's U-20 team have reached the county final of this year's B Championship. Along the way they have defeated Curry 1-17 v 3-09, St. Pat's 2-13 v 1-11, Drumcliffe/Rosses Point 4-11 v 1-15(AET) and Eastern Harps 1-10 v 1-06. They were to meet St. Patrick's in the county final. At time of print the final had not taken place.

Club Officers 2014: President; Jim Curran, Patron: Fr. Desmond Kelly PP, Chairman: Bart Barrins, Vice-Chairman: David Durkan, Secretary: Frank Barrett, Treasurer: Darren Ruane, PRO: Barry Judge, Registrar: Ultan McGranaghan/Shane Feeny. All other positions can be viewed on club website.

The Club have their Annual Night of Celebration on Saturday December 28th in The Castleconnor Community Centre, Corbally. Details available on the club's website <http://castleconnor.sligo.gaa.ie/home>



Castleconnor U-14 Team 2013, sponsored by Gerry Curley, Office PRO.



By **GERALD CLARKE**
Secretary, St Patrick's GAA

ST PATRICK'S GAA Club, Skreen/Dromard in West Sligo are still in shock following the death of 24-year-old Conor Brady in Las Vegas.

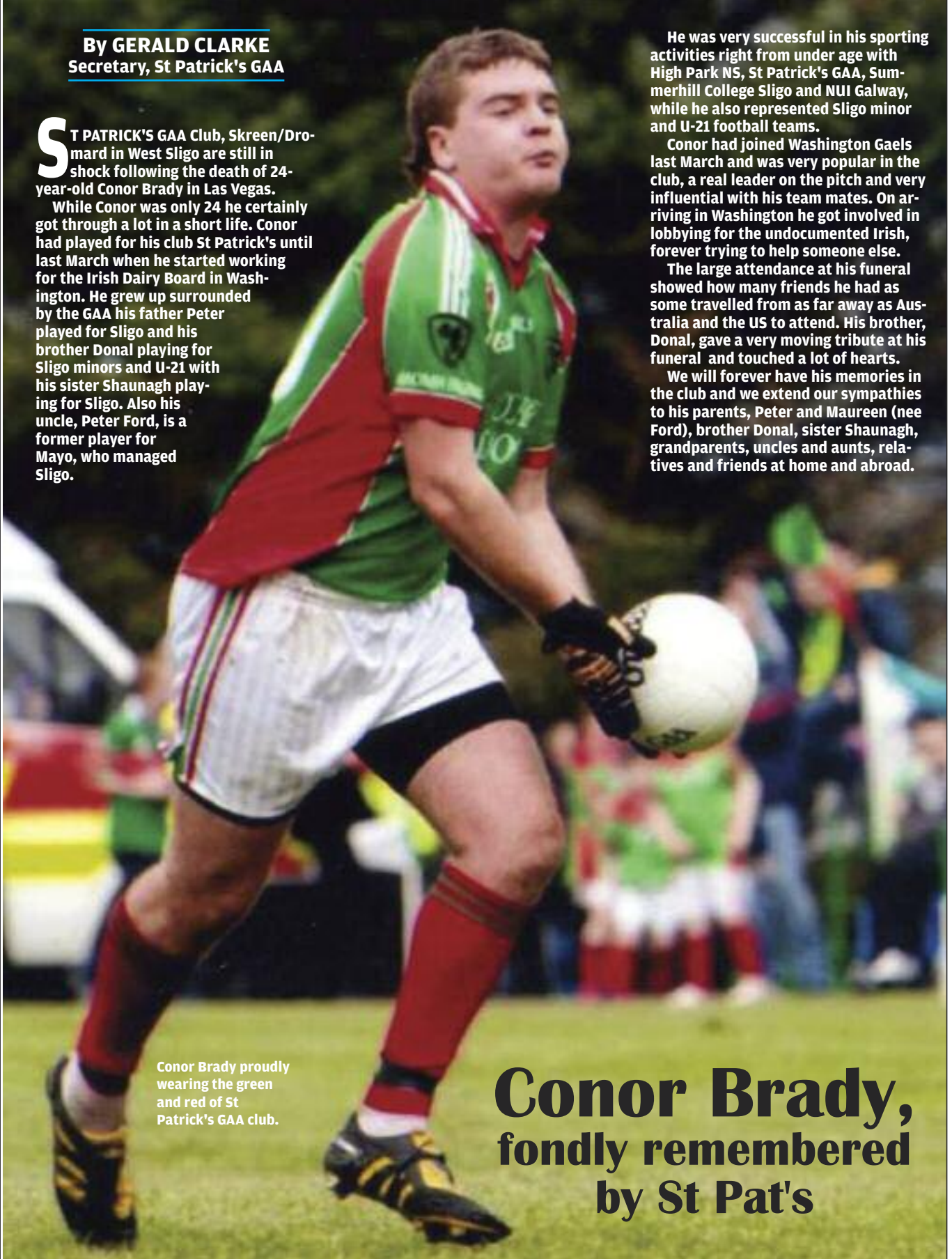
While Conor was only 24 he certainly got through a lot in a short life. Conor had played for his club St Patrick's until last March when he started working for the Irish Dairy Board in Washington. He grew up surrounded by the GAA his father Peter played for Sligo and his brother Donal playing for Sligo minors and U-21 with his sister Shaunagh playing for Sligo. Also his uncle, Peter Ford, is a former player for Mayo, who managed Sligo.

He was very successful in his sporting activities right from under age with High Park NS, St Patrick's GAA, Summerhill College Sligo and NUI Galway, while he also represented Sligo minor and U-21 football teams.

Conor had joined Washington Gaels last March and was very popular in the club, a real leader on the pitch and very influential with his team mates. On arriving in Washington he got involved in lobbying for the undocumented Irish, forever trying to help someone else.

The large attendance at his funeral showed how many friends he had as some travelled from as far away as Australia and the US to attend. His brother, Donal, gave a very moving tribute at his funeral and touched a lot of hearts.

We will forever have his memories in the club and we extend our sympathies to his parents, Peter and Maureen (nee Ford), brother Donal, sister Shaunagh, grandparents, uncles and aunts, relatives and friends at home and abroad.



Conor Brady proudly wearing the green and red of St Patrick's GAA club.

**Conor Brady,
fondly remembered
by St Pat's**



Sligo players claim Connacht titles

BRENDAN and Rachel Foody and Laura Finn have all calimed Connacht handball titles.

Brendan won the boys U-15 singles championship while Rachel and Laura won the U.15 doubles title.

And there was further success when Laura, a student at Colaiste Mhuire, Ballymote, won the Connacht Colleges B title.

Brendan staged a great recovery in the Boys U-15 singles semi-finals which took place in Belcarra Co. Mayo. His opponent Declan Barry from Galway was well on the way to the final when taking the first game by 15-1 and was 14-1 up in the second and just needing 1 more point for victory. Somehow Foody conjured up an unlikely victory from the jaws of defeat.

In a remarkable turnaround the Sligo player fought back impressively and stunned Barry taking the second game by the minimum 15-14.

In a rollercoaster final game Foody raced away in the tie breaker winning it by 15-1.

In the final against Mayo's Ross Bourke Foody made no mistake taking the title by 15-2, 15-4.

In the Girls U-15 doubles decider Sligo's Laura and Rachel had an exciting win over Galway's Christina Hanley and



Rachel Foody and Laura Finn won two Connacht medals each.



Brendan Foody.

Emma Cummins by 15-13, 15-11.

It was a busy weekend for Lalurawho won her second Connacht title of the weekend when winning the Connacht Colleges B title representing Colaiste Mhuire Ballymote.

She defeated Karen Cosgrove Balla in the final.

Odhran Quinn, Muirdeach's College, captured the junior boys singles with a comprehensive victory over Ross Bourke, Balla Secondary School.

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TG4 LADIES FOOTBALL ALL-STARS



LADIES Galway all star ALL STAR: Galway footballer, Annette Clarke, is presented with her TG4 Ladies Football All-Star award by Pat Quill, President of the Ladies Gaelic Football Association, in the company of Pól O Gallchóir, left, Ceannsaí, TG4.
Photo: Brendan Moran / SPORTSFILE



Mayo footballers, from left, Noelle Tierney, Aileen Gilroy, Fiona McHale, Yvonne Byrne and Cora Staunton in attendance at the TG4 Ladies Football All-Star Awards. TG4 Ladies Football All-Star Awards 2013, Citywest Hotel, Saggart, Co. Dublin.
Photo: Brendan Moran / SPORTSFILE

2013 CAMOGIE ALL-STAR AWARDS



Galway's Susan Earner, Niamh Kilkenny, Lorraine Ryan, Sarah Dervan, Therese Maher, Ailish O'Reilly, Emma Kilkelly, Niamh Ryan represented by her mother Geraldine Ryan, Heather Cooney, Rebecca Hennelly, Paula Kenny with manager Tony Ward at the 2013 Camogie All Stars Awards.

Photo: INPHO/James Crombie



Galway's Senior All Stars Lorraine Ryan, Ailish O'Reilly, Niamh Kilkenny, Susan Earner, Niamh Ryan represented by her mother Geraldine Ryan, Therese Maher, Sarah Dervan at the 2013 Camogie All Stars Awards in Association with Liberty Insurance, Citywest Hotel, Dublin.

Photo: INPHO/James Crombie

M. Donnelly Wheelchair



The Connacht team.



Pat Carty (Connacht) clears his lines at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.



Aidan Hynes (Connacht) in possession at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.



Connacht v Munster in the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial Final in Athlone IT



Pat Carty (Connacht) clears his lines at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.

Hurling Interprovincial



Pat Carty (Connacht) clears his lines at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.



Aidan Hynes (Connacht) in possession at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.



Aidan Hynes (Connacht) chases at the M. Donnelly Wheelchair Hurling Interprovincial against Munster in Athlone IT recently.

Three Mayo winners round off super year for Connacht



October winner, Kenny Feeney



November winner, Richie Feeney



December winner, Cora Staunton

THE competition for the October Personality of the Month was probably the most fierce of the year with players from all of the county championships putting their hand up for the award.

But after leading Tooreen to a first Mayo senior hurling title in ten years and hitting an incredible 3-6 in the final against Ballyhauins – including a five-minute first-half hat-trick – Mayo inter-county star Kenny Feeney is October's Connacht GAA Writers Personality of the Month.

Feeney also playing a leading role in Tooreen's Connacht intermediate semi-final victory over Roscommon champions, Four Roads, where he hit 0-11 points

to help his side into the provincial final.

November's winner goes to the Castlebar Mitchells club. The Mayo side had earlier ended a 20-year barren spell for county glory, but backed that up with a triumphant run through the provincial championship, where they accounted for Galway champions Corofin, and defending All-Ireland winners St Brigid's. Playing a key role in all of those wins was Richie Feeney, and he is the November recipient.

There can only be one winner of the December award as Carnacon claimed the All-Ireland Ladies senior club title with victory over Donaghmoynne from Monaghan.

In a tight game, Carnacon

emerged 1-6 to 0-8 winners, with Cora Staunton's tally of 1-5 proving crucial. Cora is the December Connacht GAA Writers Personality of the Month

The three winners will be presented with their awards at the Connacht

GAA Banquet in January at the McWilliam Park Hotel in Claremorris, where the Sports Personality of the Year will also be unveiled.

They will be joined by previous winners Wayne McKeon (January), Darragh McCormack (February), Frankie Dolan (March), Michael Gordon (April), Mark Gottsche (May), Lorcan Mulvey (June), Aidan O'Shea (July), Cillian O'Connor (August) and Therese Maher (September).