Vol 6 - Issue 10

TOWN TATTLER

CLG PORTLAOISC





CLUB AGM

MONDAY 30 NOV

7.30PM

PORTLAOISE PARISH CENTRE

Cahir Healy

Few players in the history of Portlaoise GAA can match the achievements of Cahir Healy. Across a remarkable career spanning more than two decades, he established himself as one of the club's most decorated players, representing the Town with distinction in both football and hurling.

Having made his senior debut in hurling at just 15 years of age and football at 17, Cahir went on to become a central figure in one of the most successful periods in the club's history. His honours include 11 Laois Senior Football Championships, two Leinster Senior Club Football titles, a Laois Senior Hurling Championship and two Senior 'A' Hurling Championships. He also captained Portlaoise to the Senior Football Championship in 2014 and was twice named Laois Senior Footballer of the Year.

His achievements extended well beyond club level. Cahir was part of the Laois team that captured the All-Ireland Minor Football Championship in 2003, and also won a Leinster Minor title in 2004. He subsequently added two Leinster Under-21 Football Championships in 2006 and 2007 and a National Hurling League Division 2 title in 2013, establishing himself as a dual inter-county player.

Perhaps one of the most remarkable aspects of Cahir's career was his commitment to Portlaoise while living and working as a teacher in London. For years, he travelled back and forth across the Irish Sea to continue representing his club and county, balancing the demands of his professional life with the considerable commitment required to compete at the highest level.

Having eventually transferred to St Brendan's Football club and Robert Emmetts Hurling club in London, Cahir continued his playing career, also representing London at inter-county level. His appetite for the game remains undiminished, with a recent London Intermediate Football Championship success adding another medal to an already extraordinary collection.

Yet behind the championships, individual awards and remarkable statistics is a career shaped by teammates, managers, friendships, sacrifices and a lifelong connection to Portlaoise GAA.

For this edition of the Town Tattler, we catch up with Cahir to reflect on his earliest memories of the club, the great Portlaoise teams of the 2000s and 2010s, the highs and lows of his playing career, and what wearing the green and white of the Town has meant to him.

What are your earliest memories of growing up in Portlaoise and becoming involved with the GAA club?
I think I was around 7 when I first joined in Fr Brown. It was Sunday mornings, 1 week football and 1 week hurling. I loved it from the start. I think Joe Phelan Snr gave me my first hurl and helmet the first Sunday of hurling. The street leagues then were brilliant. Seeing the names of the teams and players in the Leinster Express and pictures of the finalists when it came around was some thrill for a 7-10 year old.



Townies in Ruislip, London.
Cahir had the bragging rights over Kean and John Kavanagh as St Brendan's defeated Eire Óg in the London Intermediate Football Championship Semi-Final

Who were the Portlaoise players you looked up to as a young lad?
I looked up to the likes of Bruno and Eoin Browne in school, I knew even then they were the best GAA players in Knockmay in school. I looked up to the Laois minors and Brian Fitzpatrick, he lived in our estate and was on the 90s minor teams but the 98 county hurling winning team were my idols: Niall Rigney, Teddy, Hanno, Des Killeen, Cyril Duggan, Speed, John Taylor, Joe Phelan. I should just list the team:) I thought they were Giants and Gods. It is a beautiful thing about the GAA really that your heroes can be normal people from your Town that you aspire to be.

You were playing senior hurling at just 15 years of age. Was there a particular senior player who took you under his wing when you first broke into the teams?
I was self conscious starting but every player was sound and welcoming so the transition was easy really but that's down mostly to Teddy Fennelly. He lifted and laid me for every training, every match and he even brought me out to watch the senior football games before I made that squad also. He couldn't have done more for me. Teddy is a skit and I loved the car journeys and the dressing room then. The slagging and craic were great. It must be said, Kevin Fitz and Mickey Nolan took up the mantle and did the same for me for football when I was 17. I owe those men an awful lot.....and alot of mileage:)

You achieved an extraordinary amount at a very young age, including winning the All-Ireland Minor Football Championship with Laois in 2003. What memories stand out most from that campaign?
I'm born in December 86 so it was like our Italia 90!! haha. Laois seniors had Micko and won a Leinster for the time since the 40s so the county was going mad. We lost the Leinster final that year and I think the occasion and hype in Laois got to the team to be honest. Anyway, we went on through the backdoor and the madness continued with the county jumping on our bandwagon when the seniors were

beaten. The All Ireland final replay in Carlow was the best atmosphere I've ever experienced.

You were still only 18 when Portlaoise reached the 2005 All-Ireland Club Football Final against Ballina. What do you remember about that occasion, and how difficult was the defeat to take?
That run was like Italia 90 again hahaha. The nights out after the matches and the Mondays after winning the county and Leinster were unreal. It felt like the whole town was in Peigs and Ryans and even people without a huge interest in GAA were behind us. Some experience for a wet behind the ears youngster. It all fell asunder then. Sometimes you can take a defeat if you feel you performed but there is definitely some hurt for that team I think still over that game. The team kind of broke up or lost its way a little until the minor winners of 07/08 came through to drive it on again.

You went on to win 11 Laois Senior Football Championships. Is there one that stands above all the others, and why?
I think 2007 maybe. We had been to the all Ireland final in March 05 and then had lost to Stradbally by a point in the 05 county final and didn't get out of the group in 06. I think that brought a bit of embarrassment and with that comes a little pressure so when we had such a great performance against Stradbally in the 2007 final, it felt like a little bit of redemption.

Who were the biggest characters in those Portlaoise teams, and are there any particular dressing-room stories that stand out?
The dressing rooms and the craic are nearly what you'd miss the most. Eoin 'Stew' Browne was a gas man. DJ Brocken was always good entertainment. He sang Red is the Rose in the showers after winning the hurling final in 04. Great memory. Peter 'The Chief' McNulty was another character. A terrible loss.
Renowned solicitor Barry Fitzgerald was another good one. The Leinster final in 04 was delayed. With the crowd milling past the dressing room outside, Tommy Conroy and Tully somehow convinced Barry to sing the Galway Shawl to ease the nerves!! We were 8-1 up at half time!!!

You achieved so much in football, but you've previously spoken about hurling being your first love. If you had to choose between the two, which would it be?
I'm finished with the football now but I will hurl again next year so there is your answer I suppose.

How difficult was it to balance the demands of playing senior football and hurling for both Portlaoise and Laois?
Never an issue with Portlaoise. We are a dual club with a great dual tradition. Some of our most renowned players at county level played the opposite code with the club - as it should be. I hope to see more dual players playing senior for Portlaoise in the future.

You've experienced some incredible victories and some heartbreaking defeats. Which defeat still hurts the most?
Losing an arm wrestle to Wooly Parkinson in Dingle on the over 35s trip in 2024 was terrible. That was embarrassing. Easily the worst defeat of my life....and I've lost 10 senior county finals!!!

Who were the toughest opponents you faced in football and hurling, at either club or county level?
I think Diarmuid Connolly and Seamus Callanan from Tipp are the two that stand out the most. I was roasted plenty of times over the years but I always thought I could win the next ball. Against Connolly in 14 and Callanan in 15, I remember thinking to myself, "I'm running out of ideas how to stop him here." haha God they made me look a fool .

Who was the most underrated Portlaoise player you played alongside, someone who perhaps never received the recognition they deserved?
I often think of lads like Derek Delaney and Keith Murphy, they hurled senior for so many years after 04 and lost loads of senior finals and didn't have a flow of medals like the footballers to keep them coming back again and again. I really admired them. Brilliant Town men and great friends to this day. Eoin Browne and Brian Mulligan were two more great warriors. They were never found wanting on the pitch.

Was there a particular manager or coach who had the greatest influence on your career?
John Bohane, Pat Ryan, Jim MacManus all deserve mention along with all the others who looked after us underage. There's too many to name. Heroes in a different way. I thought Tommy Conroy was a good manager. Cheddar was brilliant and I loved him. Bro Phil Ryan, I loved his hurling sessions but I think Niall Tully may have had the biggest influence from a technical and mentality point of view. He had some great advice for man to man defending (arse to mickey) Can that be printed? haha But he also tested me too. I was back in school the Tuesday after we won the all ireland minor in 03. We had school training but rightly or wrongly I was worse for wear so left my gear at home. Niall saw me in the yard and the first thing he said was "Don't get ahead of yourself; everyone in Laois has an all ireland minor medal. It is senior that counts." haha This was after the Laois minors of the 90s so he wasn't wrong!!
I rang my mother and asked her to bring my gear in and I trained with the school team that day. It was a great lesson for me in humility and not to get ahead of myself.

You spent years travelling between London and Ireland to represent Portlaoise and Laois while working as a teacher. What motivated you to maintain that level of commitment?
I initially turned down playing with Laois when I moved over. I thought it wouldn't be feasible but Niall Tully again told me to cop on and stop making excuses for myself. If I wanted to play for Laois badly enough I'd make it work. Great advice!

It must be acknowledged though that a few more Portlaoise lads did the same with the club. Brian 'Ginge' Glynn did it from Newcastle and Liverpool for 7/8 years, I'd say. Brian Smith did it from London for a few years. Eoin Phelan did it for the hurling from London in 2018. I'd say we got some looks from dog walkers and runners seeing two lads with sticks fighting over a little white ball in a park in South West London. Haha

It was a lot of commitment. A lot of training on your own in parks. Making up drills and scenarios, pretending to race lads from stradbally or rathdowney haha to try be ready for a sunday but I was very lucky id a supportive family. My mother, father and my sister Ellen did more trips to and from airports than I could count so I didnt have to take the green bus through purgatory...I owe them a lot of mileage too...theres a pattern forming here

But look, I was no more committed though than many lads at home playing for Portlaoise or Laois. It was just that my circumstances were different. I don't doubt for a second that Joe Phelan or Tommy Fitz or Kevin Fitz or Craig Rogers or whoever would have done the same if needed.

When you eventually transferred to St Brendan's and Robert Emmetts in London, how difficult was it to accept that your playing days with Portlaoise were coming to an end?
It was difficult to accept and I didn't necessarily want to do it but it was definitely the right time and right thing to do. I wasn't making a proper contribution to either team anymore. I missed all the championships in 2017 and 2019 with knee injuries and then Covid meant I couldn't play in 2020 championships after the 1st round so I felt an imposter to be honest. There were lads coming through who didn't know me from before I moved away so I felt a bit of a fraud coming into a team for matches when those same lads were training at home but didn't know me.

What was it like lining out for London against Laois in the Tailteann Cup in 2023, having represented your home county for so many years?
Weird. You want to prove yourself that you can still do it after all those years but it was hard to 'hate' the opposition. It came easy for every other game at club or county.

You've continued to enjoy success in London, including your recent Intermediate Football Championship victory with St Brendan's. What keeps you motivated to continue playing after everything you've already achieved?
I hate golf. 5-a-side drives me mad. Running is torture and Padel is for auld lads like Teddy Fennelly and Fats Brown so what else am I going to do?
But seriously and admittedly, ego plays a part. Can I still produce it at 40?
But most importantly, it is being part of a team or group of lads that are all driving for the same thing. Training hard. The dressing room before big games. Going to 'battle' so to speak with the same lads on the pitch. That's some buzz.

Is there a particular coach, volunteer or club member who deserves more recognition for the part they played in your career?
Now that I am a little older and involved in some coaching and managing here, I understand the effort of so many people behind the scenes so much better. My admiration for them has gone through the roof. There is a huge ego involved in playing and plenty of praise if it goes well. But club volunteers are selfless and I admire them for it.

If you could go back and speak to the 15-year-old Cahir Healy walking into his first senior dressing room, what advice would you give him?
Be more committed. Give more of yourself. Invest more of yourself in this. No matter how much you think you are sacrificing, you'll get it back tenfold in memories, friendships and laughs. It's the greatest thing you'll ever do.

After everything you've achieved, what does Portlaoise GAA mean to you today?
Home. Family. Dreams

Roll of Honour
Football
Inter-County Honours (Laois)
- Leinster Under-21 Football Championship: 2006, 2007
- Leinster Minor Football Championship: 2004
- All-Ireland Minor Football Championship: 2003

Club Honours (Portlaoise)
- Leinster Senior Club Football Championship: 2004, 2009
- Senior Football Championship (11): 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 (Capt.), 2015, 2018
- ACFL Division 1 (2): 2009, 2011
- U-21 Football Championship (3): 2005, 2006, 2007
- Laois Minor Football Championship (2): 2002, 2003

Laois Senior Footballer of the Year (2): 2008, 2011
Laois Under-21 Footballer of the Year: 2006
Club Honours (St Brendan's, London)
- London Intermediate Football Championship: 2026

Hurling
National Hurling League Division 2: 2013
Club Honours (Portlaoise)
- Laois Senior Hurling Championship: 2004
- Laois Senior 'A' Hurling Championship (2): 2015, 2018
- ACHL Division 1A: 2015
- Laois Minor Hurling Championship: 2001
- Laois Under-16 Hurling Championship: 2002
- Laois Under-14 Hurling Championship: 2000

Club Honours (Robert Emmetts London)
London Senior Hurling Championship 2021
Club Honours (Fr Tom Burke's Boston)
Boston Senior Hurling Championship 2014
Laois Senior 'A' Hurler of the Year: 2015


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EVERLAST




AZZURRI
MAOR CAMÁN
CRIBBINS






O'NEILLS
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HIRE

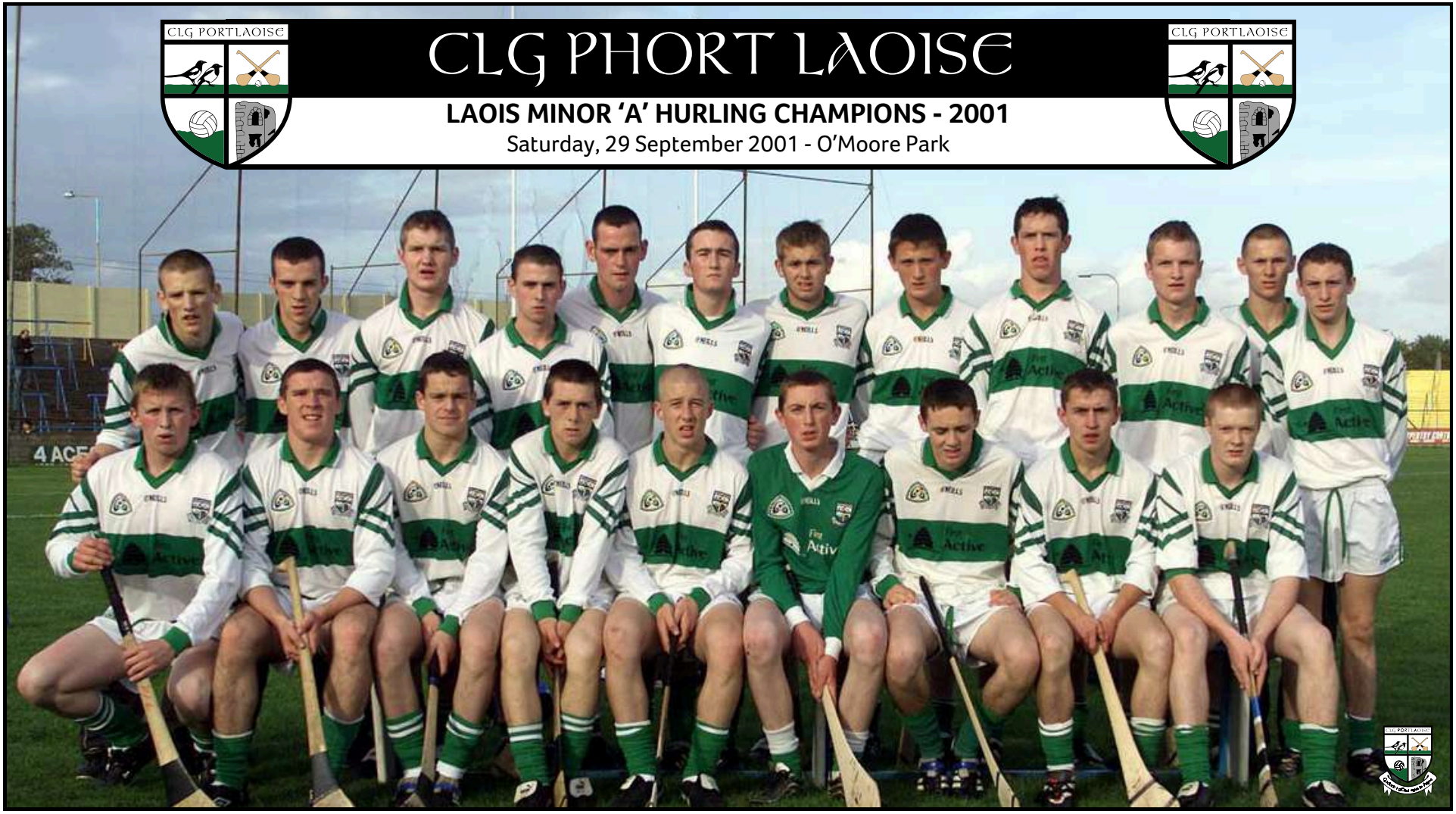

CRIBBS



CLG PHORT LAOISE

LAOIS MINOR 'A' HURLING CHAMPIONS - 2001

Saturday, 29 September 2001 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-11 v 1-10 Castletown / Slieve Bloom

Back (l. to r.): *Stephen 'Tef' Phelan, Mark Bergin, Barry Fitzgerald, Brian Devaney, Sean Cotter, Jamie 'Shades' Fitzpatrick, Sean Tobin, Derek Delaney, Eoin Fingleton, Tommy Fitzgerald, Paddy Ryan, Mark Phelan;*

Front (l. to r.): *Diarmuid Lalor (Capt.), Tadgh Murphy, Alan Kingsley, Keith Murphy, Cahir Healy, Eamon Cooke, Brian Mulligan, Liam 'Boggers' Phelan, John 'Rusty' Delaney;*

Scorers: *Alan Kingsley 0-5, Barry Fitzgerald 1-1, Tommy Fitzgerald 0-2, Brian Mulligan 0-1, Sean Tobin 0-1, Liam Phelan 0-1;*

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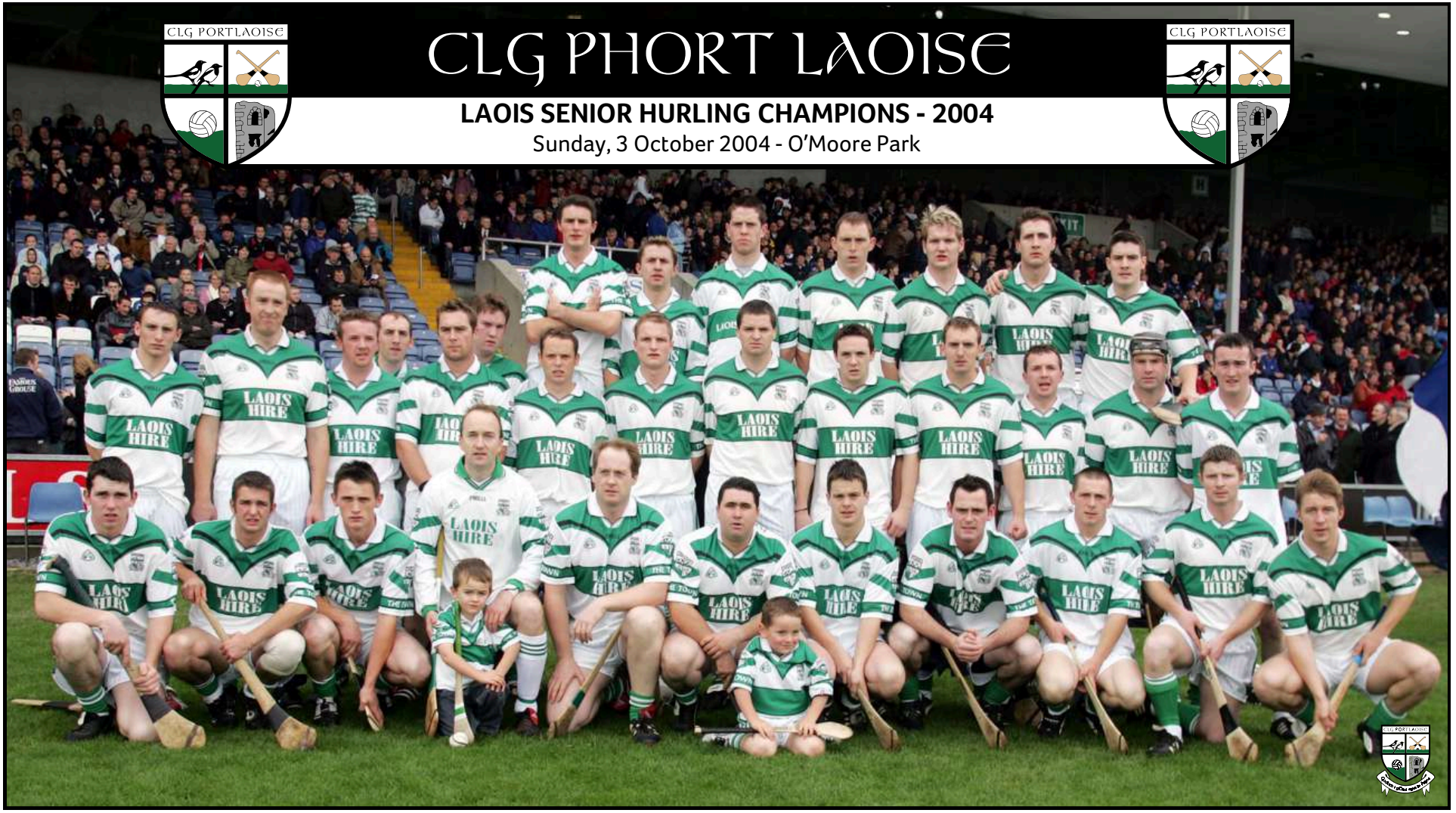
LAOIS SENIOR HURLING CHAMPIONS - 2004

Sunday, 3 October 2004 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 2-8 v 0-7 Castletown

Back (l. to r.): *Roc Scully, Liam Phelan, Eoin Fingleton, Brian McCormack, Barry Fitzgerald, Dermot Costelloe, Noel Costelloe;*
Middle (l. to r.): *Mark Phelan, Niall Rigney, John Mulligan, Geoff Phelan, Eoin Browne, Paul Scanlon, Colm Clear, Tommy Fitzgerald, Eamon Fennelly, Brian Mulligan, Joe Phelan (Capt.), Tommy Mulligan, Cyril Duggan, Jamie Fitzpatrick;*
Front (l. to r.): *Darren Murphy, Mark O'Sullivan, Derek Delaney, John Hanniffy, Pat Fitzpatrick, Brochan O'Reilly, Alan Kingsley, Sean Cotter, Keith Murphy, Mick Bowe, Cahir Healy;*
Mascots: *Sean Óg Hanniffy, Cormac Rigney;*

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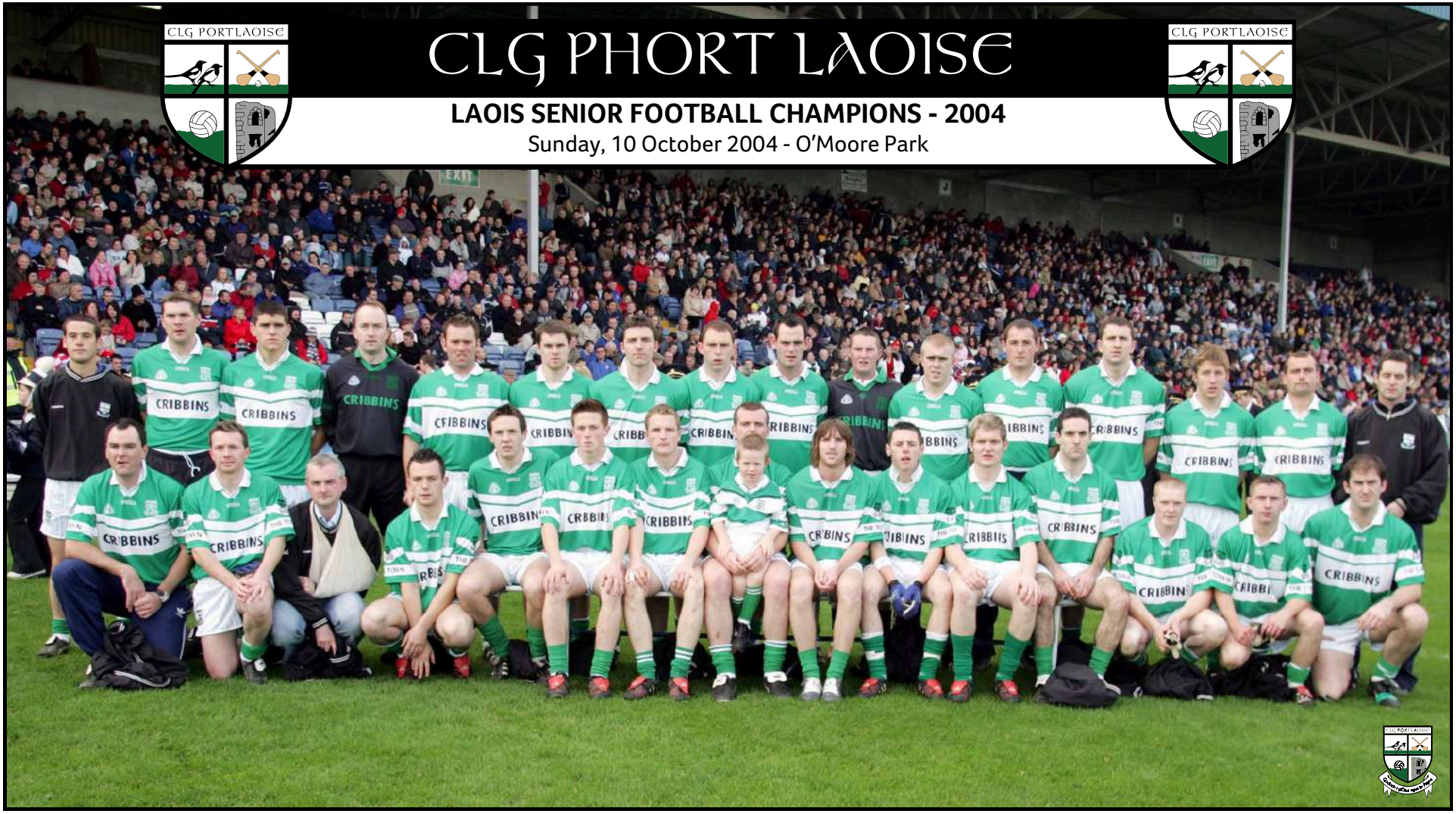
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2004

Sunday, 10 October 2004 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 0-15 v 0-6 Emo

Back (l. to r.): *Brian Gaynor, Enda Coleman, Shane McManus, John Hanniffy, Martin Delaney, Eoin Bland, Ian Fitzgerald, Brian McCormack, Sean Cotter, Michael Nolan, Danny O'Shea, Brian Fitzpatrick, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Cahir Healy, Diarmuid Mullins, Michael Fennelly;*
Front (l. to r.): *Pádraig Malone, Tommy Mulligan, Fergal Norton, Larry Fitzpatrick, Brian Mulligan, Peter McNulty, Tommy Fitzgerald, Colm Byrne, Cian Dowling Byrne (Mascot), Colm Parkinson (Capt.), Craig Rogers, Barry Fitzgerald, Aidan Fennelly, John Delaney, Liam Óg Phelan, Mark Brophy;*

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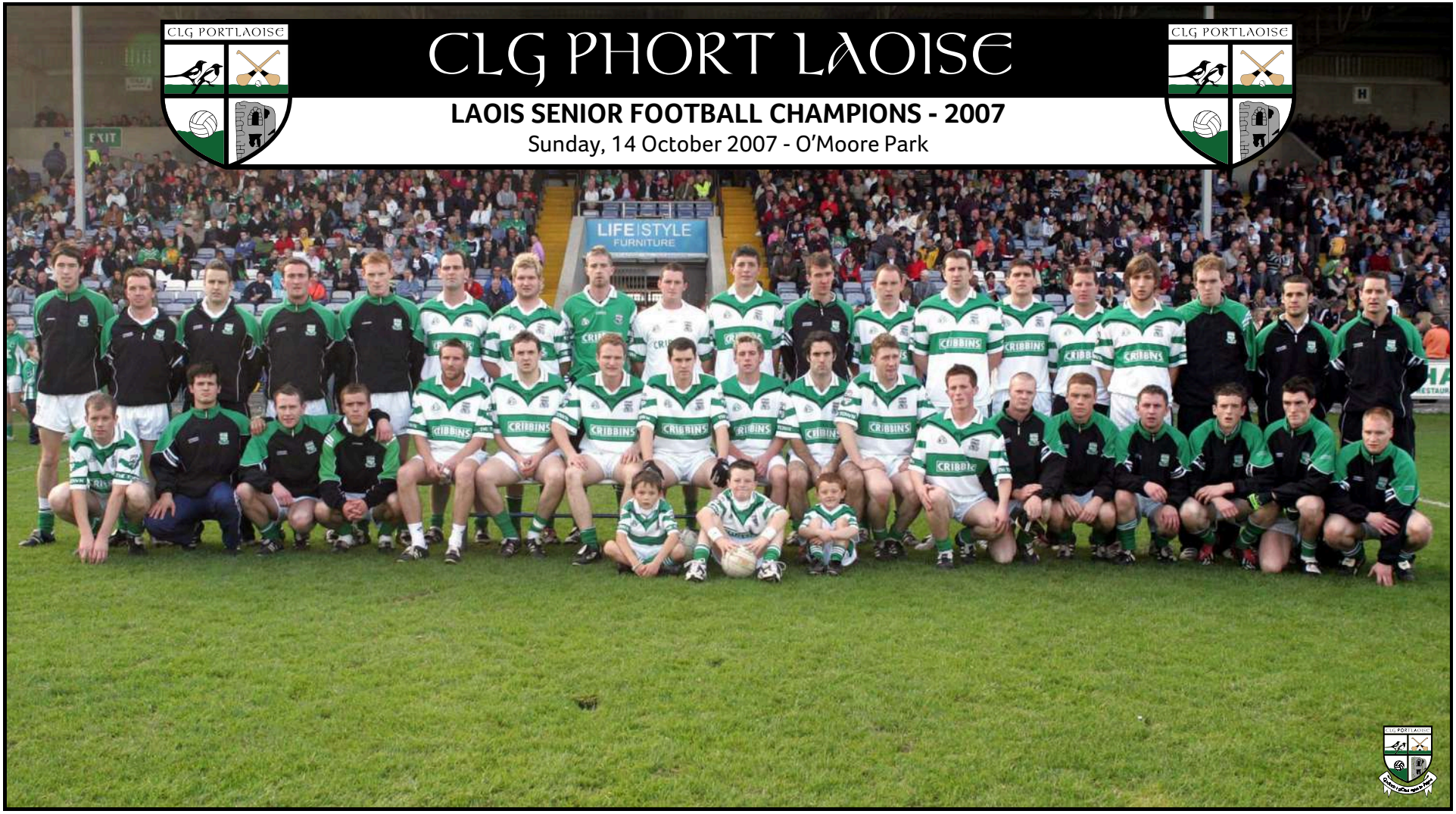
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2007

Sunday, 14 October 2007 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-14 v 0-7 Stradbally

Back (l. to r.): *Conor Boyle, Tommy Mulligan, Fearghal Fennell, Jamie Fitzpatrick, Brian Glynn, Sean Cotter, Barry Fitzgerald, Colin Rochford, Mick Nolan, Adrian Kelly, J.P. Seale, Brian McCormack, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Shane McManus, David Graham, Zach Tuohy, Jack Fennell, Brian Gaynor, Michael Fennelly;*

Front (l. to r.): *Shane Beere, Malachy McNulty, Paraic Phelan, Danny Reddin, Colm Parkinson, Brian Mulligan, Tommy Fitzgerald, Eoin Bland (Capt.), Craig Rogers, Aidan Fennelly, Cahir Healy, Peter McNulty, John Delaney, Brian McCormack, Liam Phelan, Kieran Lillis, Tommy Scully, Fint Walsh;* **Mascots**: *Glen Dowling, Gavin Fitzpatrick, Ogie Brown;*

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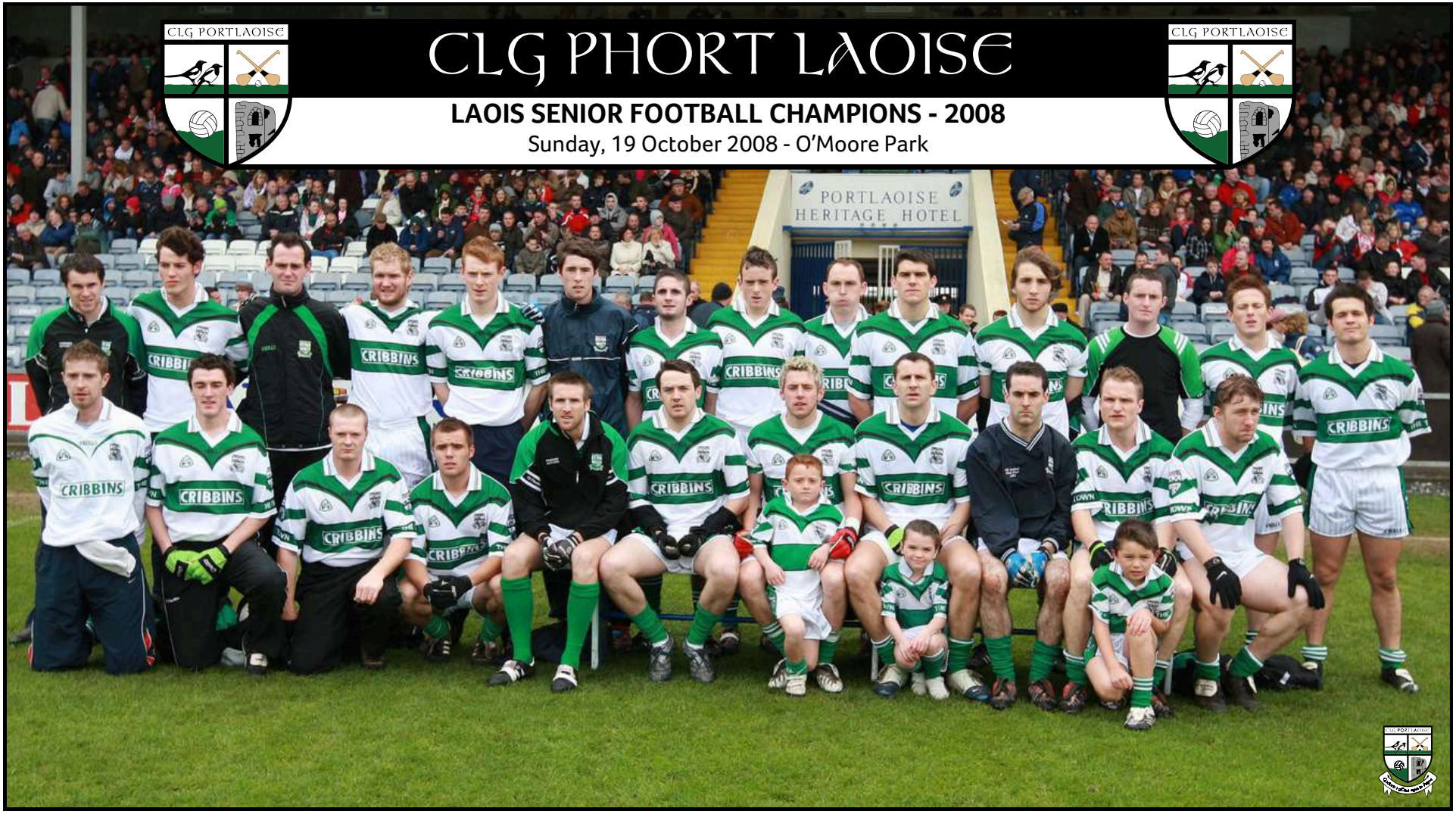
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2008

Sunday, 19 October 2008 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 2-14 v 1-7 Timahoe

Back (l. to r.): *Eoin Bland, Paul Cotter, Sean Cotter, Barry Fitzgerald, Brian Glynn, Conor Boyle, Brian Smith, Kieran Lillis, Brian McCormack, Shane McManus, Zach Touhy, Mick Nolan, Peter McNulty, Malachy McNulty;*

Front (l. to r.): *Colin Rochford, Tommy Scully, John Delaney, Danny Reddin, Colm Parkinson, Brian Mulligan, Craig Rogers, Kevin Fitzpatrick (Capt.), Aidan Fennelly, Tommy Fitzgerald, Cahir Healy;*

Mascots: *Ogie Brown, Aoife Fitzpatrick, Glen Dowling;*

Scorers: *Peter McNulty 1-3 (2f), Brian McCormack 0-3, Colm Parkinson 0-3, Barry Fitzgerald 0-3 (3f), Craig Rogers (0-2);*

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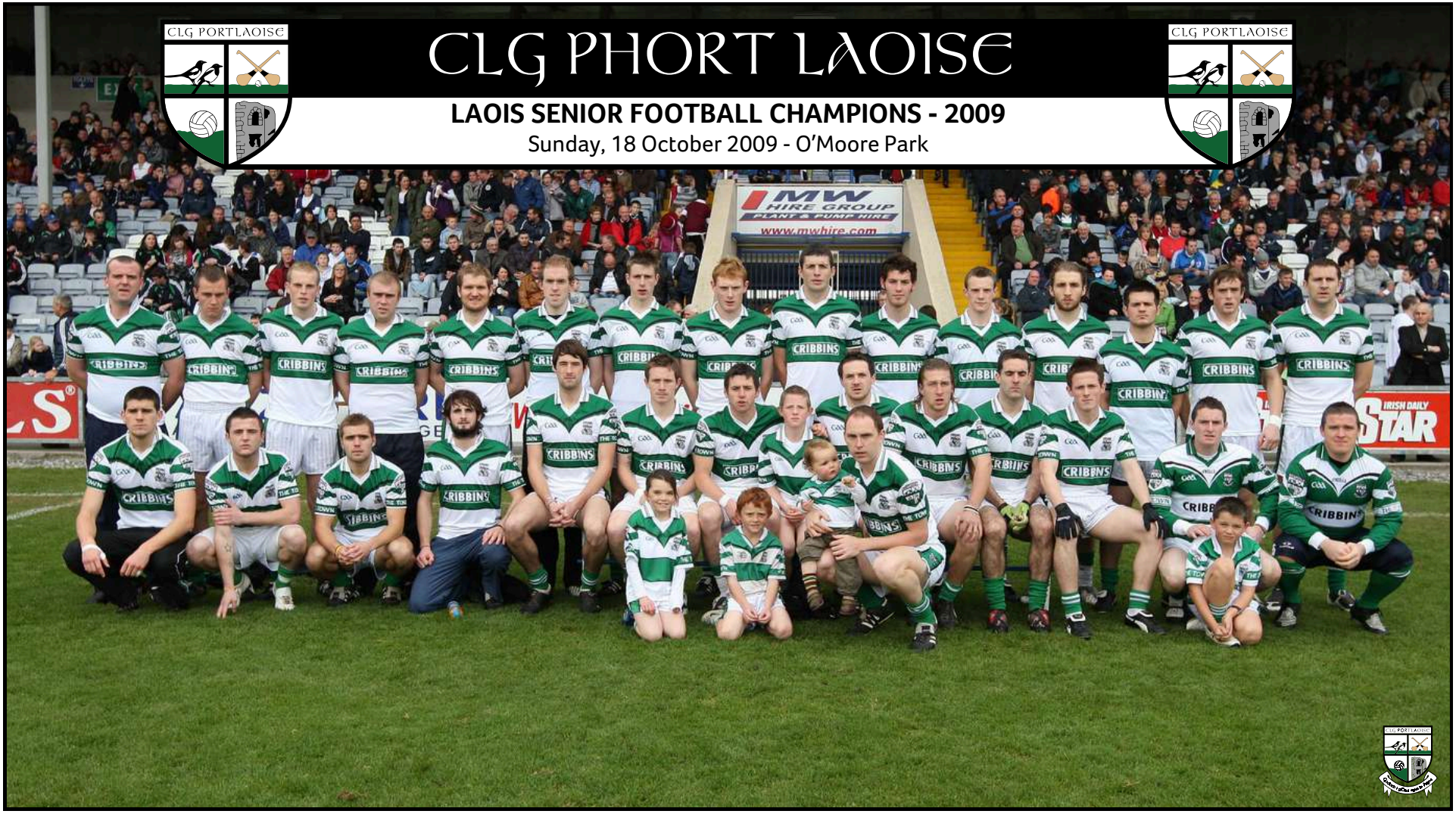
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2009

Sunday, 18 October 2009 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-9 v 0-8 Arles-Kilcruise

Back (l. to r.): *Colm Byrne, Brian Seale, Christopher Higgins, Danny O'Shea, Barry Fitzgerald, Jack Fennell, Stewart Nerney, Brian Glynn, Adrian Kelly, Paul Cotter, Mark Kavanagh, Zach Touhy, Malachy McNulty, Kieran Lillis, Kevin Fitzpatrick;*

Front (l. to r.): *Shane McManus, Ricky Maher, Danny Reddin, Brian Smith, Conor Boyle, Paul Cahillane, Craig Rogers, Brian Mulligan, Cahir Healy, Aidan Fennelly, Peter McNulty, Mick Nolan, Tadgh Murphy. Front: Brian McCormack (Capt.) with mascots Aoife Fitzpatrick, Ogie Brown, Cian Dowling Byrne, Aaron McCormack, Glen Dowling;*

Scorers: *Paul Cahillane 1-1 (1-0p, 1-0f), Zach Tuohy 0-2 (2f), Adrian Kelly & Peter McNulty 0-2, Brain McCormack & Craig Rogers 0-1;*

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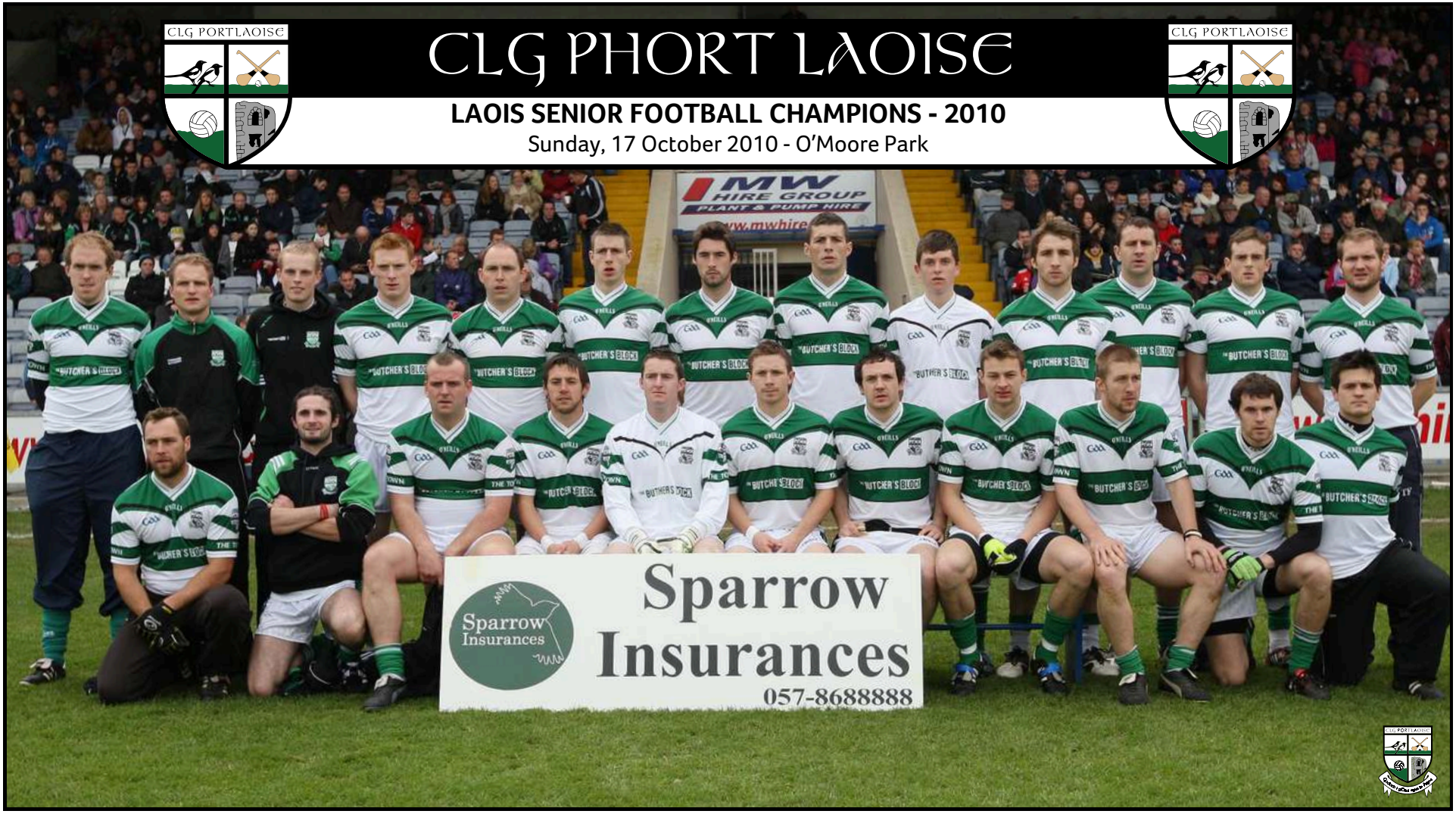
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2010

Sunday, 17 October 2010 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-08 v 0-8 Arles-Kilcruise

Back (l. to r.): *Jack Fennell, Tommy Fitzgerald, Christopher Higgins, Brian Glynn, Brian McCormack, Stewart Nerney, Conor Boyle, Adrian Kelly, Graham Brody, Zach Touhy, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Kieran Lillis, Barry Fitzgerald.*

Front (l. to r.): *Eoin Browne, Brian Smith, Colm Byrne, Craig Rogers, Mick Nolan (Capt.), Paul Cahillane, Brian Mulligan, Hugh Coghlan, Cahir Healy, Eoin Bland, Malachy McNulty;*

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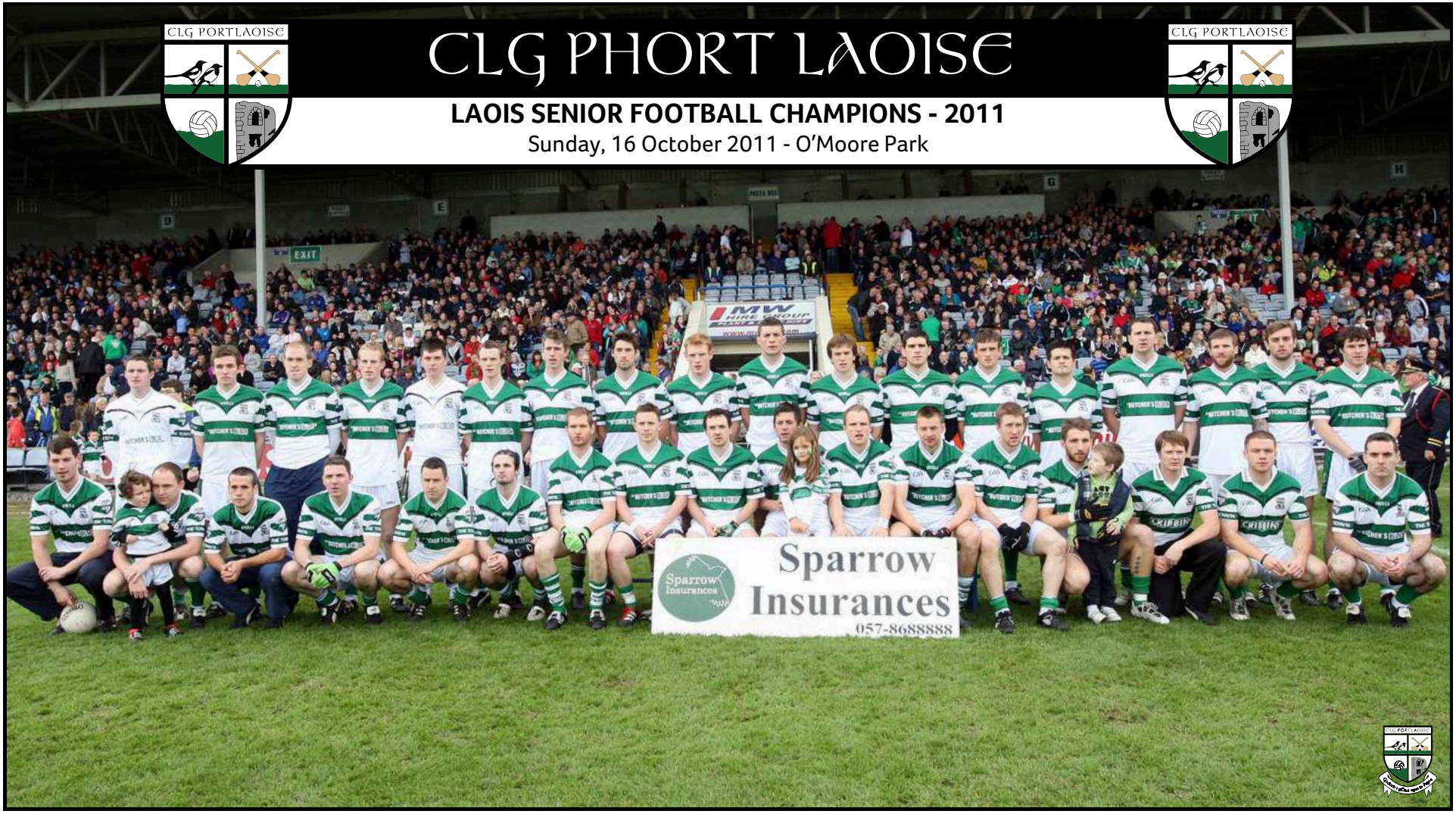
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2011

Sunday, 16 October 2011 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-12 v 1-6 Graiguecullen

Back (l. to r.): *Mick Nolan, David Seale, Jack Fennell, Christopher Higgins, Graham Brody, Mark Kavanagh, Stewart Nerney, Conor Boyle, Brian Glynn, Adrian Kelly, Eoghan Whelan, Shane McManus, Kieran Lillis, Malachy McNulty, Kevin Fitzpatrick, Colm Parkinson, David Browne, Eoin Bland;*

Front (l. to r.): *Paul Cotter, Brian McCormack, Brian Gaynor, Ian Fitzgerald, Fearghal Fennell, Brian Smith, Barry Fitzgerald, Paul Cahillane, Brian Mulligan, Craig Rogers (Capt.), Tommy Fitzgerald, Hugh Coghlan, Cahir Healy, Zach Touhy, John Delaney, Brian McCormack, Aidan Fennelly.* **Mascots**: *Aaron McCormack, Millie Rogers, Joshua Finn;*

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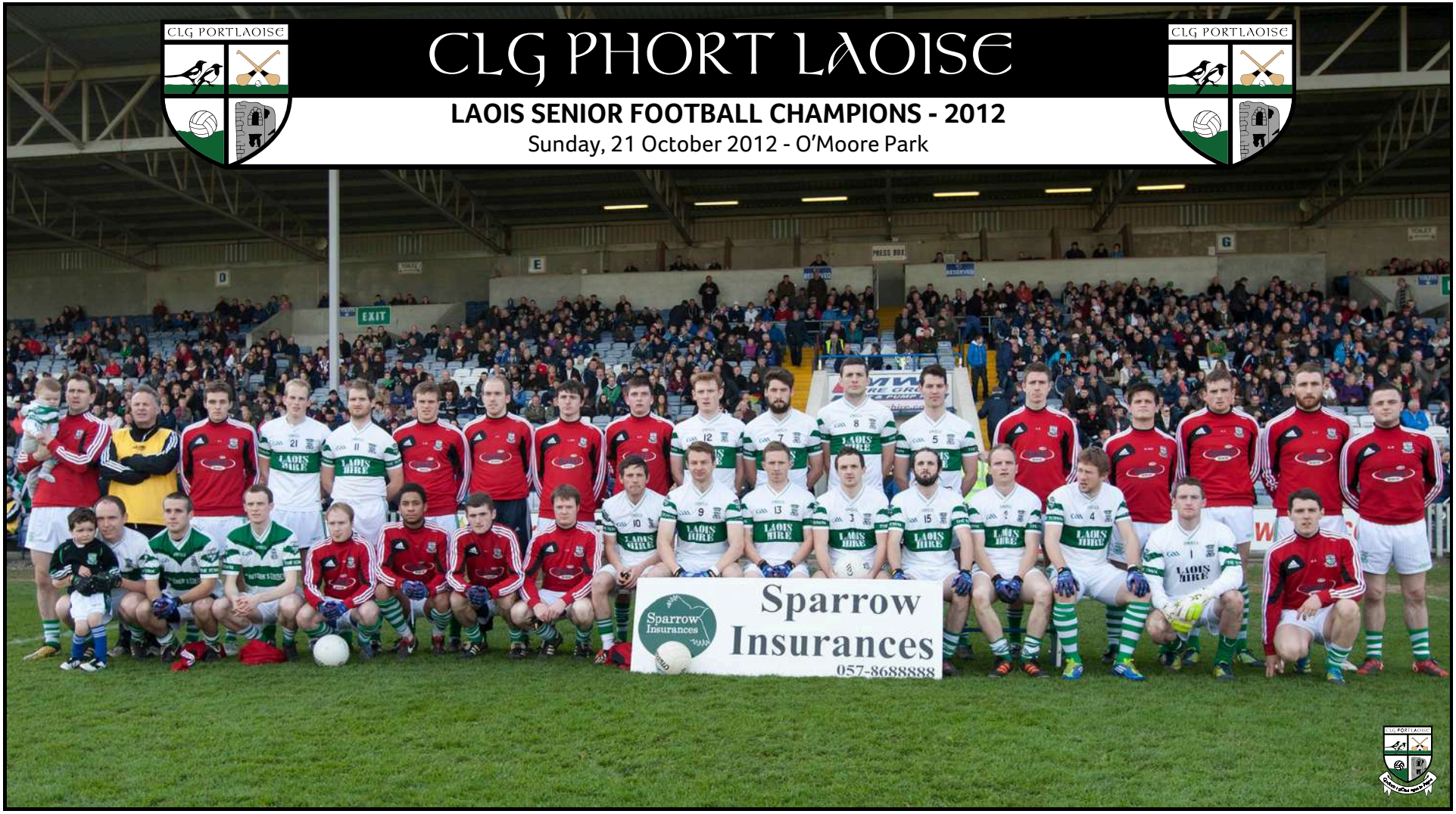
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2012

Sunday, 21 October 2012 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 1-13 v 0-9 Arles-Kilcruise

Back (l. to r.): *Kevin Fitzpatrick (with Dylan Fitzpatrick), Mick Lillis (Mentor), David Seale, Christopher Higgins, Barry Fitzgerald, Eoghan Whelan, Jack Fennell, Liam McGovern, Graham Brody, Brian Glynn, Conor Boyle, Adrian Kelly, Paul Cotter, Stewart Nerney, Malachy McNulty, Kieran Lillis, Zach Tuohy, Ricky Maher.*

***Front (l. to r.)**: Brian McCormack (with Aaron McCormack), Brian Gaynor, Mark Kavanagh, Fintan Walsh, Jo Jo Salmon, Dean Cullen, John Delaney, Craig Rogers, Hugh Coghlan, Paul Cahillane, Brian Mulligan (Capt.), Brian Smith, Tommy Fitzgerald, Cahir Healy, Mick Nolan, Murray Rogers;*

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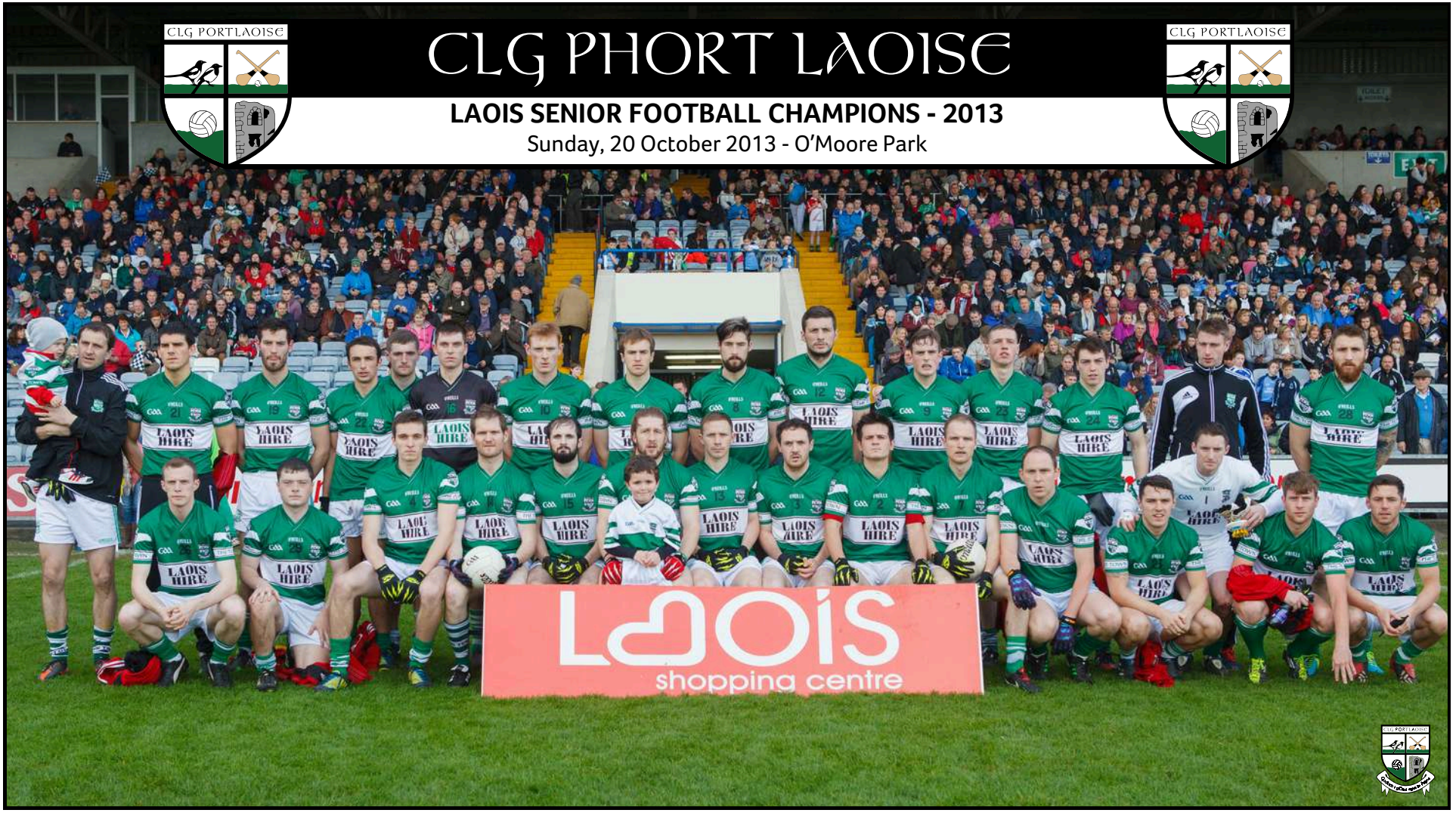
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2013

Sunday, 20 October 2013 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 2-8 v 1-8 Arles-Killeen

Back (l. to r.): *Kevin Fitzpatrick, Shane McManus, Paul Cotter, Gareth Dillon, Dean Cullen, Graham Brody, Brian Glynn, Eoghan Whelan, Conor Boyle, Adrian Kelly, Kieran Lillis, Darragh Duggan, Eoghan Feane, Stewart Nerney, Zach Tuohy;*

Front (l. to r.): *Mark Kavanagh, Dean Lynch, David Seale, Barry Fitzgerald, Brian Smith, Cahir Healy (Capt.), Paul Cahillane, Brian Mulligan, Malachy McNulty, Tommy Fitzgerald, Brian McCormack, Murray Rogers, Michael Nolan, Christopher Mulhall, Craig Rogers;*

Mascots: *Dylan Fitzpatrick, Aaron McCormack;*

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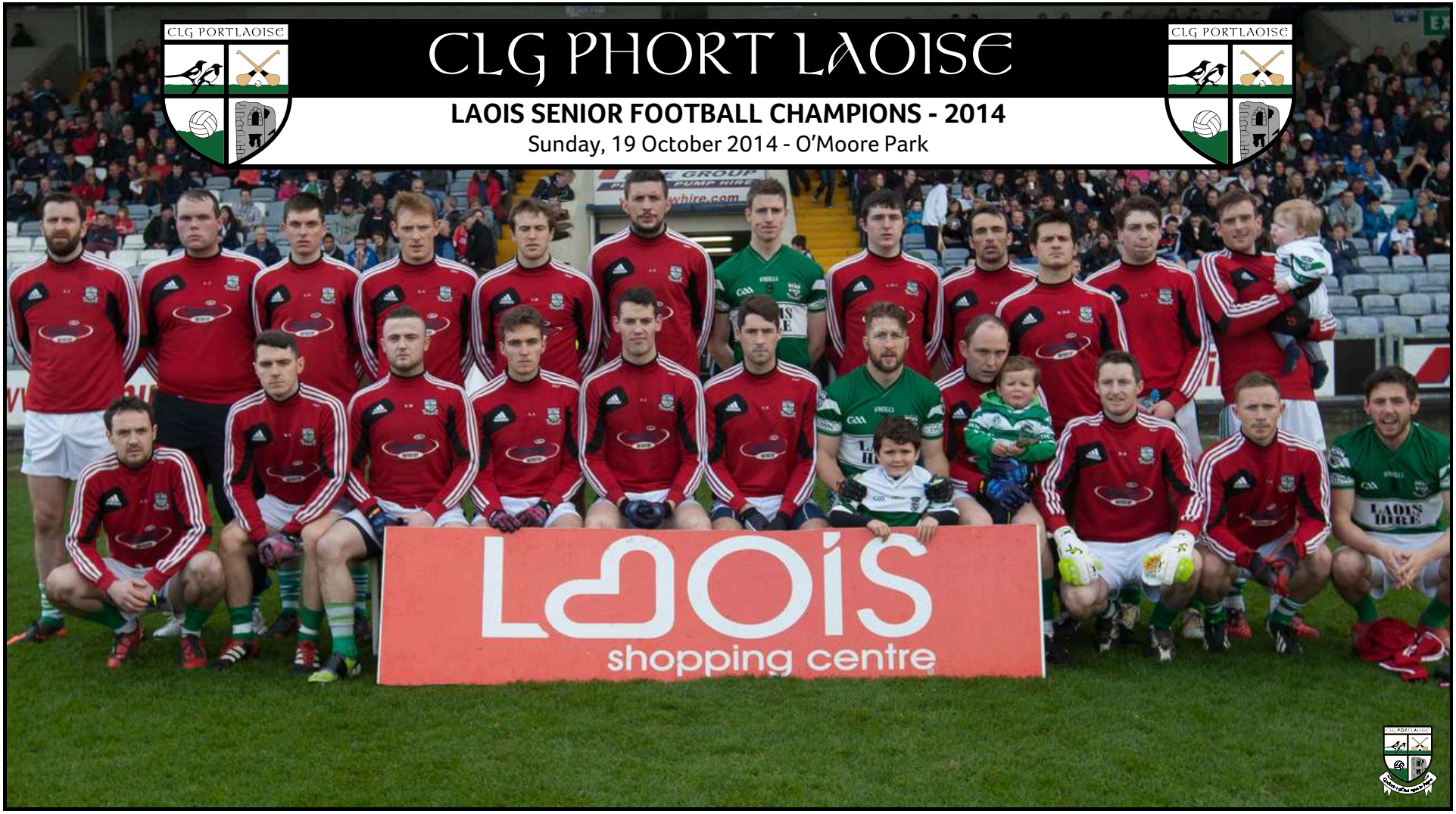
LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2014

Sunday, 19 October 2014 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 2-14 v 0-9 Arles-Killeen

Back (l. to r.): *Kevin Fitzpatrick, Shane McManus, Paul Cotter, Gareth Dillon, Dean Cullen, Graham Brody, Brian Glynn, Eoghan Whelan, Conor Boyle, Adrian Kelly, Kieran Lillis, Darragh Duggan, Eoghan Feane, Stewart Nerney, Zach Tuohy;*

Front (l. to r.): *Mark Kavanagh, Dean Lynch, David Seale, Barry Fitzgerald, Brian Smith, Cahir Healy, Paul Cahillane, Brian Mulligan, Malachy McNulty, Tommy Fitzgerald, Brian McCormack, Murray Rogers, Michael Nolan, Christopher Mulhall, Craig Rogers;*

CLG PHORT LAOISE

LAOIS SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2015

Replay - Saturday, 24 October 2015 - O'Moore Park



Portlaoise 2-13 v 0-7 Emo

Back (l. to r.): *Brian McCormack, Adrian Kelly, Brian Glynn, Jack Brown, Ciaran McEvoy, Gareth Dillon, Richard, Downey, Frank Flanagan, Graham Brody, Dean Cullen, Eoghan Whelan, Ricky Maher, Eoghan Feane, Liam McGovern, Colin Finn, Chris Finn, David Holland, Zach Touhy.*
Front (l. to r.): *Paddy Downey, Kevin Fitzpatrick, John Kavanagh, Brian Smith, Conor Dunphy, David Seale, John Delaney, Kieran Lillis (Capt.), Conor Boyle, Brian Mulligan, Cahir Healy, Craig Rogers, Paul Cahillane, Paul Cotter, Michael Nolan, Brian (Bruno) McCormack;*

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Junior 'A' Football Champions

Portlaoise 1-8
The Heath 0-10

Portlaoise Ladies secured the Laois LGFA Junior 'A' Championship title following a hard-fought one-point victory over The Heath at Annanough, earning promotion to the Intermediate Championship for 2027.

Twelve months after the disappointment of losing the county final, Portlaoise returned to Annanough determined to make amends. In another closely contested decider, the Town produced an excellent second-half performance before showing tremendous character in the closing stages to secure a deserved championship victory.

Portlaoise made a bright start and almost found the net inside the opening 30 seconds when Sinead O'Brien broke through on goal, only to be denied by an excellent save from The Heath goalkeeper Ceola Hayes.

Anna Mulligan opened the scoring from a free and added another point shortly afterwards, but The Heath responded strongly and gradually established a foothold in the contest.

Despite falling behind, Portlaoise continued to create opportunities. O'Brien kicked a fine point, while Shauna Dooley was twice denied by Hayes as the Town searched for a breakthrough.

That breakthrough eventually arrived shortly before half-time when Chloe Norton delivered a dangerous ball across the goalmouth. Dooley reacted quickest, getting a hand to the ball and directing it into the net for a crucial Portlaoise goal.

The score ensured Portlaoise remained firmly in contention at the interval, trailing by the narrowest of margins, 0-7 to 1-3.

The Town emerged for the second half with renewed purpose and immediately took control of proceedings. Mulligan converted two frees in quick succession, first drawing Portlaoise level before restoring their lead.

With Portlaoise growing in confidence, goalkeeper Kate Scully Maher produced an outstanding save to deny Emily Dowling and protect the Town's slender advantage.

Mulligan continued to lead the way in attack, adding two further points, while Kirsten Keenan also found the target as Portlaoise opened up a five-point lead. It was an impressive spell from the Town, whose work rate, determination and attacking play had put them firmly in control of the final.

However, The Heath mounted a late comeback, registering three unanswered points to reduce the deficit to the minimum and set up a tense finish.

With the championship on the line, Portlaoise showed the resilience and composure that had been required throughout their campaign. The defence stood firm under considerable pressure, denying The Heath the opportunity to force an equaliser as the clock ran down.

The final whistle sparked celebrations among the Portlaoise players, management and supporters as the Town claimed the Junior 'A' title and secured their place in the Intermediate ranks for next season.

Mulligan was instrumental in the victory, finishing with six points, while Dooley's first-half goal proved decisive. Keenan and O'Brien also contributed important scores, with Scully Maher's second-half save another defining moment in the contest.

While the scorers played their part, this was very much a collective achievement, built on the efforts of the entire panel and management team throughout the season.

Having experienced the disappointment of defeat in the previous year's final, the players showed tremendous determination to return and go one better. Their success represents another important step forward for ladies football in Portlaoise and provides a strong foundation as the team prepares for the challenge of Intermediate football in 2027.

Scorers: Anna Mulligan 0-6 (three frees), Shauna Dooley 1-0, Kirsten Keenan 0-1, Sinead O'Brien 0-1.

Team: Kate Scully Maher; Jessie Saunders, Emma Dunne, Sarah Phelan; Faye Byrne, Rebecca Keane, Abbey Louise Byrne; Jasmine Burke, Laura Nerney; Kirsten Keenan, Sinead O'Brien, Leah Brennan; Anna Mulligan, Shauna Dooley, Chloe Norton.
Subs Used: Molly Jane Dempsey for Sinead O'Brien (28 mins, injured), Kara Phelan for Faye Byrne (half-time), Kara Powers for Abbey Louise Byrne (half-time), Alix Culleton for Chloe Norton (54 mins).

Championship Result Confirmed Following Appeals Process

Following the county final, the result was subsequently disputed and The Heath subsequently lodged an appeal, and Laois LGFA ordered a replay of the final. Portlaoise appealed this decision to the LGFA Central Appeals Committee (CAC), raising concerns about the procedures followed during the investigation.

The CAC ruled in Portlaoise's favour, after which Laois LGFA established a new investigation committee to review the matter. When that committee again recommended a replay, Portlaoise lodged a second appeal, maintaining that the processes followed were flawed and that the decisions of match officials should be respected in accordance with LGFA rules.

The Central Appeals Committee upheld Portlaoise's appeal for a second time, overturning the decision to order a replay and confirming the original championship result.

Following the ruling, the Portlaoise GAA/LGFA Club Executive issued the following statement:

"*Portlaoise LGFA wish to inform our players, supporters and members that following a second appeal of the decision of the Laois County Board to replay the Laois Junior 'A' final, the Central Appeals Committee have on both occasions found in favour of Portlaoise LGFA.*

The appeal was based around processes and investigation errors. We firmly stand against using video evidence to overturn referees' decisions and the awarding of games as outlined in Rule 19. We believe that this is of utmost importance to protect our players who were fairly awarded the game on the day and referees whose decisions must be respected at all times.

We want to be clear that our appeals and concerns were based on flawed processes since the final was played. It is in no way directed at The Heath.

Their players and mentors have been just as affected by the uncertainty of recent weeks as ours, through no fault of their own, and we have the greatest respect for them.

We are immensely proud of our group of players, and we thank our members and supporters for their continued support while this has been ongoing."

The Heath GAA/LGFA Club also issued a statement following the conclusion of the appeals process, expressing disappointment with the outcome while accepting the CAC ruling and acknowledging Portlaoise's right to appeal.

"*Following the conclusion of the appeals process relating to the Junior 'A' Ladies Championship Final, The Heath GAA/LGFA Club wishes to provide clarity to our members and supporters.*

The LGFA Central Appeals Committee has upheld Portlaoise's appeal and overturned Laois LGFA's decision to award a replay. The appeal concerned the procedure used to award a replay rather than the score itself. While disappointed, we respect the decision and welcome a conclusion to the matter in the interests of both sets of players.

We remain firmly of the view that a replay would have been the fairest sporting outcome but believe it is now time to move forward.

We thank the referee for acknowledging the error in the recorded score, accept his apology and wish him well. We also thank Laois LGFA and the County Board Executive for their considerable efforts to facilitate a replay on two occasions.

To our players, families, management and supporters, thank you for your patience and dignity throughout. The flags flying proudly across our community reflect the tremendous support for our ladies. We are immensely proud of our players who continue to inspire our younger members and set standards for the future of our club.

We respect Portlaoise's right to appeal and acknowledge the outcome which sees them progress to the Intermediate Championship next year."

Unfortunately, the prolonged appeals process meant that neither club was able to represent Laois in the 2026 Leinster LGFA Junior Club Championship.

With the matter now concluded, Portlaoise have been officially confirmed as the 2026 Laois LGFA Junior 'A' Champions and will compete in the Intermediate Championship in 2027.

While the circumstances following the final were difficult for everyone involved, the club remains immensely proud of its players and management team for their achievements throughout the season, particularly after the disappointment of losing the previous year's final.

CLG PHORT LAOISE

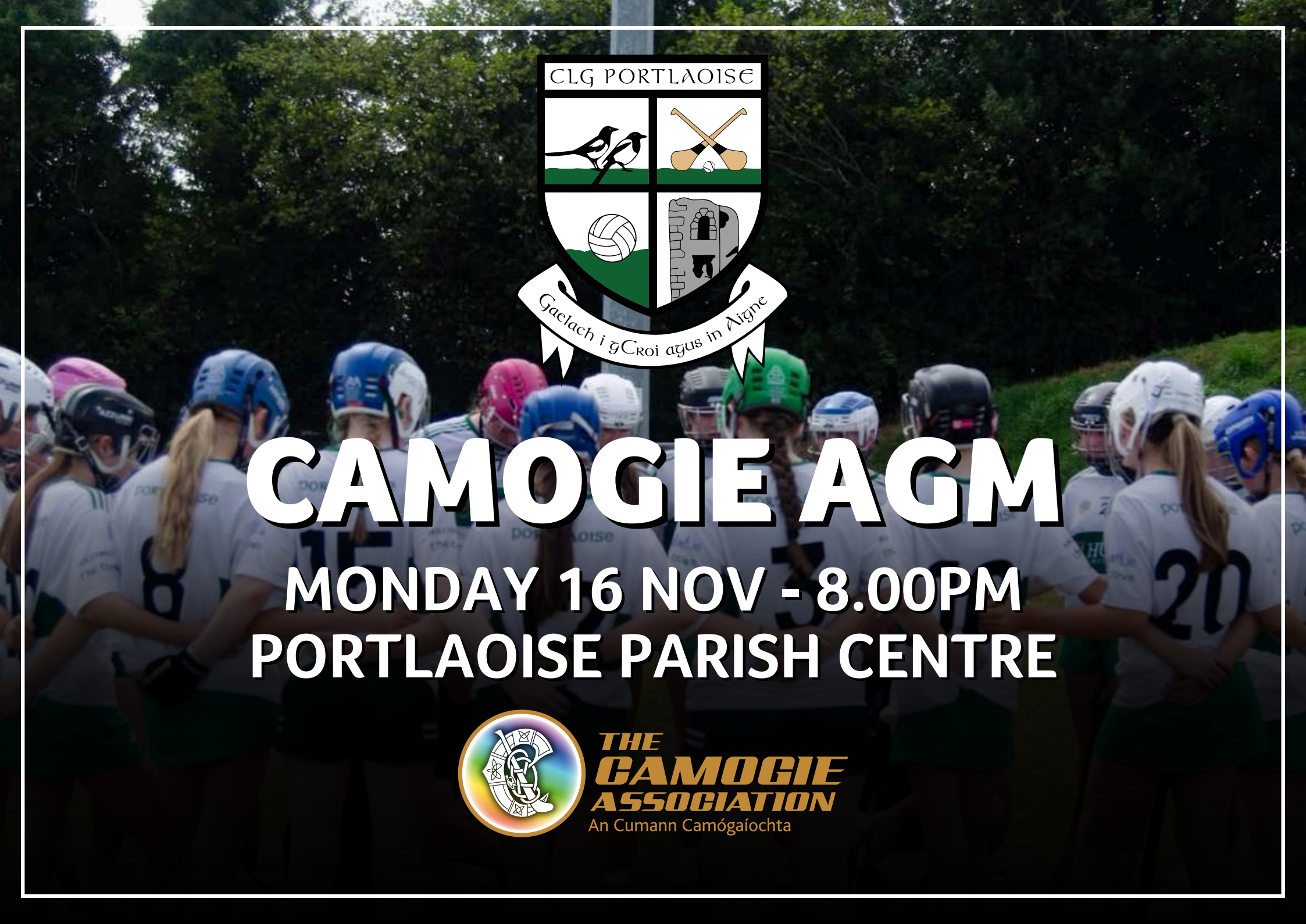
LAOIS LGFA JUNIOR 'A' FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2026

Sunday, 4th October 2026 - Annanough GAA Grounds



Portlaoise 1-8 v 0-10 The Heath

Back (l. to r.): *Kara Phelan, Alix Culleton, Sinead O'Brien, Jasmine Burke, Charlie Walsh, Chloe Norton, Rebecca Keane, Jessie Saunders, Faydagh Dunne, Kate Scully Maher, Shauna Dooley, Sarah Phelan, Faye Byrne and Amy Byrne*;
Front (l. to r.): *Leah Brennan, Molly Jane Dempsey, Kara Powders, Sophie Deegan, Kirsten Keenan, Emma Dunne, Anna Mulligan, Abbey Louise Byrne, Laura Nerney*;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PORTLAOISE PARISH CENTRE
THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION
An Cumann Camógaíochta

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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**

Under 16 ‘A’ Football Champions

Portlaoise 1-4
St Conleth’s 1-3

Portlaoise Ladies continued their remarkable dominance of the Laois U16 ‘A’ Football Championship, securing a fifth consecutive county title following a thrilling one-point victory over St Conleth’s at Annanough.

In a fiercely contested final between two evenly matched sides, the Town showed tremendous determination and resilience to emerge victorious, extending an extraordinary run of success at this grade.

The opening half was a closely fought affair, with scoring opportunities at a premium. Portlaoise goalkeeper Grace Malone played a crucial role in keeping her side in contention, producing two outstanding saves that ultimately proved decisive.

Despite those interventions, St Conleth’s held a slender advantage at the interval, leading 1-2 to 0-4 and leaving Portlaoise with work to do in the second half.

The Town responded with an impressive display of commitment and determination after the restart. With little separating the teams, every possession was fiercely contested as Portlaoise battled to turn the game in their favour.

As the contest entered its closing stages, the Portlaoise defence came under increasing pressure, but the girls stood firm. Vice-captain Lucy Mulhall produced one of the defining moments of the final with a superb late interception to halt a dangerous St Conleth’s attack.

It was a fitting contribution from Mulhall, whose outstanding performance throughout the game earned her the Player of the Match award.

Portlaoise held their nerve in the closing minutes to secure a memorable 1-4 to 1-3 victory, sparking celebrations among the players, management and supporters.

There were proud scenes at the presentation as captain Sarah Donoghue and vice-captain Lucy Mulhall stepped forward together to accept the championship trophy, confirming a fifth successive U16 ‘A’ title for the Town.

Winning five consecutive championships at the highest level of underage ladies football in Laois is an exceptional achievement and reflects the quality of players, coaching and development within Portlaoise LGFA.

The victory was a fitting reward for the dedication shown by the entire panel throughout the season and another significant success for the club's flourishing underage ladies football section.

Congratulations to all the players and to the management team of John Fitzpatrick, Enda Coleman, JP Holland, Ethan Dowling and Pauric Phelan, along with everyone involved behind the scenes.

Credit also to St Conleth’s for their contribution to an excellent county final that remained in the balance until the final whistle.

Team: Grace Malone; Sarah Walsh, Lucy Mulhall (Vice-Captain), Freagh Stanley, Caitlin Fitzpatrick, Alix Culleton, Samantha Stalbe, Kara Powers, Kara Phelan, Bett Donoghue, Ellen Fitzpatrick, Katie Holland, Eve O'Gorman, Molly Jane Dempsey, Sarah Donoghue (Captain).
Subs: Ellen McGree, Zoe Carton, Kayleigh O'Callaghan, Carrie Gorman, Olivia Canavan, Aoibhe O'Shea, Saoirse Reddin, Aimee Conlon, Darcy Carroll, Gráinne Coleman, Abbie Thompson.

Management: John Fitzpatrick, Enda Coleman, JP Holland, Ethan Dowling and Pauric Phelan.

Female Liaison Officers: Triona Holland, Catherine Howe.

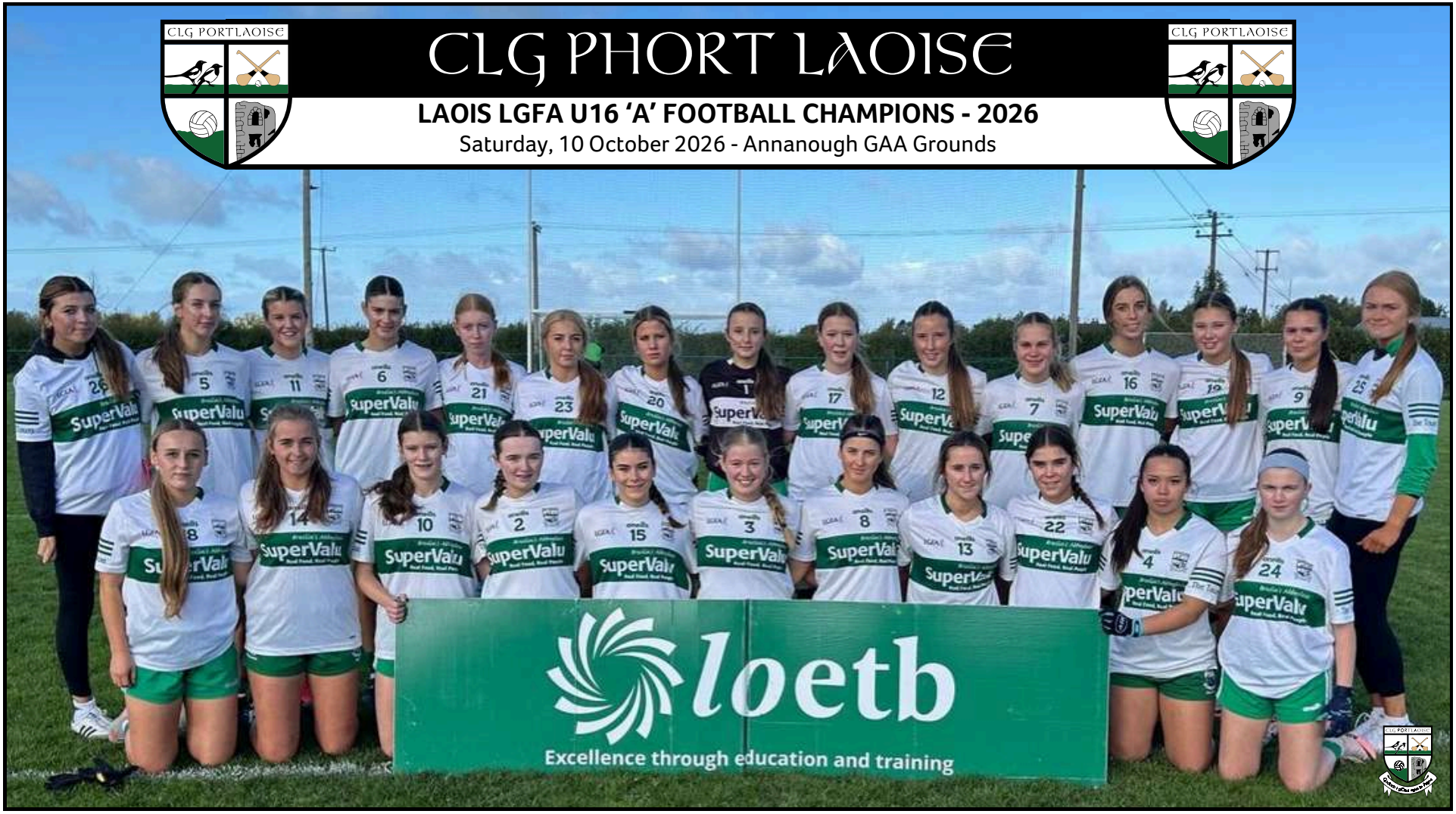
Physio: Olive Murphy.

Maor Uisce: Gráinne Coleman.

CLG PHORT LAOISE

LAOIS LGFA U16 'A' FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS - 2026

Saturday, 10 October 2026 - Annanough GAA Grounds



Portlaoise 1-4 v 1-3 St Conleths

Back (l. to r.): *Abbie Thompson, Cailtin Fitzpatrick, Ellen Fitzpatrick, Alix Culleton, Aoibhe O'Shea, Aimee Conlon, Olivia Canavan, Grace Malone, Zoe Carton, Katie Holland, Samanta Stalbe, Ellen McGree, Carrie Gorman, Kara Phelan, Grainne Coleman;*
Front (l. to r.): *Kayleigh O'Callaghan, Molly Jane Dempsey, Beth Donoughue, Sarah Walsh, Sarah Donoughue, Lucy Mulhall, Kara Powders, Eve O'Gorman, Saoirse Reddin, Freagh Stanley, Darcy Carroll;*

Minor ‘A’ Football Champions

Portlaoise 1-9 v Ballyroan 3-2



Portlaoise claimed their fifth Laois Minor Ladies Football Championship title and their first since 2019 following a hard-fought one-point victory over Ballyroan in an entertaining county final at Annanough last month.

Having suffered defeat in the previous three Minor ‘A’ finals, this was a particularly satisfying victory for a talented group of players who have enjoyed considerable success throughout the underage grades. Their determination to finally capture the county's top minor honour was evident throughout a closely contested encounter.

Playing with the advantage of the breeze in the opening half, Portlaoise made an excellent start and established a commanding six-point lead by the interval. Captain Lara Culleton opened the scoring, with Leah Brennan, Leah Brophy and Ellen Fitzpatrick also contributing as the Town held Ballyroan scoreless to lead 0-6 to 0-0 at half-time.

However, Ballyroan mounted a determined comeback after the restart. Aideen Gee, who has enjoyed an impressive season for club and county, struck twice for the opposition, while Alison Kenna added a third goal and Laoise Dunne contributed two points.

Portlaoise continued to battle against the breeze, with Culleton producing a crucial goal to help maintain their advantage. Further contributions from Brennan and Brophy proved vital as Ballyroan continued to apply pressure.

Gee's second goal in the closing stages set up a tense finish, but Portlaoise showed tremendous resolve to protect their slender advantage. The final whistle was greeted with celebrations as the Town secured a memorable championship victory.

Culleton finished as Portlaoise's leading scorer with 1-2, while Brennan and Brophy contributed three points each and Ellen Fitzpatrick added a point.



The victory was a fitting reward for a group that has shown remarkable consistency throughout its underage years. After the disappointment of three successive final defeats, the players finally brought the Minor ‘A’ title back to Portlaoise, adding another chapter to the club's growing history in ladies football.

Scorers: Lara Culleton 1-2, Leah Brennan 0-3, Leah Brophy 0-3 (one free), Ellen Fitzpatrick 0-1.
Portlaoise Team: Kate Scully Maher; Alix Culleton, Sandra O’Donnell, Samantha Stalbe; Kara Powers, Sarah McDonald, Kara Phelan; Ellen Fitzpatrick, Lara Culleton; Ellen Bergin, Amarachi Obi, Leah Brennan; Caitlin Fitzpatrick, Leah Brophy, Doireann Brennan.
Subs: Molly Jane Dempsey, Emma Scully Maher, Ashling Dowling, Katie Moore, Ruby Coyle, Katie Holland, Robyn Byrne, Sarah Walsh, Sarah Donoghue, Lucy Mulhall, Taylor Cullen, Rachel Kelly, Emily Kelly.

CLG PHORT LAOISE

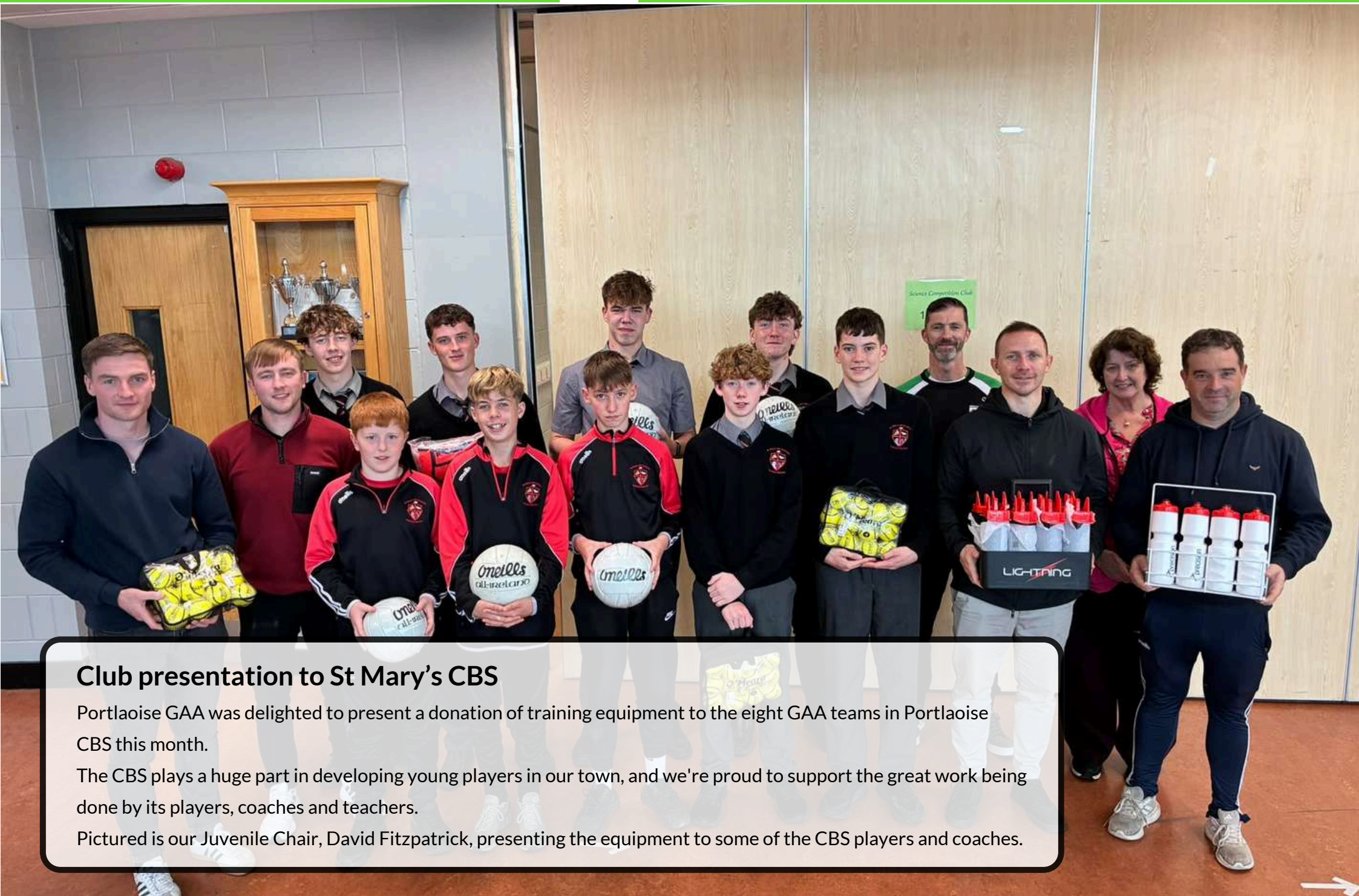
LAOIS LGFA MINOR 'A' CHAMPIONS - 2026

Sunday, 25 October 2026 - Annanough GAA Grounds



Portlaoise 1-9 v 3-2 Ballyroan

Back (l. to r.): *Katie Moore, Taylor Cullen, Robyn Byrne, Tilly O'Donnell, Lara Culleton (Capt.), Leah Brophy, Kate Scully Maher, Kara Phelan, Ruby Coyle, Alix Culleton, Ellen Fitzpatrick, Leah Brennan, Ashling Dowling, Emma Scully Maher, Sarah Walsh;*
Front (l. to r.): *Caitlin Fitzpatrick, Lucy Mullall, Samanta Stalbe, Amarachi Obi, Kara Powders, Sarah McDonald, Ellen Bergin, Doireann Brennan, Katie Holland, Sarah Donoghue;*
Manager: *Mark Brophy;* **Coaches**: *Joe Byrne, Derek Walshe;* **FLO**: *Sinead Brophy;*



Club presentation to St Mary's CBS

Portlaoise GAA was delighted to present a donation of training equipment to the eight GAA teams in Portlaoise CBS this month.

The CBS plays a huge part in developing young players in our town, and we're proud to support the great work being done by its players, coaches and teachers.

Pictured is our Juvenile Chair, David Fitzpatrick, presenting the equipment to some of the CBS players and coaches.

Bosco Grant Memorial Tournament

A wonderful afternoon for our U12 hurlers last month as they were crowned champions of the Bosco Grant Memorial Tournament!

The lads produced some fantastic displays right across the field, playing some lovely, flowing hurling on their way to lifting the trophy.

A brilliant achievement for a great bunch of young players who continue to do the club proud. Well done to all the lads and their coaches.

A big thank you to Colt GAA and the Grant family for the invitation, their wonderful hospitality and for organising such a fantastic tournament.



Town Tigers finish up for 2026

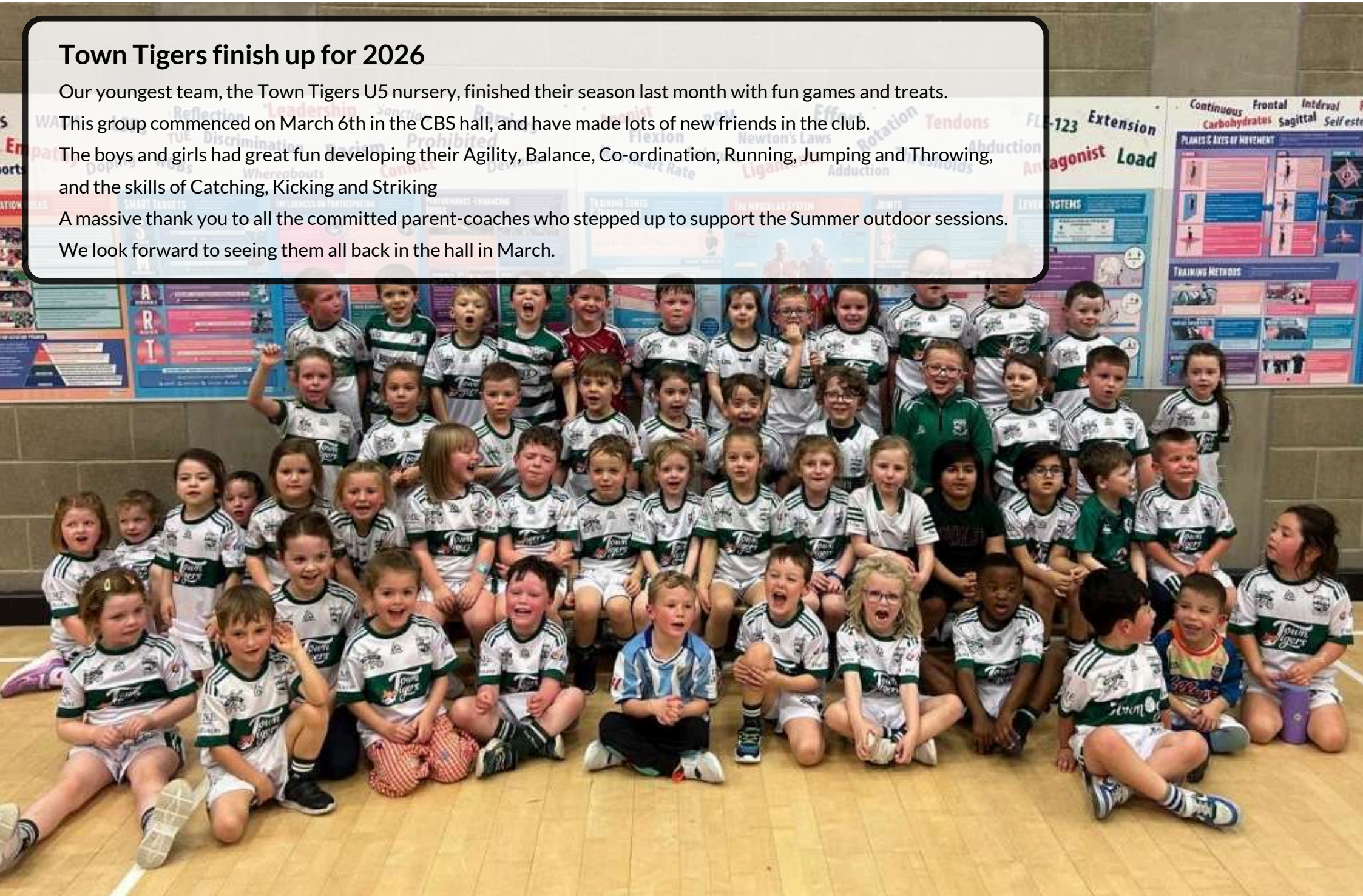
Our youngest team, the Town Tigers U5 nursery, finished their season last month with fun games and treats.

This group commenced on March 6th in the CBS hall, and have made lots of new friends in the club.

The boys and girls had great fun developing their Agility, Balance, Co-ordination, Running, Jumping and Throwing, and the skills of Catching, Kicking and Striking

A massive thank you to all the committed parent-coaches who stepped up to support the Summer outdoor sessions.

We look forward to seeing them all back in the hall in March.



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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