

# TOWN TATTLER

Vol 5 - Issue 9







# David 'Crocky' Maher

David "Crocky" Maher is our resident photographer and social historian, a man who has spent a lifetime steeped in the white and green of Portlaoise. We all know his work from the pitch, those sharp action shots that catch the heart of a game, and the quiet gems he finds away from the sporting setting. With a camera in hand and the club in his heart, Crocky has documented our town, our club, our places and our pride. This month he sat down with us to share what the club means to him, and where he hopes to see it go in the years ahead.

## What is your first memory of Portlaoise GAA?

When I was very young, my father brought me to the Portlaoise matches. Later I was dropped up to Father Browne Avenue where we did hurling and football with the late Bill Phelan and Ollie Byrne.

## When did the club shift from a place you visited to a place you felt you belonged?

After we won the National Football Féile, we had great memories of going on those trips, both football and hurling. Great lads like Johnny Keenan, Brian Rodgers and many more, and we are all still great friends today.

## Who were the early people who shaped how you see the club?

The people who I think shaped the club back then, outside of the players, were the likes of Tommy Keogh, Bill Phelan, Dick Sides, Teddy Fennelly, Peadar Molloy, John Hanniffy, Niall Kavanagh, Vinny Dowling and Peter O'Neill, and many more too many to mention.

## What small moments still stick with you?

The small moments that stick with me were after the Town won a county final, the great nights in the clubhouse on Father Browne Avenue. The stories from Doc Fitz, Paddy Fitz, Bill Murphy and Dinny Bowe. God, they were some

characters. And winning the Junior 'A' football back in '92. Some great lads back then: Grellan Delaney, Joe Walsh, Pat O'Brien, Ger O'Brien (RIP), John Taylor, Fats Brown, Barry Kavanagh, the Rake, my own brother Anthony and many more. A crazy bunch but some talent. Don't ever mention that to Fats.

## Which Portlaoise teams through the years have given you the most joy to watch and or to photograph?

I love watching all the club matches, hurling, football and camogie. Once it's the Town. I have to say my favourite matches to photograph are the hurling ones. Some belts going on there.

## Is there a side that never won the a league or a county final but earned a special place for you because of how they played or how they carried themselves?

We were a bit barren in the nineties, but contrary to what some people say, all those players trained as hard as anyone and gave 100 percent commitment to the Portlaoise jersey.

## Who are the standard bearers you point to when talking to younger players about Portlaoise at its best?

Standard bearers for me are every player that put on the Town jersey, not just the winners.



Crocky pictured with Gavin Fitzpatrick, Aaron Feane and Jason Maher at the launch event for the 2012 Féile Peile na nÓg

## What drew you into the juvenile section of the club?

I got involved in the Juvenile Section many years ago. I suppose like most clubs, volunteers were scarce, so I did my duty, got all my coaching badges and never looked back. I worked with great people like Malcolm Nealon, Paul O'Connell and Dick Finnegan on the committees.



Crocky pictured with, Kieran Lillis, Niall Rigney, Liam 'Stapo' Brown, Mick Nerney, Paul O'Connell and Terry Swayne in June 2014

## Tell us a bit about your time with the ladies section?

At a committee meeting one night there was no coach for the Ladies Junior team. I couldn't believe that people would not step forward for a club our size. I had managed underage teams and also junior and intermediate men's teams, so I said I'd give this a go. I did one year, got beaten in a semi-final of the championship. No regrets. Great bunch of ladies. Some of them are representing the senior ladies in the county final shortly. All the best to them.

## How did you get into photography?

I always loved the old black-and-white photographs. I made the move to the Portlaoise Camera Club with no clue how to do photography. A couple of years later, here I am, a qualified photographer. Back in my day there weren't too many photographs of players unless you won something, and I played with some great players. So now I think I have



every player in the club photographed. For reference, people who are at matches, do not be afraid to ask me to photograph their son or daughter.

### **Tell us about one photograph that means the most to you and the story around it?**

I have a lot of photographs that people don't see, but one I have of the late Eoin "Rake" McDonald, who played in goals for our winning junior team back in the nineties, is special.

### **What are your hopes for the club over the next few years?**

Hopes for the club are to get back to winning county finals in both football and hurling. When you're winning there's some buzz. There's some amount of talent in the underage section from what I see. It won't be long before we're back to winning ways.

### **Most photogenic place in the world?**

Most photogenic place, and I have done some places, is on our doorstep: the Rock of Dunamase at sunset.

### **One match you wish you could have shot from the sideline in any era?**

The 1983 All-Ireland winning match. My dad was a selector on that team. I would have some photos of him.

### **A picture you still want to take that has not happened yet?**

A picture I would like to take that has not happened yet: my granddaughter lifting the cup in a county final in the Town jersey.

I apologise if I've left people out. A big thanks to Teddy Jr. for a super job as chair and all the lads behind the scenes doing the financial end of things. The people on the club committee. The crazy gang out in the grounds committee they are the fabric of the club, if your ever feeling down go out for tea in the morning with those lads it's some craic.. Not least to mention Richie Coss in England, how he does the club page is beyond me. Thanks again. - Crocky.



*Tony Maher and Bernie Conroy prior to the All-Ireland Club Final, March 1983*



*Crocky pictured with, Claire Dunne, Joe Phelan, Lorraine McCormack and Liam Breen in September 2011*



*With Cahir Healy and Kevin Fitzpatrick in 2009*





# CLG PHORT LAOISE

**LAOIS JUNIOR 'A' FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 1992**

Sunday, 11 October 1992 - O'Moore Park



## **Portlaoise 3-9 v0-12 Clonaslee St Manman**

**Back (l. to r.):** Mick Mulhall, Tony Maher, Frank Keenan, Fr PJ Byrne, Dick Sides, Ned Murphy, Hugo Griffin, David Maher, Niall O'Connell, Donal Scannell, Gerard O'Brien, Ben Travers, Martin Foran, Ray Carroll, Damien Kavanagh, Paddy Delaney, Brian Bohan, Grellan Delaney, Noel O'Reilly, Pat Hooban, Danny O'Loughlin, Paddy Connolly, Peadar Molloy;

**Front (l. to r.):** Bill Phelan, Pat O'Brien, James Brown, Mickey O'Sullivan, Seamus Hennessy, Colm O'Keeffe, Declan White, Owen McDonald, Tommy Fitzpatrick, John Taylor, Brian Rogers, Barry Kavanagh, Decky Dunne, Ollie Bartley, Pat Fitzpatrick;





# LGFA & Camogie fixture clash update and next steps for our dual players

On Saturday 13 September 2025 our Junior Ladies Football team and Senior Camogie teams were scheduled to play championship games at the same time. The respective fixture schedules were ratified by both the Camogie Association and LGFA County Executives prior to the championship beginning. We worked hard to find alternative times or dates so that both fixtures could still go ahead. When it became clear that no change was possible, a difficult decision was made: that the Junior footballers would proceed with their championship semi final, which they won with the help of their dual players. As a consequence, the Camogie Intermediate third round fixture against The Harps had to be conceded. That concession resulted in our Camogie team no longer being permitted to take part in the remainder of the 2025 championship. This was deeply frustrating and upsetting for all involved. The club committee was also very focused on the younger teams coming up through the club who should not have to face such inequitable challenges to physical activity and competition.

Whilst such an outcome is avoidable at the scheduling stage, without open dialogue, coordination and collaboration between the Camogie Association and LGFA, the likelihood of such unfair outcomes increase significantly. At our September committee meeting, it was proposed, seconded and agreed that an appropriate course of action was to form a working sub committee to liaise with both county executives for the LGFA and Camogie associations. This sub-committee was constituted by members of the club executive, the club committee, including representatives from both codes. The core mission: protect player welfare, promote the coordination of fixtures effectively, and ensure that dual players can represent their teams without being forced to choose, which, unfairly causes significant anxiety. The sub committee has begun its work and will continue to engage constructively with both associations in the best interests of current and future players.

These issues affect more than Portlaoise. Other dual clubs in Laois are facing the same pressures. Declan Egan, Treasurer of O'Moore's Camogie Club, put it plainly in a recent email to the Leinster Express. Dual players across Laois are being put under *"unsustainable pressure."* He wrote, *"I am shocked at how ladies are made to play a football fixture one day and less than 24 hours later are made to play a camogie fixture, or vice versa. This has been a constant thread over the last three years at all female age groups in Laois. How can this be allowed to happen in 2025. Then again, it's only this year that women in camogie were finally allowed to wear shorts and that only came about when the most important people of all stood up, the players themselves."*

He also noted, *"It was not Portlaoise's fault that they have dual players and needed to prioritise in the best interest of the players' welfare and wellbeing. If this had been a men's team unable to field, it would have made the headlines."* His suggestion is clear and practical. *"All the girls are asking is to*

*camogie and football on alternate [weeks]. It will give proper rest time to prepare and recover for your next fixture. This was trialled in Offaly two years ago and has been a resounding success."*

We thank our players, coaches and volunteers for how they handled a tough situation with respect and care for each other. We will keep members updated on progress as the sub committee continues its work with both county bodies. Our goal is a fair, sensible fixture plan that respect and supports dual players and strengthens Gaelic games across the county.

## Club Statement from 13<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Unfortunately our Junior Ladies Footballers and Senior Camogie teams are fixed at the same time tonight, creating a clash for dual players and supporters.

We have reached out to both county associations to express our disappointment that no alternative arrangements could be made. While this will not change tonight's clash, we hope to open constructive dialogue with both bodies to avoid clashes across the codes in future.

We understand the calendar is tight. As a dual club, we are concerned that further clashes will force players to choose one code over another. That is a disservice to players who give huge effort to represent Portlaoise in both codes. This is not unique to our club and reflects the reality of dual participation across the county. We would welcome sensible accommodation when clashes arise.

As a result of the clash, our Senior Camogie team will not be able to fulfil their Laois Camogie Intermediate Championship fixture tonight. This decision was taken with a heavy heart. There is significant crossover between both squads and, with our Junior Ladies Footballers playing a county semi final this evening, the club has prioritised that fixture.

We're very disappointed as a club for our players, mentors and supporters. Thank you for your understanding and for continuing to support both squads.

C'mon The Town.





# All-Stars End of Year





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# All-Stars End of Year







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# All-Stars End of Year







# All-Stars End of Year







Club

[Football](#)

[Hurling](#)

[Camogie](#)

[LGFA](#)

[G4M&O](#)

[Juvenile](#)

[Health & Wellbeing](#)

[Archives](#)

[Culture](#)

[Club History](#)



# All-Stars End of Year







# All-Stars End of Year





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

# All-Stars End of Year







# Mná Aclaí proudly supporting the Midlands LGBT+ Project and Laois Pride Festival Day

Pictured after their morning fitness class in Rathleague are our Mná Aclaí showing their support for the Midlands LGBT+ community.





# GAA INJURY

## Logging Through Foireann

As of **1 June 2025**, all players who sustain an injury while playing or training must self-report the injury through **Foireann**. This is a change from the previous system, which was managed by the **Club Injuries Officer**.

**Important:** It is the **responsibility** of the **injured player** to start the process on **Foireann**. For **underage players**, the **parent** or **guardian** must start the process. The **club cannot log injuries** anymore unless the player or the parent/guardian has begun the report in Foireann.

The **GAA** has published an in-depth **guide** showing how to complete this.  
The guide can be found [here](#).

If you are struggling to find your Foireann login details, email the Club Secretary at [secretary.portlaoise.laois@gaa.ie](mailto:secretary.portlaoise.laois@gaa.ie)





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THIS WEEK  
€18,600**

Your support makes a real difference.  
Go here to play and support the club.



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## SFC Quarter Final: Portlaoise 0-14 v 4-11 Courtwood





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# JFC 'B' Semi Final: Portlaoise 2-8 v Errill 1-15





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## SHC 'B' Semi Final: Portlaoise 0-16 v 0-18 Abbeylax St. Lazarians





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# JHC 'A' Final: Portlaoise 0-13 v 3-20 Clough Ballacolla





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LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL

# Laois LGFA SFC Semi Final: Portlaoise 4-10 v 3-10 Sarsfields



Photos: David 'Crocky' Maher



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LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL

# Laois LGFA SFC Semi Final: Portlaoise 4-10 v 3-10 Sarsfields



Photos: David 'Crocky' Maher





# Hurling and Camogie players warned to never use unsafe 'Gola' helmets



The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has warned Hurling and Camogie players, regardless of age, to immediately cease using all 'Gola' branded helmets. These helmets, which are often sold via online marketplaces and social media, do not meet basic PPE standards leaving those who use them at risk of serious injury.

The 'Gola' helmets often have protruding screws and sharp edges which post a danger both to those who wear them and other players on the pitch.

The company Gola does not make helmets or licence the Gola brand to any other company to make helmets. Those helmets with the 'Gola' branding are counterfeit helmets that do not meet safety requirements.

As the 'Gola' brand added to these helmets is counterfeit, it is highly likely that any CE mark on the helmets is also counterfeit. Hurling and Camogie helmets must have a CE mark to show that the helmet meets the required health and safety standards.

The helmets bearing the counterfeit 'Gola' brand are also manufactured without faceguards. In order to meet health and safety standards, faceguards must be added at the point of manufacture and not afterwards.

The CCPC has provided the following guidance in relation to the wearing of 'Gola' branded helmets for Hurling and Camogie:

"The Gola branded helmets do not comply with the PPE Regulations. There is no evidence of conformity with essential safety requirements of the regulations, no evidence of product specification or production control and therefore any presence of a CE marking can be considered unsupported."

"Gola branded helmets presents a risk to the health and safety of persons wearing them, in particular a serious risk to the eye, face, and head areas of the wearer. By definition, Gola helmets are a dangerous product as defined in Article 3(3) GPSR (General Product Safety Regulation)."

It is GAA policy that all players at all levels in games and training sessions must wear a helmet with a facial guard that meets the standards set out in IS:355 or other replacement standard as determined by the National Safety Authority of Ireland (NSAI).

If a player sustains a head injury when wearing a helmet that does not meet the standard or is modified or altered from the original manufactured state, they are not covered under the terms of the GAA Player Injury Fund.

Eoghan Tuohey, GAA Player Welfare Manager and Secretary to the GAA's Sliotar, Hurley and Helmet Work Group, said: "The use of a compliant helmet system (i.e., a helmet with a compliant faceguard added at the point of manufacture, thereby making it an item of Personal Protective Equipment) which meets the NSAI standard, IS:355 is critical in terms of ensuring player safety and welfare in Hurling and Camogie at all levels.

"These counterfeit helmets do not comply with PPE Regulations and present a risk to the health and safety of any player wearing them, and to other players. There is concern around any player using these helmets and we encourage parents and players to only purchase helmets from reputable sources."

Advice to consumers

Buy your helmet from a reputable retailer – not an unreliable online source – and make sure you ask these four safety questions first:

- Is the helmet fully assembled? A safe helmet should have a faceguard attached at the point of manufacture. You should not need to attach a faceguard.
- Are there any obvious dangers? Watch out for sharp edges, sharp points, rough surfaces, or protruding screws. Do not wear the helmet if you find any of these dangers.
- Is there a CE mark on the helmet? If there is no CE mark, don't buy it.
- Are the labels and instructions clear and comprehensive? All Hurling and Camogie helmets should have instructions and information. These, as well as any labelling, should be clear and understandable.

Do not modify the helmet in any way after you buy it.

You can download the consumer guide on helmet safety for full details of the safety risks of wearing a faulty helmet, as well as information on what to do if you suspect you have purchased an unsafe helmet - <https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/2023/12/18/counterfeit-hurling-camogie-helmets-are-dangerous-warn-ccpc-and-gaa/>

Further information around [hurling/camogie helmet rules and guidance](#) can be found on Tobar.

If you have safety concerns about a helmet that you've already purchased, stop using it immediately and contact the CCPC consumer helpline on 01 402 5555 or [ask@ccpc.ie](mailto:ask@ccpc.ie)



## Laois LGFA Under 14 'A' Championship Shiel Semi Final: Portlaoise 11-12 v 0-1 Sarsfields





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## Laois LGFA Under 14 'C' Championship Final: Portlaoise 1-6 v 4-6 Sarsfields





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# Portlaoise win the Eddie Hanrahan Blitz

Portlaoise U11 Footballers had a great win in the Eddie Hanrahan Blitz in Clonmel this month. They played some super football throughout the day, showed some great fighting spirit and came out on top in the end. Thanks to Clonmel Commercial for the invite, for the hospitality and for organising a great day off football.







Back (l. to r.): Sean Lalor, David Fitzpatrick, Jack Costelloe, Lorcan O'Brien, Sean Óg Brown, Aaron Scully, Daniel Bockariov, Jake Conroy;  
 Front (l. to r.): Cian Reddington, Oran Byrne, Sean Daly, Aodhán Kelly, Conor Fitzgerald, Ruairí Bannon;



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# U13 'C' Hurling Championship Shield Final: Portlaoise 2-7 v 3-11 Killeshin





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## U9 Mini All Ireland - St Jude's

We entered three teams and played a total of 16 games. The boys represented the club with distinction throughout, narrowly losing out in a final.

This was a very well run tournament by St.Judes. Some extremely talented teams from all over the country and the boys held their own.





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# Town Tigers End of Year





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# Town Tigers End of Year





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

# Town Tigers End of Year





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

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[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

# Town Tigers End of Year





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 7





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 7





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 7





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 7





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 7





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 8





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 8





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 8





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 9





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 9





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 9





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 10





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11





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# Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 11 & U12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 12





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 13





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 14





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## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 14





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 15





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

## Juvenile Scene This Month - Under 15





[Club](#)[Football](#)[Hurling](#)[Camogie](#)[LGFA](#)[G4M&O](#)[Juvenile](#)[Health & Wellbeing](#)[Archives](#)[Culture](#)[Club History](#)

# 2025 Silver Healthy Club Award for Portlaoise GAA

Portlaoise GAA is delighted to confirm we have achieved Silver Healthy Club Status through the GAA Healthy Clubs initiative. Our policies, partnerships, activities and environment support the holistic health and wellbeing of our members and community, and this work has now been officially recognised by the GAA.

Huge credit to our Healthy Club Officer, Karen Monaghan, and her team for their efforts over the past couple of years, including the smoke-free zone at Rathleague, the Aclaí fitness groups and player welfare working groups, to name but a few.

The club will receive the award at the Healthy Club Award Recognition Night in The Hamlet Court Hotel, Johnstown, Co Kildare, on Tuesday, 7 October 2025.

Maith sibh to everyone involved.





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TOWARDS DAY TO  
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THE CLUB**

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**Go to fundraising section  
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Thanks to everyone who supports our fundraising efforts through the Town Lotto (day to day running costs), and Club Bingo (development). It is greatly appreciated.

If you have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, or if you would like to contribute to it, please contact [info@portlaoisegaa.ie](mailto:info@portlaoisegaa.ie)