

Vol. 1 Issue 3 March 2021

Portlaoise GAA Club Newsletter

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@PortlaoiseGaa

#ClubIsFamily

Editorial

Hello and fáilte to the 3rd issue of Portlaoise GAA Club's new newsletter, Town Tattler. It's hard to believe it's been a year since we entered our first lockdown. And what a year it's been! I'm a glass two-thirds full kind of guy and try to see the positive in everything - from the Town Tattler to Friday night's Lockdown Bingo it's brilliant to see the uptake of engagement and involvement in the club. We also can't forget the success on the pitch in the past year and we reflect on that and look towards the future in this issue. Everyone at Town Tattler is overwhelmed by the success of the newsletter and the support from the whole town. I hope you enjoy this issue and REMEMBER, we are another step closer to our reunion in Rathleague,

Cathal



Some Good News!



Happy Mother's Day

To all our GAA Mammies, past and present. Today is our day to say 'Thank You.'

Thank you for being officers, committee members, coaches, supporters, players, cheerleaders for Portlaoise GAA. Thank you for shouting from the sidelines, for washing the jerseys, for playing our games, for coaching our kids, for feeding us, for getting your kids to training, for the lifts to matches, for attending meetings, for your ideas on how we are doing and how to make things better, for the laughter & the tears, for your encouragement and support.

Most of all, thank you for being part of the Portlaoise GAA Club family

#ClubIsFamily

Congratulations to Gareth Dillon and his wife Eimear on the birth of baby Zac.

Bingo Success!



Portlaoise GAA's first 'Lockdown Bingo' was hosted on Friday 12th March. It was great to see huge involvement from everyone in the club. A huge thanks to all our sponsors and organisers and of course our resident Bingo Caller, DJ Brochan. Our jackpot winner was Patrice Deffew McEvoy.

The prize fund is going to be even bigger next week, so don't forget to buy your books now on our website portlaoisegaa.ie. Hope to see you all next Friday at our new time of 8pm.



@PortlaoiseGaa

List of Bingo Winners

Game 1	One Line	€25		11477	Yes	Des Mulhare
	Two Lines	€50	Wandering Elk €50	9308	Yes	Danny Farrell
	Full House	€50		2043	Yes	Joanna Kucharz
		€50		10290	Yes	Diarmuid Lalor
Game 2	One Line	€25		9981	Yes	Natasha Dunne
	Two Lines	€50		13068	Yes	Sandra O'Neill
	Full House	€50		1661	Yes	Caitriona Dennehy
		€50		11915	Yes	Ann Barry
Game 3	One Line	€50		638	Yes	Jack Tobin
		€25		10350	Yes	David Fitzpatrick
	Two Lines	€50		2176	Yes	Liz Traynor
	Full House	€100	Boscós - Hamper €70	13129	Yes	Ellen Foran
Game 4	One Line	€25		1348	Yes	Fidelma Delaney
	Two Lines	€50		1787	Yes	Maura Loughlin
	Full House	€100	Browns Off License - €200	11452	Yes	Patrice Daffew
Game 5	One Line	€25		12038	Yes	Eamonn Fennelly
	Two Lines	€50		12693	Yes	Grainne Moran
	Full House	€500		572	Yes	Aine Holmes
Game 6	One Line	€50		9336	Yes	Laura Christie
	Two Lines	€100		637	Yes	Lorraine Delaney
	Full House	€1,000		11571	Yes	Patrice Daffew

#CmonTheTown



Picture: Paddy and Imelda with the sign in the newly refurbished gym

Thank You!

The club would like to say a heartfelt THANK YOU to Paddy and Imelda Fitzpatrick, who have sponsored this new sign for the newly refurbished gym in Rathleague. This is a wonderful contribution and brilliant message from two lifelong members of the club - *"Don't Quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a Champion."*

Congrats Ladies!

Two of our Ladies footballers have been given sport scholarships in the last few weeks. Congratulations to both girls, making everyone at Portlaoise GAA very proud.

- Fiona Dooley - WPGA Enhanced Scholarship
- Aoife Hyland Conlon - 3rd Level Scholarship





Happy St. Patrick's Day



Magical March Madness

#FlyTheFlag

Its March and we cannot let this month go without special mention to two great teams that brought us to the highest point in club sport.

The heroes of 1982/83 stand alone in our club as the only team to make the ultimate breakthrough. In March 1983 - a miserable day weather-wise that resulted in the last-minute relocation of the game from Tullamore to Cloughjordan - the town defeated Clann na Gael from Roscommon on a scoreline of 0-12 to 2-0 to become All-Ireland senior champions for the first and only time.

A team littered with once-in-a-generation players such as Eamon 'Atch' Whelan, Colm and Gerry Browne, and Tom 'Curly' Prendergast had blazed a trail through Laois and Leinster in 1982, scraped over the famed St Finbarrs of Cork in the semi-final in early '83 and were not going to be denied their destiny. This team had it all, a perfect blend of youth and experience.

Mick Dooley and Mick Mulhall had also won a Leinster Championship back in 1971. Colm Browne, Gerry Browne, Eamon Whelan, Liam Scully, Noel Scully, Tom Prendergast, Billy Bohan, and Bernie Conroy joined them to win another in 1976. They had also lost Leinster finals in 1979 to Walsh Island (by a solitary point) and 1981 to Raheens of Kildare.

By 1983 this team was ready. Cloughjordan will always be a place associated with the glory days of Portlaoise GAA. This team underlined its greatness with further Leinster Championship successes in 1985 and 1987. Can you name everyone in this famous picture?

This St. Patrick's Day will be very different to what we are used to. We won't have a float or a parade or have the chance to celebrate all that is great about being Irish over a pint and a packet of Tayto in the pub.

However, we still want to #FlyTheFlag This is where you come in! We want you to dress in your Town colours, fly your Portlaoise flags, raise some bunting and whatever else you think would represent the club this Paddy's Day! It may be different but that doesn't mean we can't have a little fun and enjoy ourselves safely during this lockdown.

If there is one thing our club is good at its pulling together to exude pride and colour. To quote a great song from The Script, "it's alright, because tonight we are going to paint the town green". That may be cheesy but you get the jist. Let's all stay safe, have fun and turn out in our colours this St Patrick's Day!

Be sure to send us in all your lovely pictures and videos to our social media platforms and be part of our #FlyTheFlag initiative.

#FlyTheFlag



The heroes of the 1970's and 1980's helped transform the mindset of Portlaoise football. For many years we laid claim to being the most successful club in our province. This holds true still where we sit atop the roll of honour alongside the famed St Vincent's.

The torch was passed to the next generation in fine fashion and in 2004/2005 the town finally arrived back on the big stage - this time in the more auspicious surrounds of Croke Park. This was a team backboned by a host of players who had starred at minor level competing and winning All-Irelands with Laois.

This team gave us memorable days. Who will ever forget 'the Doc' Fitz giving a rousing rendition of the Portlaoise Queen in Newbridge after his beloved town had swept the Trevor Giles-led Skryne from Meath away in the Leinster Final.

Beating the great Crossmaglen team in the All-Ireland semi final must rank as one of the greatest victories in the history of the club. Heartbreak was to follow in the final. Portlaoise looked to be heading for victory, without reaching the heights of their potential, only for Ballina to register the last three points of the game and deprive a gallant town side by one single point.

Such are the fine margins in sport but what a team this was; Cahir Healy, Aidan Fennelly, Martin Delaney, Bruno McCormack, Ian Fitzgerald, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Woolly Parkinson - household names and what a supporting cast alongside them. How lucky have we been to see teams such as these in our club. We may be down a little right now but the standard has been set and Portlaoise will come again.

Thanks to the panels of 1982/83 and 2004/05 for the magical March memories.



A Throwback to Past Parades!





Bígí ag caint as Gaeilge ar an líne!

Ah réiteoir! – Ah ref!

Pas anseo – Pass here

Pas an liathróid – Pass the ball

Fan siar – Stay back

Táim saor – I'm free

Maith thú/an buachaill/cailín – Well done (you/boy/girl)

Maith thú – Well done (you)

Lean ar aghaidh – Keep going

Sin cúl álainn – Lovely goal

An imríonn tú leis an gclub áitúil? – Do you play with the local club?

Portlaoise abú – Up Portlaoise

Próifíl Imreora

Ainm: Gearóid Ó hÁimhirgín

Aois: 25

Post: Múinteoir Bunscoile

Scoileanna ina d'fhreastail tú: Scoil Bhríde agus Scoil na mBráithre Críostaí

Caithimh Aimsire: Iománaíocht, Léitheoireacht, Siúlóid amuigh san nádúr, Is breá liom bheith ag traenáil ar an páirc imeartha nó san seomra aclaíochta

An Clár Netflix is fearr leat: The Office

Banna Ceoil is fearr leat: Oasis

An áit is fearr le dul ar laethanta saoire?

Maidir le hÉireann agus an téarma "Staycation", is aoibhinn liom an tIartharr (Clár / Gaillimh) mar gheall ar an t-uisce agus na radharcanna

Cén áit ar an bpáirc is fearr leat? Is breá liom bheith ag imirt i lár na páirce chun an liathróid éasca, scaoilte a fháil!!

Cé hí/hé do laoch spóirt? Michael Jordan (Tar éis an clár fáisnéise "The Last Dance" a fheiceáil)

An t-imreoir is fearr leat: Tony Kelly

Comhairle d'imreoirí óga: Déan cleachtadh ar na scilleana bunúsach agus bí ag obair go dian, ach is é an rud is tábhachtaí dár liom ná bain taitneamh as!



#PortlaoiseAbú

In Conversation With: Steven Doyle

Chairman of Portlaoise Camogie

So who is Steven Doyle?

Originally from the Big Blue Smoke I grew up in Killinarden, Tallaght with 2 brothers and my sister. I've been working with Campion Insurance in The Town for the past 13 years after giving up on the dreaded commute. Before moving to Portlaoise, I've worked in Germany for a short time and in Jersey in the Channel Islands for about 10yrs. It was there I met my lovely wife Andrea before getting married and settling in Portlaoise. We have 2 lovely kids a girl & a boy who are both members of the Club so lots of time spent in Rathleague.

How did you end up in Portlaoise?

After returning home to get married we knew we didn't want to live in Dublin, the country had gone through massive changes with the Celtic tiger. The Tallaght I knew had become a mini city which wasn't us. We had friends that lived in Abbeyleigh and they suggested looking down around here. We had looked at other areas before deciding on The Town.

When did you get involved in PL GAA?

Our daughter started playing Camogie for the club in 2014, something I never thought would happen - next thing, she's lining out in her hurl and helmet and getting stuck in. Now I'm involved with my son in the juveniles and the circle starts again.

You're now chair of Portlaoise Camogie - how did that come about?

I can blame Mick Ryan for that... At the start I enjoyed getting involved to help the coaches it was getting to be out on a football pitch again. The following year I took on my daughters team and I got more involved with the committee - Development Officer, attending County board meeting, the rest they say is history. Last year I was voted in as Chairman.

Challenges of the role?

A few sleepless nights at the start, but with COVID restrictions playing havoc across our community, the stop/start of the season and outstanding county finals our club are

still involved in. I think the challenges have been more on the players and their families. We have a good group on the committee with a vast amount of knowledge about the in's and outs of running the club and I hope to call upon when we get back playing.

Aspirations?

To keep the club growing, in the beginning the club started with just 25 members it has grown a lot in the years since, but there are plenty of camogie stars still to be discovered.

Are you enjoying your role?

The year that is has been yes, I have. I haven't had to deal with a lot of the other issues around chairing a club I'm sure that will come.

A Dublin man - do you still support The Dubs?

Oh Yeah, how many in a row ? I will come to support Laois as long as yous aren't playing the Dubs.

Any opinion on the whole GAA debate and how to deal with the juggernaut that is Dublin?

Great for the County, but not sure its good for the game.

Do you feel at home in Portlaoise nowadays?

Yes, we settled pretty much straight away. There's no going back to Dublin.

Opinions on the whole different associations scenario?

Very complicated, logistically fitting a club season into a short period of time takes a lot of time to sort out, then add county fixtures. This year highlighted the issue regarding dual players and the clash of fixtures. There are people within the associations calling for this to change, so we'll have to wait and see.

How important is it for kids to be involved in sport?

I think its very important now more than ever, it's a great outlet from them. We know the benefit of kids being involved in sports - Health, Wellbeing, Commucation, Team Work, Stress Releaser but mostly the Fun and enjoyment.

Quickfire Favourites Questionnaire

Movie - Any of the Star Wars Movies

TV Programme - Survival/Nature Programmes

Food - Fish

Holiday - Dubai

Drink - Italian Red

Player - Xabi Alonso

Sport - Football (Liverpool)

Hobby - Anything DIY

35

Laois Football Championships

11

Laois Hurling Championships

7

Leinster Football Championships

1

All-Ireland Club Football Championship

1

Ladies Laois Football Championship

#ProudTownies

THE WAITING GAME

As the Senior Hurlers await their fate of the 2020 Championship Final, the man in charge, Derek Delaney gave us an insight into the future of this team

How difficult has it been to be a manager in what must be the craziest couple of years in our lifetimes?

It's certainly been a year with plenty of challenges that nobody had previously experienced so at times it was just a case of managing the scenarios based on facts and then at times with total optimism!

Our plan for the year was scrapped and re-organised numerous times. Early on I identified that a "one size fits all approach" was not going to work for the group so it was a case of managing the situation and challenges on an individual basis as needed to make sure we were ready to the ground running. Once we got back and the games were confirmed, it was a lot easier as it was typically 2 weeks between each game, having dates to work towards was ideal from both players and mgmt. point of view.

The hurlers seemed to be in very good shape coming up to a final last year - describe the feeling of this getting called off at the death

Of course, we were really ready for that, for the first time all year we had our strongest panel fit and ready to play a full part, picking the starting team was starting to cause us a few headaches!

We were peaking at the right time, training went really well with a lot of competition for places so it was definitely a sickening feeling in ways but we quickly accepted that it was beyond our control and moved on, the most frustrating part outside of the short notice was the uncertainty for a number of weeks after it was initially called off.

How did you find preparing a team last year for the games you did get played...no dressing rooms etc?

No real issues being honest, we knew from early on what was and wasn't allowed so we organised our game routine around that and it seemed to work well, it was the same for everyone so no point in making an issue about it and in fairness to the players they

just embraced the scenario, committed to training and got themselves ready for the games. As a team we certainly missed the social aspect post games but hopefully that will return later this year.

What headspace are the hurlers in as they get ready for 2021?

Lads are really keen to get back together as a group and work towards achieving the goal of Senior Hurling, uncertainty on the return date is not helping but at this stage lads have accepted that and are doing what they can to maintain fitness knowing that once we are back it will be full on.

Leaders are starting to emerge in different ways that might not be seen just now but will hopefully come to fruition later in the year.

How do you manage the situation in terms of trying to stay positive yourself firstly and then communicating with the group as this crisis persists?

I found it easy in ways as the situation was something that I, the management team or players could not control or influence, Perspective is everything, last year we just focused on the small wins each week until we got dates confirmed and from that we just focused on the next session and the next game. Given the players their own time and space at key times is also very important as each have their own views, challenges and other commitments.

There was a nice injection of youth into the team in 2020 - was this a positive development for town hurling?

Certainly, and it should be happening every year! All coaches must strive to provide that year on year. From the start it was something I felt the panel needed and in fairness to the lads they committed, done what was asked of them early in the year so once we got back to the field after the first lockdown they hit the ground running, throughout the year they showed great attitude, desire and a hunger to make the team.



Once they got a jersey they were keen to hold onto it and really contribute to the culture and standards that we are trying to create. That alone was possibly the most pleasing in so many ways. We have another few coming through this year, as long as they apply themselves they will get the same opportunities and that can only be a positive for Portlaoise Hurling going forward.

What are your hopes and aspirations for the year ahead?

I hope we can get back as a group asap to correctly prepare for the final, whenever that will be! Outside of that I hope to see more leaders emerge among the group. We started to re-develop a culture last year that was challenging at times due to the impact of Covid but we had a lot of success in ways, so looking forward to building on that. I'm also looking forward to seeing how much competition we can create amongst the panel with the development of our younger players.



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Out of Town with Alan Kingsley

Alan Kingsley was a hurler of great promise with Portlaoise. A former Laois minor hurler of the year and a member of the last team to win the senior championship in 2004. Hurling's loss was rugby's gain, we spoke to Alan, who has recently been appointed kicking consultant with Cardiff Blues and also works with the Dragons and Biarritz.



What are your memories of sport as a kid?

Earliest memories would be getting dropped out to Togher on a Saturday morning to play rugby and then up to the street leagues on a Sunday morning in the GAA centre. The minibus trips to and from Togher from the top square along with the away blitzes around the midlands always come to mind. From the GAA side, we were lucky enough to play in many county finals right through the age grades, the old dressing rooms in O Moore park and running out the tunnel was always a special occasion and something that sticks in my mind. On TV watching the 5 nations with Fred Cogley on commentary and Italia 90 were the big early stand out memories.

Who were your early GAA heroes?

Cuman na mBunscoil used to hand out posters in the schools of the top footballers and hurlers around that time. Pauric Lodge now an RTE commentator grew up right next door and he'd sit on the wall commentating while I'd try copy scores and skills of the players on the posters. DJ Carey, Nicky English, Mickey Linden and Jason Sherlock were among the favourites and mentioned most. The Laois minors of 95 and following years were also players I looked up to. While not that much older they certainly inspired my age group a lot. In the club the likes of John Taylor, the Rigneys who played both rugby and hurling, Zoom and my neighbour Tom Conroy really stood out as ppl I looked up to.

When did rugby start to become your chosen path?

I was lucky enough that the seasons didn't cross over too much back then and I could fully commit to both for 99% of the time. The first real big decisions I remember having to make was to play a minor football final against St John Boscós or an inter-pro game against Ulster. I chose the rugby but it was a close call.

What's the main difference for you?

The biggest and most clear difference is the pace of the game. From hurling that moves 100mph to rugby that can be stop start. The ability to move fast for 60 mins and execute at top speed compared to the ability to take collisions and rely more on power and strength are the noticeable differences from a fitness point. From a skills perspective both required the skills of decision making, spatial awareness, execution etc but hurling and the finesse of the touch and speed of the game for me is a step above anything in rugby.

Favourite memories of Portlaoise GAA?

There's a lot of great memories right from u10 to senior but I think winning the minor hurling final against Castletown in 2001 is up there with the best. It was a fairly tight group at the time and an enjoyable year on and off the field. Working in the club house bar with Walla Brown as boss man are real good memories too.

Do you stay in touch?

Probably not as much as I should but the beauty of meeting old team/club mates when back in town is we always have something in common to chat about over a few pints. I'd be in regular contact with a few still, but definitely room for improvement too.

What are your highlights of rugby?

I was lucky enough to play on some great teams and win some big competitions along with playing some representative stuff but I think winning the Towns cup with Portlaoise is my favourite highlight. Some close friends, cousins and my brother were all on the team and was a special day. The club always made a massive effort in that competition and hadn't won it in a while which probably made it all the sweeter too.



How did you evolve into a rugby coach?

I fell into it really, I was in Australia and got asked to help with The Western Force academy as kicking and skills coach. I did that part time for a year before coming back to Ireland and coaching Navan RFC for 5 years. I got involved with St Mary's CSSP and did 3 senior cup cycles with them while also getting involved with some academy and u19/20 teams with Leinster. From there I got the opportunity to move to Wales and take a role with the Dragons thanks to Bernard Jackman. This year with Covid, I've moved to more of a consultancy role and work with some teams here in Wales and over in France .

What are your career highlights so far?

The visible highlight would probably be a big win over Scarlets on Judgement day 19/20 season but most of the highlights are the small victories away from the public eye. The helping players through bad patches and seeing improvements in individuals is rewarding along with installing a game plan and it being executed despite a loss can also be a highlight for coaches.

What are your ambitions for your career?

I don't really know to be honest, I'm enjoying being involved in pro rugby at the moment and will see where it takes me. To get back and coach in Ireland I suppose would be nice at some stage but at the moment, I'm happy to be learning and getting coaching experiences away from home.

Are you settled overseas?

Yeah happy at the moment and really enjoying life in Wales. All the family are happy here and we've met some really nice people through rugby circles and also through St Pauls GAA club here in Cardiff. While we're overseas I think we as a family would be open to move around a little more but definitely a return to Ireland and hopefully Portlaoise at some stage. If we moved home I think it would be very hard to leave again so I think we'll stay on the road while we have the opportunities. Portlaoise is home and as the saying goes, there's no place like it. No matter what corner of Europe rugby has brought me, sometimes the first thing after matches would be to check GAA or rugby results from Portlaoise. It means a lot to me and I look forward to moving back there at some stage.

Advice for young players

Nothing new here but you have to enjoy it and nothing beats hard work and diligence. Be willing to adapt and a team first mentality is a great characteristic. Also to play as many sports as possible while younger as skillset from different sports can be transferable.

How has Covid 19 impacted your life?

It's a totally different lifestyle under Covid as it is for everyone and we consider ourselves lucky to be able to get on with playing and training. All the normal chat of bubbles, tests etc are daily and wearing thin. It's very different playing in empty stadiums and the supporters can't come back quickly enough to create that buzz and help the off field stuff too. In the UK here, there's a plan and suggested dates to start returning to normal life so if we keep to the rules for a few more weeks hopefully we can finally beat Covid-19 .

Describe your typical day

Working in rugby means long days and very little time off. Normal day would see staff and players arrive at 7.15am. Coaches would be having 1:1 meeting with players, preparing sessions and presentations to be delivered during the day or week. There would normally be two pitch sessions a day on Mon/Tue for about 40 mins each so out of a 9/10 hour day only 1.20 mins actually spent on grass. While the match at the weekend maybe be the focus for players the coaches work a week ahead so when it gets to the following Monday all the prep is ready for the players to roll into another week. Depending on the match day a normal week is Mon/Tues off Wed and back in Thurs/Fri and match Saturday. Sunday would be at home but very much a working day to have reviews ready to go Monday morning.

Who's your favourite rugby player

That's a hard one. I can't narrow it down to one. In the modern game there are some hugely talented players creating their own legacies and known worldwide along with some of the greats of the game. George Gregan, Carlos Spensor, Christian Cullen are a few of many who come to mind and at the moment you can't but admire what Antoine DuPont is doing for France and Toulouse.

Who are your biggest influences?

I suppose the underage coaches in Togher and the GAA club who instilled a love for sport and made it fun to keep going back. Again, I've been lucky enough to work under some top class coaches but the credit must go to the people who started the journey along with my parents who encouraged sports but were never pushy.



A Tribute



It seems like a long time ago now and so much has happened since but we want to pay tribute to the Town senior footballers of 2019 – who still haven't been presented with their medals. We want to assure the lads that this win – a hard fought one point win against first time finalists Killeshin – will be marked, and medals presented, at an appropriate time in the near future. For some of the panel this was their first win – and for others it may have been their last. Though we became accustomed to senior title wins in the last 20 years we can never take these things for granted. A glance through the history of our Roll of Honour in this months Tattler is testament to that. Well done to the team of 2019 and we look forward to celebrating with you.

March Birthday Shoutouts



- A huge Happy Birthday yo James 'Fats' Brown celebrates his big 50th birthday this month



- Fionn Delaney will be 10 on the 24th of March. Always with a hurl in his hand, Fionn plays for our Under 11 Footballers and Hurlers.



- Gearóid Trotman will also be 10 on 29th March.



- Michael Mc Grath celebrates his birthday on the 17th of March



- Aileen O'Neill is also celebrating her birthday this month



- Paul Cahillane also has a March birthday.



Ronan O'Gorman will celebrate his 8th birthday on the 26th of March.

MARCH CAMOGIE BIRTHDAYS:

Zuzanna Tuszynska

Charlene Duff

Emma O'Sullivan

Jasmine Burke

Rachel Glynn

Gráinne O'Reilly

Laurina Skehan

Aileen O'Neill

Abi White

Abbie Blake Dunne Sophia van der Meulen Sarah Corrigan

Sophie Heffernan

Keeping Well

Health & Wellbeing Q & A -

with Catherine Doyle - Portlaoise GAA Club Health & Wellbeing Officer

A positive message to set the tone for our March 2021 Newsletter:

Enjoy every day as best you can. Go for a walk, hail, rain or sunshine. Don't take life too seriously and get a dog or 10!!!

How Portlaoise GAA Club could be healthier and happier?

I think our club can be happier and healthier if we improve how we communicate with each other at all levels. Failure to communicate in an open and transparent manner is what often leads to mistrust between people and sections, etc. Healthy communication from executives to members, from section to section and so forth will lead to a much more positive mindset across the club

POSITIVE
VIBES

How to Get Involved!



The Team behind the Club Newsletter are continuing to extend the invitation to anyone who has ideas for the newsletter going forward. No idea is too big or too small, to get involved, simply email us at info@portlaoisegaa.ie or contact a member of the newsletter team. You can also contact us on our social media platforms, details of which you will find in the newsletter. Thank you all for supporting this project.

CHOOSING THE CORRECT HURLEY SIZE

Choosing the correct size hurley will increase a player's success at mastering the skills of the game. A shorter, lighter hurley is especially recommended for children and those new to the game.

HOW TO MEASURE THE CORRECT SIZE:

- Player stands nice and relaxed with their hands down by their sides.
- The distance from the ground to their wrist is the correct length.
- Player should be able to hold the hurley at the top and the hurley should be just touching the ground.
- If a player is between sizes it is still better to have the hurley too small rather than too big.

TOP TIP!

With the correct size, your finger should align with/touch the player's wrist bone.

Place your finger horizontally just underneath the grip as shown.

WHAT ABOUT THE WEIGHT?

Players should hold hurl in their dominant hand and be able to make ever increasing larger circles for 30 seconds comfortably. Then this is correct weight.



Membership and Registration Update

With the GAA Foireann system you now have the opportunity to register & pay your membership online. During these Covid times, in the interest of the health & safety of all members we would encourage as many as possible to register online.

For those who aren't totally comfortable with online registration, don't worry we will still be able to help you to register as a member of the club. Just contact any Club officer for assistance.

- All players, coaches, administrators & committee members must be full members of the club

- Purchase a County Board ticket for €130 & cover the membership costs for 1 Adult for 2021

- Instalment options are an attractive feature of Foireann

- 6 month option on full membership €22pm

- 5 month option on juvenile €15pm

- 3 month option on supporters/social etc €17pm

Foireann is the brand new, purpose-built, online GAA system that will become the one-stop-shop for members to interact with our Club.

For players and coaches who have been using the "Return To Play" function on Foireann, please note that you can still submit a Health Questionnaire as normal by scrolling down to the bottom of the home page and clicking the Add New button in the Health Questionnaires section.

For more information on the new membership & registration and how to get the most out of these new features visit the GAA Support Website

<https://returntoplay.gaa.ie/>

**DON'T KNOW WHAT
SIZE HURL IS FOR YOU?
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS
POSTER FOR SOME
TIPS!**

Keeping Our Children Safe - A message from our Childrens Officer Kevin Gorman



Portlaoise GAA is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who wish to participate in our Gaelic Games and activities. We will take all practicable steps to protect them from discernible forms of abuse - from harm, discrimination or degrading treatment and shall respect their rights, wishes and feelings, as they grow and develop as members of our club.

We do this by first and foremost recognising that all children have the right to be protected from harm and endeavouring to ensure that all of our coaches and volunteers are carefully recruited and selected and that they accept responsibility for ensuring the wellbeing of children in their care.

The Juvenile Committee complete a child safeguarding Risk Assessment each year, where we identify the potential for harm to children when they are participating in our games and attending our activities, under a number of headings. This helps to form our Child Safeguarding Statement, which is displayed in Rathleague and includes relevant contact numbers. This statement identifies the fact that at the moment, our main area of focus is any risk of harm resulting from unvetted, uneducated or unqualified coaches. This isn't just a club issue, it's a national one, with the Children First legislation now making it compulsory for all coaches who are in any way involved with children to have met the following requirements; a) be garda vetted b) have completed a Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop c) have a coaching qualification and d) be a club member. This seems like a lot, but in reality is readily achievable. Garda vetting is now done online, just follow the steps at <https://www.gaa.ie/the-gaa/child-welfare-and-protection/vetting> Here you will see it outlined that "it is a criminal offence, for a person acting on behalf of the GAA, or for the GAA as an Association to permit any person to commence working with children on behalf of the Association without that person first obtaining a vetting disclosure from the National Vetting Bureau in respect of the role for which they have been recruited". There are a couple of ways of completing the other requirements - the County Board regularly organise workshops and coaching courses which we will circulate throughout the club, and we as a club also intend to run these courses independently throughout the year. We made a huge effort to become compliant last year, and in the process almost doubled the number of vetted personnel in our club. Almost 20 coaches attended a safeguarding course organised by the club in July, and the plan was to run more before the end of the year, until Covid restrictions intervened. We will continue to do everything we can to help all coaches become compliant, thereby consolidating our position as an organisation where children do indeed come first.

Aside from ensuring that personnel meet all conditions required, Portlaoise GAA as a club are committed to responding swiftly and appropriately to protect the welfare of children who participate in our games and related activities, providing parents and children with the opportunity to voice any concerns that they may have, reviewing the effectiveness of our Child Protection procedures and policies on an ongoing basis, and also insuring that members, coaches, team mentors, administrators, parents/guardians and spectators sign up to and adhere to our Code of Behaviour.

Our children are the future of the club - it is our focus, responsibility and duty to ensure that each and every one of them are given the chance to develop in a safe and secure environment, and be standard-bearers among Laois clubs when it comes to child safeguarding issues. With everyone's help and support, Portlaoise GAA can achieve this.

PORTLAOISE GAA ROLL OF HONOUR

HURLING, CAMOGIE AND FOOTBALL

Portlaoise GAA Championship Roll of Honour in Laois (Hurling)

JUVENILE

U12: (10)	1972,1973, 1974, 1975, 1979, 1983, 1984, 1991, 1993, 2010
U14: (20)	1973,1974, 1975,1980, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1988, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2004, 2008, 2011, 2012, 2014
U15: (1)	2019
Feile: (17)	1976, 1980, 1981, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012
U16: (24)	1960, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1968, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1992, 1995, 1997, 2002, 2003, 2014
U17: (10)	1972, 1976, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1989, 1996, 1998, 2002
Minor: (21)	1949, 1950, 1952, 1953, 1955, 1956, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1965, 1972, 1980, 1984, 1985, 1989, 1996, 1997, 1999, 2001
Minor B: (1)	2018

[**Rovers won 6 minor hurling titles from 1942-1947 at a time when club was disbanded – a Portlaoise team]

Juvenile Total (104)

SENIOR

U21: (5)	1978, 1981, 1988, 2000, 2015
Junior A: (4)	1965, 1987, 1993, 2013
Junior C: (1)	2018
Intermediate: (2)	1935, 1942
Senior A: (3)	2002, 2015, 2018
Senior: (11)	1928, 1943, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1989, 1991, 1998, 2004

Senior Total (26)

Portlaoise GAA Championship Roll of Honour in Laois (Football)

JUVENILE

U11: (1)	2019
U12: (16)	1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1978, 1979, 1982, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2016
U12 B: (2)	1970, 1973
U14: (21)	1961, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1984, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1998, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012,
Feile: (15)	1984, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014
U15: (1)	2019
U16: (19)	1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1968, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1986, 1993, 1995, 1999, 2000, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2009, 2010
U17: (13)	1965, 1971, 1971, 1972, 1978, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1988, 1989, 1996, 1998, 2000
Minor: (25)	1940, 1951, 1954, 1956, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1981, 1984, 1993, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2012

Juvenile Total (113)

SENIOR

U21: (18)	1965, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2013
Junior A: (8)	1935, 1973, 1977, 1988, 1992, 1999, 2002, 2005
Junior B: (1)	2002
Junior C: (3)	2003, 2008, 2009
Intermed: (5)	1939, 1956, 1972, 1975, 1982
Senior: (35)	1889, 1892, 1897, 1907, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1970, 1971, 1976, 1979, 1981, 1982, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1999, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2018, 2019
Leinster SFC : (7)	1971, 1976, 1982, 1985, 1987, 2004, 2009
All-Ireland SFC: (1)	1983

Senior Total (78)

Portlaoise GAA Roll of Honour (Ladies Football)

JUVENILE

U12: (8)	2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2018
U14: (8)	2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2016
U16: (6)	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2017, 2018
Minor: (3)	2007, 2008, 2017

SENIOR

Junior: (4)	1987, 1988, 1992, 2005
Intermediate: (1)	2006
Senior B: (1)	2014
Senior: (1)	2020

Portlaoise GAA Roll of Honour (Camogie)

JUVENILE

U12: (3)	2014, 2017, 2019
U14: (2)	2016, 2017
Feile: (2)	2016, 2017
U16: (2)	2018, 2019
U16 Shield: (1)	2009
U16 League: (1)	2017
Minor:	-

SENIOR

Junior:	-
Senior:	-

CLUB DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONNAIRES

Have Your Say!

We want to hear the views of all our members, in all sections of the club, on the future development of Portlaoise GAA Club. This month we are asking you to take a few minutes to express your preferences for both the short term and long term development of our club by completing some questionnaires. The forms will take less than 5 minutes to complete but are incredibly important to the future of our club.

Rathleague Facility Development Survey 2021 - Adult Club Members Only

<https://forms.gle/6JNt7zhB4X4rZDqJ9>

Rathleague Facility Development Survey 2021- Youth Members & Parents

<https://forms.gle/jxRiJCKTX1XXMCcu8>

Portlaoise GAA Club Health & Wellbeing Survey March 2021

<https://forms.gle/s5J9PXsor2QBmDLf6>

It is important to note the following points:

- **Access to the questionnaires closes on Friday March 26th 2021.**
- **Please take time to provide accurate responses as responses cannot be altered.**

Re: Youth & Parent Questionnaire 2021

Youth members:

Please read and complete your questionnaire carefully with your parents help and guidance. You are under no obligation to complete this questionnaire if you do not wish to.

- One questionnaire per young member in your family should be completed.

Parents:

Before beginning the questionnaire, please explain to your child/children that Portlaoise GAA Club is embarking upon exciting development plans for Rathleague in the near future.

We want to know what our young people see as a priority, what they believe should be built first, what they like about the club and what they feel is currently missing. There is also a section where we look for your opinions as parents.

Please supervise and help younger children when completing the questionnaire.

We look forward to hearing from everyone.