

Tuarascáil an Rúnaí 2015

(Tipperary Co Secretary's Annual Report)

Beidh cuimhne ar 2015 toisc gur shroicheamar trí chinn de cluichí ceannais na hÉireann. Cé nach raibh bua againn in aon ceann acu, is féidir linn a bheith deimhneach agus bródúil go rabhamar páirteach insan méid sin de laetha móra CLG. D'fhág Éamon Ó'Sé slán tar éis páirt a ghlacadh sna cluichí ceannais sa sraith agus sa chraobh, ach ar a laghad, bhí sé de shólás aige Craobh na Mumhan a bhuachaint, an t-aon trófaí i rith a réime bhainistíochta. Leanann an dul chun chinn sa pheil agus chuir Na Tráchtálaí marc airde nua síos leis an éacht a rinne siad i Mí na Samhna ag tabhairt an chéad Craobh Peile Chúige ar ais don chontae.

It is a privilege to present my ninth report to Tipperary County Convention. 2015 was so full of promise being so near and yet so far away and could have easily turned out a great year. After a bad start losing the Waterford Crystal and League first round our Senior Hurlers had four very impressive League wins on the trot to qualify for the League play-offs. A most disappointing one point loss to Waterford in the League Semi was put aside as we overcame our bogey team Limerick in the Munster Championship with a sixteen point victory in their own Gaelic Grounds. This was followed up with a Munster Final win over Waterford and momentum was building towards an All Ireland Final. But Galway stopped us in our tracks with a most disappointing one point defeat at Croke Park in the Semi-Final.

Our Senior footballers were impressive this year but the northern teams were our stumbling block in both League and qualifiers. Despite losing the Munster Semi-Final to reigning All Ireland Champions Kerry, the Kingdom's visit to Semple Stadium was a special day as up to 12,000 spectators flocked to Thurles. This euphoria was a spin off from Tipp's participation in the All Ireland 21 football Final for the first time as many of the same players were on the Senior side. Reaching the two Minor All Irelands Finals was unique but unfortunately both had disappointing outcomes. Full credit to Co.CCC for reaching all our Munster deadlines this year as Clonmel Commercial made history in the club and county by winning the first Munster S.F. Club title. Thurles Sarsfields reigned supreme in S.H. but once again fell short in Munster against Na Piarsaigh. On the administration front, our finances were controlled and our income boosted with funds raised in London and the Galway races. The pause button was pressed on Dr Morris Park as we repaid our loans to the Divisions and planned our next phase which is a new building to enhance the existing three pitches and hurling wall. We suffered the loss of great friends in Tony Reddin, Jimmy Doyle, Ray Reidy, Eddie Connolly etc. and over the next few pages we will remember them all and recall the year that was, as I take you through on a month by month basis since the convention in December 2014. I hope my summary brings back many memories and forms a worthwhile reference for the future authors of club and county histories. First of all let us take a look at how our teams performed:



TIM FLOYD
County Secretary

Tipperary Senior Hurling

| DATE | VENUE | TEAM | SCORE | TEAM | SCORE | REFEREE |
|------------------------------|---------------|-----------|-------|-----------------|-------|---------------|
| Waterford Crystal Cup | | | | | | |
| Preliminary Rd | | | | | | |
| 09/01/2015 | Dr. Morris Pk | Tipperary | 4.16 | Mary Immaculate | 1.16 | Nathan Wall |
| Quarter Final | | | | | | |
| 18/01/2015 | Sixmilebridge | Clare | 0.16 | Tipperary | 0.15 | Johnny Murphy |

Allianz Hurling League

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|---------------|
| Round 1 | | | | | | |
| 15/02/2015 | Parnell Pk | Dublin | 2.20 | Tipperary | 0.14 | Barry Kelly |
| Round 2 | | | | | | |
| 21/02/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 2.18 | Galway | 0.20 | James McGrath |
| Round 3 | | | | | | |
| 08/03/2015 | Cusack Pk | Tipperary | 2.19 | Clare | 0.20 | Brian Gavin |
| Round 4 | | | | | | |
| 15/03/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 2.22 | Kilkenny | 1.13 | James McGrath |
| Round 5 | | | | | | |
| 22/03/2015 | Pairc Ui Rinn | Tipperary | 2.28 | Cork | 4.21 | Barry Kelly |
| Quarter Final | | | | | | |
| 29/03/2015 | Tullamore | Tipperary | 1.16 | Offaly | 0.13 | John Keenan |
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 19/04/2015 | Nowlan Pk | Waterford | 1.19 | Tipperary | 2.15 | Barry Kelly |

Munster Championship

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|-------------|
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 21/06/2015 | Gaelic Grounds | Tipperary | 4.23 | Limerick | 1.16 | Brian Gavin |
| Final | | | | | | |
| 12/07/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 0.21 | Waterford | 0.16 | James Owens |

All Ireland Championship

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|------|--------|------|-------------|
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 16/08/2015 | Croke Park | Tipperary | 3.16 | Galway | 0.26 | Barry Kelly |

Tipperary's playing year opened with the Waterford Crystal and a clash with Mary I in mid-January at Dr. Morris Park. New panellists on show for Tipp included Stephen Maher & Joe Dwyer in the backs plus Sean Maher, Liam Treacy and David Butler in the forwards. For Mary I, Niall O'Meara, Tadhg Gallagher and Andrew Ryan were the other Tipp players on show. The game meandered along with little between the sides up to the final ten minutes until Seamus Callanan laid down his first marker for 2015 by blitzing Mary I with three goals in three minutes to give Tipp a nine point victory. The Quarter Final was played in Sixmilebridge versus Clare and a late fight back from Tipp when we trailed by four points with seven minutes remaining was not enough. The teams were tied on 15 points each until Clare's Colin Ryan got the winning point in added time to give the Banner victory. With eyes firmly focussed on the Allianz League three weeks later Tipp were ready to up the ante as preparation levels increased to match the higher League intensity. Challenge games v Offaly in Moneygall and Kilmallock in Annacarty over the following weeks help decide the selection to play Dublin in Round One. Injuries to James Barry, Paddy Stapleton, Lar Corbett and Michael Cahill coupled with the retirements of Eoin Kelly and John O'Brien gave new players a chance to stake a claim. On top of this Noel McGrath was being rested following Loughmore Castleiney's prolonged run in the County Football Championship. A trip to Parnell Park to play a Dublin team under new manager Ger Cunningham was a daunting opener in the League that is now very competitive with only five games. Tipp fielded a strong experienced team with Paul Curran returning at full back, Conor O'Mahoney at centre back, Shane McGrath and James Woodlock at Mid field. Despite this we struggled to reach the required level against a hungrier and smarter Dublin side who imposed themselves from the start. A 17th minute Dubs goal gave them a six point lead which was extended to nine by half time and twelve by the final whistle. Injuries to Joe O'Dwyer (dislocated shoulder) and Shane McGrath (concussion) compounded Tipp's problems as they faced a home game against Galway the following Sunday. Also many players were involved in Fitzgibbon Cup Quarter Finals that week so anxious times for Eamon O'Shea and Co. It gave them the opportunity to give starting places to new young players like Michael Breen and Ronan Maher in the half back line plus John McGrath and Denis Maher in the forwards. During the game they brought in Conor Kenny and John Meagher and it had the desired effect. Tipp were more assured in this game and led by three points at half time. A John "Bubbles" O'Dwyer goal immediately after the break and a further green by Callanan mid way through the half gave the home side a commanding ten point lead. Six unanswered points by Galway led to an exciting finish which Tipp survived, led by a commanding Pdraic Maher at No. 6. The four point victory put Tipp back on track with a trip to Cusack Park, Ennis next on the list. A shoulder injury to Denis Maher added to our growing injury list but it gave new players the opportunity to make an impact. Seven days later Tipp gave one of their most impressive performances of the year to dismantle the Banner running game. Going toe to toe with their key attackers, Cathal Barrett and Conor O'Brien put the shackles on star forwards Shane O'Donnell and Conor McGrath as Tipp led by four points at half time. With newcomer John McGrath in dazzling form, scoring five points over the hour, the Premier drove on in the 2nd half and goals by Noel McGrath and James Woodlock sealed a deserving five point victory. This win put Tipp in the right frame of mind for Kilkenny who were next up in Semple Stadium just one week later. The Cats fielded half their 2014 All Ireland team between retirements and the Ballyhale players still club tied plus a few injuries. Over 10,000 turned up to see another battle between the two kingpins of hurling and they were not disappointed as Kilkenny's John Joe Farrell had the ball in the net after just 17 seconds. The goal ignited Tipp as they scored 1-07 in the first quarter to a single Kilkenny point adding to their early goal. Callanan's goal was class as Tipp went on to lead by nine points at the break 1-16 to 1-09. Despite Farrell threatening with missed goal opportunities, Tipp's performance grew and a further goal by Niall O'Meara in the 54th minute sealed a deserving 12 point victory for the Premier. This was our first victory over Kilkenny since 2013 and it ended a six game run without a win against our arch rivals. The victory also marked a successful debut for the new Tipp sponsors Intersport / Elverys as the players donned the new jersey which was launched in Hayes's Hotel earlier in the day. Our final game in the group of six was only to decide placings as Cork and ourselves were sitting pretty at the top with six points each. Tipp could afford to experiment as we headed for Páirc Uí Rinn on a perfect spring Sunday. The first half limped along with little between the sides as Anthony Nash dealt with the few Tipp goal chances. With Tipp trailing by 0-15 to 0-13 at half time it gave little indication of the drama ahead. In the 43rd minute Cork struck for two goals from Conor Lehane and Pat Horgan and ten minutes later another double blow as Paudie O'Sullivan and Horgan again hit the net to leave Tipp four goals adrift with just over 15 minutes remaining. What happened in the last quarter was a remarkable comeback as Tipp outscored Cork by 2-09 to 0-02 to record a one point victory. Goals by Bergin and Forde helped but the quality of the Tipp forwards shone out as they added the points before Noel McGrath sealed victory in added time to place the Premier at the top of the league table. Tipp's reward was a quarter final versus Offaly in Tullamore where a predictable win was recorded but at a cost. Seamus Callanan had 1-06 scored when he was controversially sent off for a strike on the Offaly full back which was later deemed incorrect by the Central Appeals Committee and he was cleared to play in the semi-final. Cathal Barrett also got the line following a second yellow in the



**Tipperary S.H.
Management 2015:
Mick Ryan, Paudie
O'Neill, Eamon O'Shea
and Declan Fanning**

65th minute when Tipp led by eight points which was just enough to absorb the late Offaly pressure. Even more serious was the ankle injury to Kieran Bergin which would sideline him for the semi-final. Having played four Sundays on the trot, a three week break to the semi-final was welcome as Tipp headed to Alicante for a five day training camp. Only fully fit players travelled as following the tight congestion of matches this was the first opportunity to have prolonged sessions combined with a strong element of continuity and work ethic. The growing list of injured players who stayed back for rehab was added to with a shoulder injury on camp to Cathal Barrett so the semi final would really test our panel strength. But all these problems paled into triviality when the news of Noel McGrath's testicular cancer broke a few days before the semi-final. The manner in which Noel and his family faced up to the ordeal was testament to their courage and faith and this was rewarded when he returned to the playing fields later in the year. On Thursday night before the semi-final better news came when Seamus Callanan's hearing at Central Appeals cleared him to play which was a major boost to the team. So we headed for Nowlan Park, not to play Kilkenny for a change but a Waterford team on a roll playing their new style of hurling with a packed defence counter attacking in waves. Assisted by the wind, Tipp started well and had goals from Bonnar Maher and John "Bubbles" O'Dwyer by the 12th minute but indiscipline in our backs gave Pauric Mahony too many opportunities from frees as they kept in touch to only trail by three points at the break. A Colin Dunford goal in the second half put Waterford in the driving seat heading in to the final quarter. Tipp rallied and were level in the final minutes but a Pauric Mahony free sealed it with his 11th from placed balls and a place for Waterford in the final. After this disappointment our focus now switched to nine weeks later on June 21st and a Munster Championship Semi Final v Clare or Limerick.

Munster Championship

As the Divisional and Club championships kicked off the players were busy with their clubs whilst also preparing for the Munster Semi Final. Meanwhile Waterford completed the double over Cork in the League Final and Munster Quarter Final whilst Limerick overcame Clare to become Tipp's opponents in the Semi-Final. This would be the fourth year in a row the sides would meet in Munster with Limerick having won the last two. So it was back to the Gaelic Grounds on June 21st for the latest episode. Limerick scored the first three points but Tipp took control then and two Callanan goals gave us a six point lead by half time. The Treaty side made another big surge after the break but an on form Darren Gleeson kept them at bay with some great saves until Shane Dowling eventually netted from a penalty. This gave them a new lease of life but it was short lived as Jason Forde and sub Micheal Breen added two more goals to give Tipp a compressive sixteen point victory. As the County celebrated being back in a Munster Final in our own Semple Stadium three weeks later, it also mourned the passing of one of its greatest hurling legends Jimmy Doyle. The celebration of Jimmy's life during the funeral built a great sense of pride and united the County as his great deeds and achievements were recalled. The presence of our minor hurlers also in the Munster Final added further impetus as Tipperary looked forward to a very special occasion on July 12th in Thurles. Added to this was a triple Saturday fixture in Semple Stadium with Tipp SF v Louth followed by SH qualifiers Dublin v Limerick and Clare v Cork. The ground staff in Semple worked long hours into Saturday night to make sure the pitch was in prime condition for Sunday and they truly excelled. 43,000 packed in on Sunday and the minors set the example as they came from behind to defeat a fancied Limerick side. Tipp took on the Waterford system from the start with our own precision passing game by-passing their sweeper as we raced into a four point lead early on. Scores were hard to come by as the hurling was frantic and of high intensity with work rates high on both sides. Tipp led by a single point at half time 0-10 to 0-09. The introduction of Maurice Shanahan, who scored three points, added impetus to the Waterford attack but Tipp replied and never allowed the Decies boys gain control as we tacked on the points in the closing stages to win by five. This was a tactical victory for Eamon O'Shea and the skill of his players won out in the end as Tipp picked up their 41st Munster title and their first since 2012 and their first silverware under Eamon. It was route one to the All Ireland semi-final in five weeks on August 16th and another double bill with our minors, but this time in Croke Park. Our opponents were Galway who accounted for Cork in the Quarter Final. The break allowed progress to be made with club fixtures and most of the training was done behind closed doors as Tipp plotted their strategy to face a more orthodox system which Galway play. Once again our minors set the tone with a five point victory over Dublin before a 58,000 attendance in Croke Park. Tipp seniors got a dream start with a Callanan goal within the first minute but the signs were ominous at the other end as Darren Gleeson saved a Joe Canning penalty and followed up with another block from Cathal Mannion. We were over reliant on Callanan where the other forwards were failing to spark as Galway stifled our key men. Galway took the lead in added seconds before half time to lead by 0-13 to 1-09. Two more goals by Callanan in the first 18 minutes of the second half disguised our deficiencies all over the field as Galway's intensity and physicality had us playing second fiddle. Lar Corbett's introduction seemed to have the desired effect as he was deprived of a goal by Galway keeper Colm Callanan. The appearance of Noel McGrath for the first time since his illness seemed like the perfect catalyst to drive us home in the final eight minutes especially when he drove us into the lead in the closing stages. But it was Galway who scored the last two points with debutant substitute Shane Moloney getting the winner in added time to seal it for the Tribesmen. On this occasion Tipp played second fiddle to Galway's pace and physicality and to be only one point behind at the end was indeed remarkable. It was a bitter defeat for Seamus Callanan having scored 3-09 and ending up on the losing side. It was a disappointing end to a year which promised so much following impressive league displays in March and emphatic Munster Championship victories over Limerick and Waterford. Having successfully overcome the Waterford "System" in the Munster Final after losing the league semi final to them, gave very positive vibes that this team were ready to challenge Kilkenny in an All Ireland Final. Galway's display came like a bolt out of the blue and showed up many inadequacies which left us very vulnerable. It was bitter disappointment for Eamon O'Shea who bowed out after his three years in charge. He commanded so much respect from the players who would dearly have loved to have delivered an All Ireland to him. Those days when they were successful in playing the "beautiful game" he coached, it was a joy to watch. He preached and instilled positivity in them and he believed so much in their talent and ability. He demanded high octane performances and prepared his players for the intensity of every battle. I find it very frustrating trying to fathom why it failed to happen for him as he deserved success. I have never seen so much thoroughness in the preparation of a team. He leaves a very positive legacy behind which many County Managers and Coaches would love to have on their CV. During his six years involved with the Tipp SH teams (2008-2010 & 2013-2015), he reached 3 All Ireland finals, winning one, reached two Munster Finals winning both and participated in three National League Finals winning one. Apart from All Ireland finals, he also took Tipp to two other All Ireland Semi-Finals.

Tipp Team v Galway

Darren Gleeson Portroe, Cathal Barrett Holycross Ballycahill, James Barry Upperchurch Drombane, Conor O'Brien Éire Óg Anacarty, Ronan Maher Thurles Sarsfields, Padraic Maher Thurles Sarsfields, Kieran Bergin Killenaule, James Woodlock Drom & Inch, Shane McGrath Ballinahinch, Jason Forde Silvermines, Brendan Maher Borris-ileigh Captain, Patrick Maher Lorrha, John O'Dwyer Killenaule, Seamus Callanan Drom & Inch, Niall O'Meara Kilruane MacDonaghs, Paddy Stapleton Borris-ileigh, Shane Bourke JK Brackens, Lar Corbett Thurles Sarsfields, Noel McGrath Loughmore Castleiney, Conor O'Mahony Newport, Michael Breen Ballina, Darragh Egan Kildangan, Michael Cahill Thurles Sarsfields, Barry Heffernan Nenagh Éire Óg, Conor Kenny Borris-ileigh, Dan McCormack Borrisoleigh

Tipperary U21 Hurling

| DATE | VENUE | TEAM | SCORE | TEAM | SCORE | REFEREE |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-------|-----------|-------|------------|
| Munster Championship | | | | | | |
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 16/07/2015 | Gaelic Grounds | Limerick | 3.16 | Tipperary | 3.14 | Colm Lyons |

Following on from their epic battle with eventual All Ireland champions Clare in 2014, the same management team remained intact with TJ Connolly at the helm aided by Ken Dunne and Niall Curran. The fourth selector Noel Morris was unavailable due to work in England. That game with Clare went to extra-time with Tipp scoring 1-25 having conceded two goals in the opening minutes and the Banner went on to win their three in a row Munster and All Ireland titles. This year 2015, hopes were high in the Premier with management selecting from the minor team that won the 2012 All Ireland title. The panel was boosted by Senior hurling squad members Barry Heffernan, John McGrath, Ronan Maher, Bill Maher, Tom Fox and Michael Breen along with the experience of Senior Footballers Colin O'Riordan, Kevin O'Halloran and Steven O'Brien (who was ruled out with a hamstring injury). They had prepared well since early in the year and no stone was left unturned leading into this knock-out competition with no back doors or losers' groups to fall back on. On home turf in the Gaelic Grounds before a crowd of 3,437 it was Limerick who made all the early running and young senior star Cian Lynch had the ball in the net after 15 seconds. By the 25th minute the Treaty side had built up a 12 point lead and Tipp needed something very special to stay in this game. It was Colin O'Riordan who supplied this "X Factor" with two goals before half time to leave us just five points adrift at the break 2-09 to 2-04. The pendulum swung back in Tipp's favour as we closed the gap on the resumption with three points on the trot and when Limerick centre back Barry O'Connell was dismissed for a second yellow it was definitely advantage Tipp. Despite this, it was Limerick who reacted best with a Tom Morrissey goal to give them a five point lead with a quarter of an hour to go. Tipp rose to the challenge and scored three points before Tadgh Gallagher blasted to the net to draw level for the first time in the 21st minute. When Tipp required composure and discipline to drive on in the closing minutes the opposite happened as errors and the dismissal of Michael Breen gave the initiative to Limerick as they scored four points to Tipp's two during that crucial stage. Tipp will look back on this game with grave disappointment as they never lived up to expectations despite recovering from a 12 point deficit in the first half and a further five point arrears in the second half. It was a bitter pill to swallow for Tipp Manager T.J. Connolly who was in his sixth year with the U21s having served four as a selector with Ken Hogan. Following the game he stepped down as manager having given his all for Tipperary in terms of commitment and passion.

Tipperary U21H team v Limerick: Paul Maher (Moyne Templetuohy), Tom Fox (Éire Óg Anacarty), Michael Breen (Ballina), Jack Peters (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Ronan Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Barry Heffernan (Nenagh Éire Óg), Tomas Hamill (Moyne Templetuohy), Bill Maher (Kilsheelan Kilcash) (captain), Stephen Cahill (Thurles Sarsfields), Billy McCarthy (Thurles Sarsfields), Willie Connors (Kildangan), Colin O'Riordan (JK Brackens), Tadgh Gallagher (Kildangan), Paul Shanahan (Upperchurch Drombane), John McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney), Josh Keane (Golden Kilfeacle), Jack Shelley (Mullinahone), Andrew Coffey (Nenagh Éire Óg), Paul Maher (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Brian Hogan (Lorrha Dorrha), Dylan Fizzle (Cashel King Cormacs), David Sweeney (Kildangan), Alan Flynn (Kildangan), Ger Fennelly (Ballingarry)

Tipperary Minor Hurling

| DATE | VENUE | TEAM | SCORE | TEAM | SCORE | REFEREE |
|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|---------------|
| Munster Championship | | | | | | |
| Quarter Final | | | | | | |
| 08/04/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 1.14 | Waterford | 0.16 | Johnny Murphy |
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 25/06/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 1.15 | Clare | 1.11 | Joe Larkin |
| Final | | | | | | |
| 12/07/2015 | Semple Stadium | Tipperary | 0.20 | Limerick | 0.17 | Joe Larkin |
| All Ireland Championship | | | | | | |
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 16/08/2015 | Croke Park | Tipperary | 2.17 | Dublin | 1.15 | Paud O'Dwyer |
| Final | | | | | | |
| 06/09/2015 | Croke Park | Galway | 4.13 | Tipperary | 1.16 | Paud O'Dwyer |

Despite having a disappointing year in 2014 where Tipp lost by nine points to Limerick and fourteen points to Clare, the management team of Liam Cahill, John Sheedy, Sean Corbett and TJ Ryan were retained as their appointment for the 2014 season came too late to prepare sufficiently. Liam Cahill took a step back from the coaching of the teams and brought in the former Toomevara forward Michael Bevans to focus on that role. Liam and the other selectors scouted the county over the winter months to seek out the best available talent. Ten of the 2014 panel were still underage Tommy Nolan, Jack Skehan, Darragh Peters, Liam

McCutcheon, Alan Tynan, Stephen Quirke, Brian McGrath, Cian Darcy, Shane Neville and Shane Hennessy. Of these Tommy Nolan was under suspension for the first game following his sending off in the Clare game in 2014 and both Cian Darcy and Shane Hennessy were injured. In the first round this year Tipp faced Waterford in Semple Stadium. Waterford had eight of their 2014 team and were coming in on the back of reaching the previous two Munster Finals plus winning the 2013 All Ireland title. The confidence from this experience was evident in their first half performance as they dictated the pace but Tipp kept in touch mainly with frees and the hard work of substitute Lyndon Fairbrother who scored two points from play. A lucky scrambled goal by Ruadhan Mulrooney just before half time gave Tipp a one point lead at the break. Waterford again dominated the start of the second half but Tipp stayed on their coat tails and hit the front thanks to two successful 65's from Brian McGrath during the closing minutes. Tipp held out for a one point victory, which, while not impressive, was a big relief to team management and supporters following the disappointments of 2014. This victory kept us out of the play-offs and allowed a ten week break until after the exams before a semi-final against Clare, again in Semple Stadium. With ten of the panel sitting the leaving cert, Coach Michael Bevans still made a lot of progress and at least six challenge games kept the team sharp. Extra players were tried out and Borrisokane's Gary Ryan was brought straight on at centre forward with Tommy Nolan back from suspension and Lyndon Fairbrother getting a starting place. Three new forwards starting, added a fresh look against a Clare side carrying just five of last year's team which demolished Tipp in a play-off in Ennis. The game was postponed 24 hours from Wednesday to Thursday to allow for the funeral of Tipperary Hurling legend Jimmy Doyle. It was tit for tat in the first quarter and the loss of Stephen Quirke with a knee injury in the 16th minute looked like a bad blow for Tipp. A goal by Tommy Nolan in the 26th proved decisive as Tipp led at the break by 1-08 to 0-04. Our dominance continued at the start of the second half with Lyndon Fairbrother in top form scoring points and stretching our lead to ten points. Tipp took the foot of the pedal then and allowed Clare score 1-07 to our three and leave a nervous three points between the teams with just five minutes remaining. A Mikey Connors point in the final minute was security enough to see Tipp home and into their first Munster Final since 2012. Limerick were our opponents in the final having defeated Cork and now looking for a hat trick of Munster Minor titles. With the seniors also in the Final and Waterford agreeing to play in Thurles, this meant a double for Tipp and a great chance to perform on the big stage. Little separated the teams in the first half of the final as points were exchanged before Limerick added three points from frees to give them a 0-10 to 0-08 lead at the break. The concession of frees was a concern as the free count in the first half was nine to one in favour of Limerick. The second half followed a very similar pattern as the first with goal chances being restricted and the lead changing hands. Limerick held a one point lead with seven minutes remaining but three points from Lyndon Fairbrother and the final point from sub Shane Neville gave Tipperary a three point victory. Limerick were unhappy as the referee did not play the full two additional minutes as displayed but it was later discovered the problem was with the stadium clock and not the referee's watch. This was a sweet victory for Tipp following a disastrous 2014, losing two out of two. Already in 2015 we won three from three and heading to Croke Park for another double bill with the seniors on August 16th in the All Ireland Semi Finals. With our minor footballers also reaching the All Ireland semi-final these were busy times for the eight or nine dual players Emmet Moloney, Tommy Nolan, Jack Skehan, Brian McGrath, Ross Peters, Stephen Quirke, Michael Connors, Alan Tynan and Tommy Lowry. Both managers were well aware of the challenge in keeping these players fresh whilst also ensuring their fitness and skill levels were maintained. We had a five week break before the Semi-Final where we faced Dublin on August 16th on the same bill as the Tipp v Galway Senior Hurling semi-final. This was a treble bill as Galway finally overcame Kilkenny in the other minor semi-final replay which was the first game. Tipp started in great style and had two goals from Tommy Nolan & Davy Gleeson to build up a four point lead after 17 minutes but the Dubs were back on level terms by half time 2-06 to 1-09. The sides were level three times in the second half but the introduction of Ruadhan Mulrooney and Shane Neville seemed to ignite the forward line as they scored three points between them in the final minutes. Tipp scored 7 points to Dublin's one in the last ten minutes to record a five point victory and a place in the All Ireland Final. Before the day was over the challenge before them became bigger as our seniors lost which meant facing a Galway side in front of massive Galway support. As our minor footballers also qualified for the final seven days later, it really put serious pressure on both management teams and especially the eight dual players. Galway got the better start in the final cheered on by the growing support of maroon in the stands but Tipp quickly responded and that was the trend in the first half until the 18th minute when a failed clearance was whipped to the net by Galway's Brian Concannon. Tipp also had goal chances but Galway keeper Darragh Gilligan deprived both Gary Ryan and Cian Darcy with great saves. Tipp stayed in touch to be level at the break (1-7 to 0-10) and despite the goal we were well positioned at half time. The crucial period of the game came in a three minute spell between the 8th and 11th minute of the second half when Galway pounced for 2 goals and a pointed free in between. Tipp went from being one point down to eight down during this three minutes of madness. Tipp needed goals but this was never going to be easy as this Galway team had not conceded a green to date in their three games against Limerick and Kilkenny (twice). Tommy Nolan finally breached their rearguard in the 30th minute but it was too little too late as Galway cheered on by their growing support found the net for a fourth time in the 32nd minute to deservingly claim the Irish Press Cup and their tenth All Ireland title.

Losing an All Ireland Final is very disappointing especially when the team doesn't perform to its potential. Still a lot of progress has been made since failing miserably in 2014 and after an unconvincing start against Waterford in 2015. This was a well drilled Tipp minor team who also beat fancied Clare, Limerick and Dublin teams along the way. Jeffrey Lynskys's Galway side were just better on the day and their two games against Kilkenny really stood to them. Still Liam Cahill has made great strides since last year and the appointment of Mikey Bevans as coach was a master stroke. This pair along with selectors John Sheedy, Sean Corbett and TJ Ryan will remain in charge for 2016 as these are men on a mission and are driven with a passion to bring success to the Premier County.

Tipperary MH panel v Galway

Padraic Hayes Ballingarry, Enda Heffernan Clonoulty Rossmore, Emmet Moloney Drom & Inch, James Quigley Kildangan, Kevin Hassett Drom & Inch, Brian McGrath Loughmore Castleiney, Darragh Peters Kilruane MacDonaghs, Alan Tynan Roscrea, Liam McCutcheon Templederry Kenyons, Cian Darcy Kilruane MacDonaghs, Stephen Quirke Captain Moyle Rovers, Garry Ryan Borrisokane, Tommy Nolan Drom & Inch, David Gleeson Ballinahinch, Lyndon Fairbrother JK Brackens, Ruadhan Mulrooney Portroe, Jack Skehan Holycross Ballycahill, Michael Connors Drom & Inch, Shane Neville Lattin Cullen.

Tipperary Intermediate Hurling

| DATE | VENUE | TEAM | SCORE | TEAM | SCORE | REFEREE |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------|-------|-----------|-------|--------------|
| Munster Championship | | | | | | |
| Semi Final | | | | | | |
| 21/06/2015 | Gaelic Grounds | Limerick | 1.23 | Tipperary | 2.13 | Thomas Walsh |

Under the same management team of John Carroll (Roscrea), Sean O'Meara (Mullinahone), John Ryan (Upperchurch) and "Bricky" O'Neill (Cappawhite), the squad came together in April to prepare for a semi-final duel with Limerick who overcame Clare in the Quarter Final by two points. The panel included many experienced players from previous All Ireland winning Intermediate Hurling teams in 2012 & 2013 like Sean O'Brien, Tom Treacy, David and Michael Butler, Adrian Ryan etc. plus current senior extended panel members like Willie Ryan, Kieran Morris and Liam McGrath. Despite this experience and playing with the wind, it was Limerick who made all the running from the start and led by six points before Tipp had their first point. As we clawed our way back into the game we were hit with a sucker punch just before half time as Limerick full forward Tom Morrissey goaled leaving the score 1-10 to 0-07 at the break. Despite scoring two late goals in the second half from Kieran Morris and Liam McGrath, Tipp never got to the pace of the game and played second fiddle to Limerick all through. Limerick looked a well drilled team with a serious focus on this grade having been together for a much longer period than ourselves. Despite this Tipp's approach is very practical giving an opportunity to many current and future senior prospects. Unfortunately on this day very few lived up to expectations.

Tipperary IH v Limerick: Darragh Mooney (Eire Óg Anacarty), Sean O'Brien (Newport), Michéal Butler (Drom & Inch), Tom Treacy (Cappawhite), Brian Stapleton (Templederry Kenyons), John Coghlan (Moyné Templetuohy) Captain, Willie Ryan (Clonakenny), Liam Ryan (Drom & Inch), Daire Quinn (Nenagh Eire Óg), Paudie O'Dwyer (Eire Óg Anacarty), Kieran Morris (Moycarkey Borris), David Butler (Drom & Inch), Davin Flynn (Roscrea), Adrian Ryan (Templederry Kenyons), Liam McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney), Justin Cahill (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Alan Maloney (Rockwell Rovers), Kevin Fox (Eire Óg Anacarty), Joe Carroll (Roscrea), Matthew Ryan (Templederry), Sean Hickey (Sean Treacys), Tom Meade (Moyné Templetuohy), Odhran Floyd (Newport), Tony O'Brien (St. Patrick's).

Inter Co. Football 2015 Summary

The secretary of the football committee JJ Crowley gives a detailed account of the activity of our Inter –County football teams during 2015, so I will just give a short commentary on each.

Senior Football

On the management side the status quo remained with Cork native Peter Creedon at the helm for his third full year with Donegal's Mickey McGeehan Coach and Selectors Eoghan Cooney, Michael O'Loughlin and Tommy Toomey. Following challenge games in December 2014, Tipp faced Cork in the McGrath Cup Quarter Final, having boycotted this competition twelve months previously. The rebels came to Clonmel with a strong outfit but the home side put up a sterling performance. A Donnacha O'Connor penalty in the second half was the decisive score as Cork edged out winners by five points. Having gamed promotion from Division 4 Tipp faced the stand-out team in Division 3 three weeks later starting with an away fixture versus Kieran McGeaney's Armagh at the Athletic Grounds. The closing minutes of the game were full of incident and the comments by Manager Creedon on the referee's performance afterwards landed him in hot water and a sideline ban for the following game. Tipp led by two points at the end of normal time and Armagh levelled in the two minutes of signalled added time. Referee David Coldrick played a further minute during which Armagh Jamie Clarke scored the winning point. Other incidents that angered Creedon were the awarding of a dubious penalty to Armagh in the first half and the sending off of Robbie Kiely in the second half. One week later Tipp bounced back with a very impressive home victory by 12 points over Limerick. Confusion reigned over the venue for this fixture as the All Ireland club hurling semi-finals on Saturday fixed for Semple Stadium were transferred due to a frozen pitch and the football game was transferred to Templetuohy. Following a thaw by Saturday morning the football game was switched back to Semple much to the disappointment of the Moyné Templetuohy club who had put in a lot of work in preparation for it. Tipp footballers took full advantage of Semple and romped home to pick up their first brace of league points. Three weeks later it was another trip to Ulster, to Brewster Park to face Fermanagh who now had Peter McGrath in charge. Tipp matched the Erne men for most of the game but faded out in the final minutes to give Fermanagh a four point victory. Back to Semple six days later and Tipp looked very impressive with a six point victory over Clare. The following Sunday the long trip to Drogheda was fruitful as Tipp recorded their first away win and their third overall on a day when Tipp Hurlers were home to Kilkenny and Elverys / Intersport launched the new sponsorship. This win assured our Division 3 status for 2016 and maybe a place in the 2015 final if Armagh or Fermanagh slipped. Tipp had to keep winning to retain this hope and this they did two weeks later with a two point victory over Sligo in Semple Stadium which featured a potential serious neck injury to Colin O'Riordan - thankfully no spinal injury was revealed, but he did suffer concussion. As both the Northern Counties were now guaranteed promotion. Tipp's final game at home to Wexford was a "dead rubber" game the following week in Clonmel. Peter Creedon rested the six U21 players who were due to play Cork in the Munster Final the following Thursday. Despite leading by 8 points at half time, Tipp slumped to a three point defeat as David Power's "Model" team stormed into the game with the aid of the breeze in the second half. Regardless of this defeat Tipp can look back on a good league with the two games away to Armagh and Fermanagh the crucial defeats which cost us promotion and a place in the Croke Park final. Tipp had almost eight weeks to prepare for their Munster Championship Quarter Final with Waterford in Semple Stadium. Buoyed up by the performance of the U21s in reaching the All Ireland Final, Tipp faced the Decies full of confidence with Colin O'Riordan, Steven O'Brien, Kevin O'Halloran, Jason Lonergan and Evan Comerford available from that team. While Waterford always put up stubborn resistance in recent years, it was not to be this year as against the wind Tipp dominated and had 1-13 on the scoreboard by half time, the goal coming from the fist of Michael Quinlivan. As Steven O'Brien picked up six points from mid-field, Tipp scored 1-21 from play and cruised home to qualify for a home semi-final with Kerry. Sunday June 14th the Kingdom came to Semple Stadium and the magnetism of the All Ireland champions drew over 11,000 to Thurles compared to 1,648 for the Waterford game two weeks earlier. Apart from the Kerry attraction, Tipp's U21 championship performance coupled with a promising league campaign drew

plenty of Premier support apart from the Kingdom day trippers. Tipp got the start they wanted and led 1-02 to 0-01 after ten minutes, the goal coming from Michael Quinlivan in the 4th minute. Wides and errors prevented Tipp from increasing their lead but the Kingdom gradually got into their stride and goals by Barry John Keane and Paul Geaney put them in the driving seat. Quinlivan goaled again for Tipp before half time but the signs were fairly ominous at the break even though Tipp only trailed by two points 2-06 to 2-04. Kerry kicked on in the second half and could afford to bring on an All Star bench which included such household names as James O'Donoghue, Aidan O'Mahoney, Darren O'Sullivan and Tommy Walsh. Tipp struggled with injuries to Ian Fahey (during the warm-up), George Hannigan, Robbie Kiely and Colin O'Riordan, but despite this they battled to the end against the All Ireland champions who were so clinical in their finishing. A six point Kerry victory was well deserved as Tipp faced into Round 2 of the qualifiers and drew Louth in another home game at Semple one month later. The game on July 11th was the first part of a triple bill in Semple Stadium as it was followed by two hurling qualifiers, Dublin v Limerick and Clare v Cork. This was a very different Louth line up than the one we defeated by eight points in Round 5 of the League in March. Tipp were weakened with George Hannigan (out for the year), Steven O'Brien, Ian Fahey and Brian Fox all injured. Despite a competitive start, a Ger Mulhaire goal in the first few minutes was a sign of things to come as the floodgates opened and Tipp ran out easy winners by 23 points. Just one week later Tipperary faced the toughest possible opposition in Tyrone and following the controversial U21 final in May this game was much anticipated. Colin O'Riordan and Kevin O'Halloran were also involved in U21 hurling championship versus Limerick just two days before the game. For the fourth championship game in a row this year Tipp were at home in Semple Stadium and a decent 4,600 spectators came to watch. Tipp competed well in the first half and were only one point down (0-07 to 0-06) at the break but the massive effort in trying to penetrate the Tyrone blanket defence took its toll on a tired Colin O'Riordan and an injured Steven O'Brien. The second half was all Tyrone and they outscored Tipp 0-12 to 0-01 as our discipline fell apart with Liam Casey red carded for stamping, Ciaran McDonald black carded and a further seven yellows to Premier players. This was not in the script as many supporters saw this as our first chance to take a big scalp and make a statement that we had arrived at the top table. Unfortunately it was a disappointing exit for Manager Peter Creedon who stepped down after the game. Peter ruled over a very successful ascendancy period in Tipp football since his arrival mid-season in 2012. Since then he has propelled Tipp to Division 3 and progressed through the qualifiers each year. He leaves Tipp senior footballers in a healthy position and we were privileged to have such a shrewd manager at the helm during very important development years following successful Minor and U21 campaigns. We thank him sincerely and wish him well in his new professional position as Principal at C olaiste Dun Iascaigh.

Tipperary U21 Football

The Senior Football Management agreed to bring the U21s under their wing with Tommy Toomey as manager and it proved a very successful formula. With 11 of the 19 players used in the 2014 campaign and 8 on the current senior panel this looked a promising outfit. Five games in the Hastings Cup was ideal preparation despite playing with weakened sides as players were involved with U21 club championship and Sigerson Cup. The Shield final of the Hastings was a real wake up call for Tipp as we suffered a ten point defeat to Kerry in St. Patrick's GAA Field Limerick just four weeks before the championship. Our opponents in the Munster semi-Final were Clare who had already defeated Waterford in a Quarter Final. Played in Semple Stadium Tipp started well but found it hard to shake off a spirited Banner side until the last fifteen minutes when we pulled away for an eight point victory. Cork were our opponents once again in the Munster Final and they were chasing their fifth title in a row having been successful over Tipp in the 2013 and 2014 deciders. Back in Semple Stadium before 2,000 spectators Tipp dictated from the start and led by 0.08 to 0.04 coming up to half time but were caught by two Cork goals on both sides of the break by their big full forward Peter Kelleher. But Tipp showed their true fighting spirit by working their way back and aided by an Ian Fahey goal on the 45th minute they led by five points going into the final minutes. A Cork goal and point had every one on the edge of their seats in the closing stages but Tipp held on helped by Kevin O'Halloran's accuracy from frees to win by that one solitary point. A jubilant captain Colin O'Riordan raised the Corn Na C asca for Tipp's 2nd Munster title in six years. Colin played a captain's part despite concussion following a knock eleven days earlier versus Sligo in the league. As Tipp entered bonus territory they faced reigning All Ireland Champions Dublin nine days later in Tullamore. Despite competing well Tipp trailed by 0.07 to 0.03 at half time and the Dubs extended this to a five point lead immediately after the break. This was when Tipp really knuckled down and showed real fighting spirit. With Colin and Steven dominating mid-field it formed a platform to break down the Dublin defence and they were pegged back gradually point by point. The final two scores from O'Brien and O'Halloran gave Tipp victory by two points and a place in the All Ireland final for the first time in history. The final versus Tyrone was fixed for Navan but the Croke Park Safety committee ruled it out due to unsafe floodlight masts so despite objections from Tipp the game was played in Parnell Park. They day will be remembered for many unfortunate things including a double medical emergency which delayed the start of the second half by over half an hour. One of these resulted in the death of Dom Browne a great Tipperary Supporter from Knockavilla. Tipp set the pace in the first half against the wind as Tyrone wasted scoring opportunities. At half time the Premier led by 0.07 to 0.05 but the unfortunate 40 minute delay broke our momentum especially as our players had returned to the field only to eventually be sent back to the dressing room. When the second half finally got under way Tyrone looked to get the upper hand and were back on level terms within ten minutes of the restart. Three long range frees by Kevin O'Halloran over the next five minutes only yielded one point as the other two hit the crossbar and shaved the upright. The crucial score came in the 15th minute when Cathal McShane goaled at the end of a good Tyrone passing movement. The Northerner's then went into their customary defensive mode but led by Captain, Colin O'Riordan who scored two magnificent points Tipp reduced the lead to one point with three minutes to go. This period plus the added four minutes were full of drama but unfortunately all negative for us. An Ian Fahey goal was disallowed for a foul on the keeper. Then Tyrone used up almost a minute making a substitution and a yellow card on a Tyrone defender for a foul on Ian Fahey did not reverse a free out almost on the final whistle. These incidents left a very sour taste in the mouths of Tipperary people present. The heroic performance of this Tipperary U21 Football team was lost in the controversy that raged in the week following this game. Our three senior games against Northern oppositions and this U21 final, has definitely thought us a harsh lesson on how we must prepare for these games. With 18 of the panel underage in 2016 this will give many of these players an opportunity to bounce back but they will be without Colin O'Riordan whose wonderful football talents have exposed him to a professional opportunity in Australia. We wish him the best of luck and hope his dreams are fulfilled down under.

Tipperary Minor Football

Charlie McGeever was entering his third year in charge with the same management team and with Michael O'Sullivan added as coach and Michael Power (Newcastle) included in the backroom setup. The team included over half of the 2014 starting line up and was captained by Danny Owens (Moyle Rovers). Waterford was the opening game in a quarter final at Semple Stadium which Tipp, after going behind in the first half eventually won convincingly. One month later after the Losers Group was played out we met a fancied Clare side and Tipp rung the changes with a whole new full forward line. Level at half time it was Clare who set the pace in the second half and led by two points in the closing minutes. But Tipp finished strong and new boy Kilsheelan's Brendan Martin got the winning point in added time to reach our seventh Munster Final in ten years. Almost two months later after exams, Tipp faced All Ireland Champions Kerry on their own Killarney patch. Without the injured Stephen Quirke but with Alan Tynan back on the team, Tipp now were up to ten dual players who were involved in both Munster Finals. With a 12 noon start in Fitzgerald Stadium, the team had to overnight in Tralee but our backs were still asleep in the early stages as Kerry walked through for two goals in the first 15 minutes which put us on the back foot. Despite being nine points down Tipp fought bravely and contained the Kingdom and an Aidan Buckley goal in the closing minutes kept the score respectable. Jack O'Connor's Kerry won the trophy but Charlie McGeever's team advanced with them and faced Connacht champions Galway in the All Ireland Quarter Final one month later in Tullamore. There was very little between these teams and an Alan Tynan goal late in the second half was the crucial score to drive the Premier side to victory and a semi-final date with Leinster Champions Kildare in Croke Park. Kildare had beaten Dublin in the Leinster Semi, beat Longford by nine points in the final and accounted for Cavan in the All Ireland Quarter Final. Tipp's minor hurlers were already in the final so nine dual players were facing an extremely busy period. Nothing separated Tipp and Kildare in the first half and they went in six points each at half time. Stephen Quirke made his first appearance during the first half after two months out through injury. With Jack Kennedy in sparkling form securing "Man of the Match" Tipp finished the stronger and despite missing goal chances they did enough to win by two points and gain a place in the All Ireland Final. Once again as in the Munster Final we faced the Kingdom in their second home Croke Park. Our minor hurlers had already fallen in their final so it was down to the minor footballers to make it third time lucky as our U21 footballers were first to lose their final back in May. A two day camp in St. Patricks Thurles bonded the team the weekend before the final as they refocused the hurlers and commenced to build momentum for the biggest day in the football calendar. The game commenced with Kerry dominating the mid-field area as Mark O'Connor went on to give a man of the match performance. Tipp managed to stay in touch and only trailed 0-04 to 0-02 after 17 minutes but the floodgates opened over the next five minutes as the Kingdom scored 2.02 including a penalty. Alan Tynan tried to rally the team with two good points but the writing was on the wall by half time as we trailed 2.08 to 0.04. Kerry's dominance continued and they scored another goal shortly after the restart followed by a second from the penalty spot. Tipp only managed two points in the second period and failed to score in the final 18 minutes as Kerry went on to lift the Tommy Markham Cup and won their thirteenth minor football title. It was a disappointing end to a year which promised a lot having reached three All Ireland Finals but this Tipp minor football team were only beaten by one team in the land and can boast on beating two Provincial champions on their way to the final. Charlie McGeever stepped down as Minor Manager after three years in charge. He was meticulous in his preparations and brought a very professional approach to the organisation of our minor football team. He will continue to be actively involved in Gaelic Football with his adopted Commercial club and no doubt will return again to Inter County Management in the future.

Tipperary Junior Football

As in 2014, the management of the junior football team was shared with U21 manager Tommy Toomey taking the reins and assisted by Eoghan Cooney with Anthony Shelly (JK Brackens) added. The team was a good blend of youth and experience with senior panel fringe players aided by others off the U21 Inter Co. Squad. It was very much a development squad with only four extra players brought in from outside existing panels. The first round / quarter final v Waterford was played as a curtain raiser to the senior game in Semple Stadium on May 31st. The Decies opened brightly but Tipp led by Aldo Matassa were resisting the pressure. The real hero of the match was keeper Gearoid Slattery who saved two penalties on both sides of half time. A Dean Lonergan goal in the 46th minute clinched it for Tipp despite Waterford getting a late goal in the dying minutes as it finished with a three point win for the Premier. This win gave the team another curtain raiser to the seniors and a double date with Kerry at Semple Stadium on June 14th. The Kingdom controlled the first half and led 1.14 to 0.05 at half time but a Dean McEnroe goal after the break gave Tipp the lead for the only time in the game. Kerry responded with five unanswered points and a goal by former minor Dan O'Donoghue confirmed their dominance as they went on to claim an eight point victory. The game was held up for a lengthy spell in the first half following a clash of heads between Alan O'Riordan (Tipp) and Tadhg Morley (Kerry) but fortunately both players did not suffer serious injury. County Boards policy in combining this grade with the Seniors and / or U21s should be continued as it gives extra exposure to fringe players and allows senior selectors an opportunity to develop them with the existing structure.

The following is a month by month record of the year since October 2014;

MONTH BY MONTH

November 2014

- **Freddie Quinn RIP (Ardfinnan)** died in October 2014. Apart from being a staunch Ardfinnan clubman he was a great Tipp Football Supporter and rarely missed a Tipp game in the company of his great friend and colleague Pete Savage.
- **Liam O'Dwyer RIP (Boherlahan Dualla)** proudly represented Tipperary at Munster Council for many years.
- **John McLoughney RIP (Clonakenny)** died in late 2014 whilst still Vice-Chairman of the Mid Board. He also served as Mid Referees Co-Ordinator and was club Chairman for 20 years.



John McLoughney

December 2014

- Tom Dawson (Eire Óg Anacarty) a native of Granard, Co. Longford took over as Co. Bórd na nÓg Chairperson replacing Joe Kennedy who went on to chair the Mid Tipperary Senior Board.
- Michael Bourke (Upperchurch Drombane) succeeded Sean Nugent as Chairman of Tipperary Co. Board.
- Tipperary Hurling legend Liam Devaney was inducted into the Munster Hall of Fame and the Mullins Brothers of Clonmel won the handball award.
- The Arravale Rovers Co. Senior Football title winners of 1985 were honoured by Tipperary Co. Board at a reception in Ballykisteen Hotel.
- Brian Boyle (Drom & Inch) took over as Tipperary Senior Camogie Manager.
- Dan Kennedy (Roscrea) was elected Chairman of North Tipperary Board and Michael Flynn (Kildangan) became the new Vice Chairman.
- The Jim Madden Leadership programme was launched in Croke Park by the GPA in honour of the late Jim Madden Portroe supported by his son Michael Madden and the Madden family.
- Nenagh Eire Óg launched "Gaelic Sport in Nenagh" a history of the GAA in the town of Nenagh.
- Steven Carty (Kilruane McDonaghs) was honoured by the Tipperary Hurling club New York as their club person of the Year.
- In the December Tipperary GAA Draw held in Nolan's Lounge, Castleiney, Liam Robinson won the Skoda Octavia whilst Fernvalley Transport Cahir won the 2nd Prize of €10,000.
- **Patrick "Devere" Reynolds** RIP (Nenagh Eire Óg & New York) passed away during December 2014. "Devere" played centre back on the Tipperary Minor Hurling All Ireland winning team of 1956-57. He emigrated to USA in 1961 and was a major loss to Nenagh Eire Óg and Tipperary. I had the honour of meeting "Devere" during our "Gathering" visit to New York in 2013.

January 2015

- Tipp Senior Football lost out to Cork in the McGrath Cup Quarter Final 1-14 to 0-12 in Clonmel.
- Loughmore Castleiney claimed the 2014 Co. U21 "A" hurling title defeating Kildangan 1-08 to 0-10.
- Moyle Rovers followed up their 2014 Co. Minor Hurling title with victory over Cappawhite / Treacys by 1-14 to 0-15 to also claim the 2014 Co. U21 Hurling "B" title.
- Following victory over Mary I in the Waterford Crystal Pre Round, Tipp fell to Clare in the Quarter Final at Sixmilebridge 0-16 to 0-15.
- The January Tipperary GAA Draw was held in Robinsons Bar Kilsheelan and the star prizes went to Thomas Stakelum Holycross Ballycahill (€15k) and Martin Hickey Cahir (€10k).
- **Johnson Lyons RIP (Grangemockler)**; owner of The Trap Bar passed away during January after a long illness. Apart from his dedication to Ballyneale-Grangemockler as a player, mentor and officer, he was a great supporter of Tipperary GAA fund-raising including the Tipperary GAA Draw and he sponsored many events.
- **Tomas O'Baróid RIP (Thurles Sarsfields)**; long serving Tipperary Co. Secretary passed away at the age of 90. Tomás served as Rúnaí of Coiste Chontae Thiobraid Árann for 37 years, secretary of his club, Thurles Sarsfields, for 12 years and also as a Trustee of the GAA for 3 years. He was one of the founders of Féile na nGael in 1971 and gave a lifetime of outstanding service to the Association, county and games that he loved passionately. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam uasal.

**Tommy Barrett****February 2015**

- Following defeat to Armagh (away) in the Allianz Football League first Round Tipp bounced back to defeat Limerick convincingly.
- Tipperary U21F team lost the Hastings Cup Shield Final to Kerry 3-09 to 0-08 at St. Patrick's Limerick.
- Tipp Senior Hurling suffered a heavy defeat to Dublin 2-20 to 0-14 at Parnell Park in the Allianz League Round 1 but bounced back the following Sunday to defeat Galway in Semple Stadium 2-18 to 0-20.
- Thurles CBS won their 8th Harty Cup beating St. Francis College Rochestown by 2-12 to 1-12 in Mallow.
- In the February GAA Draw held in The Thatch Bar, Ballycahill, Timmy Ryan Ballina won the first prize of €15k and the second prize of a Skoda Fabia went to Michael Ryan (JC) Cappawhite.
- Most Reverend Kieran O'Reilly was installed as Archbishop of Cashel & Emly and later confirmed as the new patron of the GAA.
- Ciaran Byrne JK Brackens won the Scór Na nÓg All Ireland Scéalafocht title at the finals held in the City West. Loughmore Castleiney quiz team were a respectable fifth in their competition out of 29 Counties.
- **Martin Dwan RIP (Drom & Inch)** who passed away during February was well known as a steward in the enclosure area at Semple Stadium. He was a proud Drom man and he attended every Munster and All Ireland Final from 1950 to 2014.
- **Jackie Condon RIP (Fr. Sheehy's;)** died in February 2015 and apart from his club activity he will be remembered for being on the Fr. Sheehy's Quiz team who won the All Ireland Senior Scór for Tipperary in 1978 along with Dinny Lonergan and John Clohessy.

March 2015

- Tipp SF lost to Fermanagh in Enniskillen thus ruling out promotion but kept the pressure on the two northern Counties by following up with victories over Clare at home 2-11 to 1-08, Louth away 4-16 to 3-11, and Sligo at home 0-15 to 0-13.
- Tipp SH followed up their victory over Galway with a 2-19 to 0-20 defeat of Clare in Cusack Park followed by a convincing 2-22 to 1-13 win over Kilkenny in Semple Stadium and a dramatic 2-28 to 4-21 victory over Cork in Páirc Ui Rinn. In the League Quarter Final Tipp beat Offaly 1-16 to 0-13 in Tullamore.
- Tipperary Co. Referees Committee recruit and train up 24 new referees.
- Elvery's / Intersport are announced as the new Tipperary GAA sponsor and a new Tipp jersey is launched in Hayes Hotel before the Tipp v Kilkenny game.
- Tipp U21 Footballers commenced their 2015 campaign with a convincing 0-15 to 0-07 victory over Clare in the Munster semi-

- final in Semple Stadium to qualify for a final date with Cork.
- In the March Tipp GAA Draw held in "Johnsie's Bar" Toem, Cappawhite, Ballybacon-Grange's James Moran won the Skoda Octavia (€15k) and Mullinahone's Breda Ryan won the Skoda Fabia (€10k).
 - **Gay O'Connell RIP (Arravale Rovers)**; was a dedicated Arravale Rovers worker and she assisted her husband Jimmy as club secretary, treasurer, draw co-ordinator. She made sure there was always a warm welcome for everyone at the O'Connell home in Garryskillane, Tipp Town.
 - **Tommy "Senator" Murphy RIP (Carrick Davins)**; who passed away during March won many honours as a player with club and County and the 1966 Co. Senior Hurling title with Davins was a special memory. He later served as a selector with Tipperary Junior and Intermediate hurling teams.
 - **Rita Clohessy RIP (Moycarkey Borris)**; died during March and Moycarkey Borris GAA Club and Tipperary GAA lost one of its most efficient club officers. She served as club secretary for many years and was club treasurer at the time of her untimely death.
 - **Tony Reddin RIP (Lorrha-Dorrha)**; died on March 2nd and he will always be remembered as a true legend of Tipperary Hurling. He joined the Tipp panel in 1949 and for the next nine years his performances between the posts for the Premier County earned him immortal status and he still remains arguably the greatest ever hurling goalkeeper to this day. He won 3 All Ireland Senior Hurling medals, 3 Munster, 6 National Leagues, 5 Railway Cups and 1 Oireachtas. Tony was named the GAA's hurling goalkeeper of the Century in 1984 and on the Hurling team of the Millennium in 2000.



Tony Reddin

April 2015

- Tipperary SF completed their 2015 Allianz League campaign with a 2-15 to 2-12 defeat by Wexford in a "dead rubber" game in Clonmel.
- Tipperary U21 Football team won the Eirgrid Munster Final by beating Cork at Semple Stadium 1-15 to 3-08. Bill Maher won the Man of the Match award. They followed this with a historic victory over Dublin 0-14 to 0-12 in Tullamore to qualify for their first ever All Ireland Final.
- Tipperary Senior hurlers lost the Allianz League semi-final to Waterford 1-19 to 2-15 in Nowlan Park.
- Tipperary Minor Footballers defeated Waterford 2-16 to 1-07 in the Munster Quarter Final in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary MH team got over the first hurdle beating Waterford 1-14 to 0-16 in the Munster Quarter Final.
- Thurles CBS lost to St. Kierans 1-12 to 1-15 in the Masita All Ireland PP Schools Final in Semple Stadium.
- Abbey CBS lost to St. Mary's Carlow in the All Ireland Post Primary Schools "B" football final 1-14 to 3-03 in Croke Park.
- The County rallied behind county senior hurler Noel McGrath when it became known he was receiving treatment for testicular cancer from which he thankfully made a complete recovery.
- In the April Tipp GAA Draw held in The Glenview Lounge, Goatbridge, Killenaule's Bob Hall won the €15k star prize whilst Knockavilla Kickhams Tom Comerford won €10k. The biggest ever Tipperary GAA lotto jackpot prize of €20k was won by Denis Parker Nenagh Éire Óg.
- Scór enthusiasts were celebrating two All Ireland Senior Scór wins in the City West as Noel Joyce JK Brackens won his second recitation title whilst Newport's were successful in Instrumental music.
- **Denis Mulcahy RIP (Kildangan)**; died during April after a lifetime of service to the GAA. He laid many of the foundations for the current success of Kildangan GAA Club and served as Chairman to North and County Bórd na nÓg.

May 2015

- Tipperary U21 footballers fell short in the All Ireland final in Parnell Park losing to Tyrone in a controversial finish by 1-11 to 0-13.
- Friends of Tipperary Football launched "Smart Lotto" as a fundraiser to support Tipp Football.
- Jim Fogarty launched "The Cross of Cashel", a history of All Ireland U21 hurling finals 1964 to 2014.
- Tipp Minor Footballers reached the Munster Final following a 0-16 to 2-09 victory over Clare in Semple Stadium.
- The Munster SH championship got off the ground with Limerick defeating Clare in Semple Stadium and qualified to meet Tipperary in the Semi-final.
- Skoda retained their links with Tipperary by sponsoring two Yeti Sherpa Kit Vans.
- Tipperary Supporters club hosted very successful Golf Classics at Dundrum House Hotel and Edmonstown Gold Club Dublin.
- Tipperary SF qualified for the Munster semi-final with a convincing 1-24 to 0-05 victory over Waterford at Semple Stadium.
- Tipp's Junior footballers also defeated Waterford 1-12 to 1-09.
- Tipperary Co. Board hosted its second Team Tipperary fund-raiser in London's West End at the Intercontinental Hotel. Special guests included Eoin Kelly, Declan Browne, Mick Ryan, Eamon Corcoran and Paul Collins.
- **Dom Browne RIP (Knockavilla Kickhams)**; died at the All Ireland U21 Football Final in Parnell Park watching football and the Tipperary team he loved so much. He travelled to all games on the Friends of Football supporters bus having given a lifetime of service to his beloved Kickhams Club.

June 2015

- Tipperary Co. Board launched its 28th Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw with Hayes Hotel the venue for the May Draw. The Star Prize of Skoda Superb or €25k went to Moycarkey Borris John Costelloe and the Skoda Fabia was won by Nora O'Grady Loughmore Castleiney. In the same month the June draw was held in Corcoran's Bar, Two Mile Borris and Brian Gentles (Clonmel Óg) won the Skoda Octavia whilst Catriona Kirby Solohead won €10k.
- Tipp Senior Hurlers played their best hurling in a while as they broke the Limerick bogey by defeating them 4-23 to 1-16 in the Gaelic Grounds.
- Tipp Intermediate Hurlers lost heavily to Limerick in the curtain raiser at the Gaelic Grounds by 1-23 to 2-13.
- Tipp Minor Hurlers progressed with a 1-15 to 1-11 victory over Clare in Semple Stadium and qualified for the Munster Final.
- Over 11,000 supporters arrived in Semple Stadium as All Ireland champions Kerry proved too good for Tipp with the score

line 2-14 to 2-08 and confined the Premier to the Qualifiers.

- Tipp Junior Footballers exited the championship 2-13 to 1-08 at the hands of Kerry in the curtain raiser to the Senior at Semple Stadium.
- Tipp footballer Colin O'Riordan was named the Eirgrid GAA U21 football player of the Year for 2015 whilst Steven O'Brien picked up the Opel GAA GPA player of the month for May.
- In the Tipperary Long Puck Finals held on the Galtee Mountains, Michael Flannery (Newport) won the senior competition and Evan Murphy (Nenagh Éire Óg) won the U16.
- Friends of Tipperary Football staged their annual Mr. Mister Golf Classic in Thurles Golf Club and 80 teams took part.
- "Tom Semple and the Thurles Blues" written by Liam O'Donnchú was launched in the Sarsfields Social Centre.
- **Fr. Ray Reidy RIP**; passed away during June. He played centre back on Tipp Minor Hurling teams for three years being captain on the victorious third year in 1955. He played on the Tipp Senior teams 1956 to 1960 and won one All Ireland medal in 1958. He was also on the great Thurles Sarsfields teams in the late 50s and early 60s but his priestly commitments with the Kiltegan Missionary Society curtailed his availability. He served as a Tipp Senior Hurling selector in the 1980s. His sister Ann (who died just one month later) was married to the late John Doyle.
- **Jimmy Doyle RIP (Thurles Sarsfields)**; died unexpectedly on Monday June 22nd and sent shock waves through the GAA world. He was regarded as a hurling wizard and a GAA legend but always very humble and a true gentleman. His peers described him as a "genius" and an "artist" and "the greatest of them all". He won three All Ireland MH medals in 1955/56/57, six All Ireland SH medals, nine Munster titles, seven National Leagues, eight Railway Cups and ten County Senior titles with Thurles Sarsfields plus the Texaco Hurler of the Year in 1965. He captained Tipp to all Ireland titles in 1962 and '65 and he was named at right full forward on the team of the Century in 1984 and the Hurling team of the Millennium in 2000. Thurles Town Council honoured him in 2012 by opening the "Jimmy Doyle Road" which leads right up to Semple Stadium.



Fr Ray Reidy



Jimmy Doyle

July 2015

- Tipp lost to Kerry in the Munster Minor Football Final in Killarney by 2-14 to 1-11 having conceded two goals in the first quarter.
- Drom & Inch captured the Johnny Ryan Cup with victory over Clonoulty Rossmore in the Co. Senior Hurling Challenge Cup Final.
- Tipperary SH captured their 41st Munster title with a 0-21 to 0-16 victory over Waterford at Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary MH captured their 38th Munster title in the curtain raiser at Semple Stadium with victory over Limerick 0-02 to 0-17.
- Tipperary SF advanced in the All Ireland qualifiers with victory over Louth in Semple Stadium 3-21 to 0-07. One week later again in Semple Stadium Tipp made their exit from the championship at the hands of Tyrone 0-19 to 0-07.
- Upperchurch Drombane won the Jim Devitt Cup by defeating Kilruane McDonaghs 0-19 to 1-13 in the Co. Senior Hurling Challenge Cup Final.
- Tipperary U21 hurlers campaign came to an abrupt end in the Munster Semi following defeat at the hands of Limerick in the Gaelic Grounds 3-16 to 3-14. Manager TJ Connolly and his management team stepped down following the defeat.
- The July GAA Draw was held in the Clonmel Óg Clubhouse and the lucky winners of the big prizes were Margaret Stanley Roscrea (Skoda Octavia) and Alice Hayes Knockavilla (€10k).
- Tipperary Co. Board hosted a fundraising race day at the Galway Races on Monday July 27th and almost 400 supporters attended.
- **Mickey Buckley RIP (Cashel King Cormacs)**; who died during July played for Tipperary Minor Hurlers in the 1949 All Ireland Final and attended every All Ireland Final afterwards, up to 2011.
- **John Vaughan RIP (Mullinahone)**; always brought a light hearted atmosphere to County Board meetings with his little anecdotes and stories. He was Mullinahone's County Board delegate for 24 years and was renowned as a commentator and story teller.
- **Fr. Paudie Moloughney RIP (Moycarkey Borris)**; passed away during July after a long battle with cancer. Despite being a missionary in far off fields like Brazil and Nigeria he was a great ambassador for Tipperary GAA and sported the Blue & Gold at every opportunity with pride.
- **Billy Ryan (Murray) RIP (Borris-ileigh)**; who passed away in July served as North Board Chairman during the late 1990s and up to recently was on the County Hearings Committee. He was well known as a salesman for the Gleeson Group Borrisoleigh.

August 2015

- Tipperary's 2015 SH dream came to an end as we lost to Galway 0-26 to 3-16 at Croke Park in the All Ireland semi-final despite a man of the match performance from Seamus Callanan who scored 3-09.
- Tipperary MH advanced to the All Ireland final with a 2-17 to 1-15 win over Dublin in the curtain raiser at Croke Park.
- Tipperary Co. Board hosted a County fixtures forum in LIT Thurles at which club delegates aired their views.
- The story of the Late Jimmy Doyle "The Boy Wonder of Hurling " was launched at the Sarsfields Centre Thurles by GAA president Aogan O'Fearghail.
- Tipperary's MF team join the MH in a double appearance as they defeated Kildare 0-11 to 0-09 to reach the All Ireland MF Final.
- Moyne Templetuohey won the James Holohan Cup with victory over Boherlahan Dualla 3-18 to 1-15 in the challenge cup final.
- Nenagh Éire Óg claimed the Dr. Fogarty Cup as they defeated Mullinahone by 4-33 to 2-14 in the Challenge Cup Final.
- Tipperary GAA's August Draw took place in Phelan's Bar Roscrea and the top prizes went to William & Eleanor Devaney Newcastle (€15k) and Joe Kennedy Moyne Templetuohey (Skoda Fabia).
- **Billy Sweeney RIP (Moyne Templetuohey)**; who passed away in August was a mentor with Tipperary Intermediate Hurling teams and played a leading role when they won the All Ireland Final in 1989.

September 2015

- The first part of a historic minor double failed to materialise as Tipp Minor Hurlers fell to Galway in the All Ireland Final in Croke Park by 4-13 to 1-16.
- Two weeks later Tipp Minor footballers suffered a similar fate in their All Ireland Final losing to Kerry as the Kingdom inflicted an even heavier defeat than the Munster Final with a 4-14 to 0-06 defeat at Croke Park.
- Johnny Ryan (Boherlahan Dualla) refereed the All Ireland U21 hurling final Limerick v Wexford in Semple Stadium.
- Borris-ileigh "7's" had a double on All Ireland weekend as their seniors won the Kilmacud Final beating Loughmore Castleiney 10-07 to 5-12 claiming their sixth title. The Borris-ileigh Juniors also won the St. Judes's "7's" defeating Abbeyknockmoy Galway 3-06 to 2-05. On the same day Sean Treacys Tipperary won the Junior "7's" shield beating Warwickshire.
- At the September GAA draw in Nugent's Bar Newcastle the star prize of €15,000 went to Michael Meaney Ballyporeen whilst the €10,000 prize was won by Pauline O'Connor Borrisoleigh.
- Jimmy Finn Borris-ileigh (All Ireland 1951 Captain) was honoured by the GPA with the "Lifetime Achievement Award" for hurling at their annual former players event in Croke Park.
- Divisional Senior Football finals were held throughout the County with Loughmore Castleiney winning Mid, Arravale Rovers winning West and Kilsheelan Kilcash surprising all by defeating Commercials to win the South.
- A "Night at the Dogs" was held in Thurles Greyhound Stadium for the "Eddie Connolly Trust Fund" and a massive crowd turned up to pay tribute to the former Loughmore Castleiney and Tipperary player who passed away the previous day.
- **Eddie Connolly RIP (Loughmore Castleiney)**; passed away in September following a two year battle with cancer. Eddie represented Tipp at all grades in both hurling and football and was captain of the All Ireland winning intermediate hurling team in 2012. Remarkably he returned to wear the club colours in October 2014 when his beloved Loughmore Castleiney booked their place in the County final.



Eddie Connolly

October 2015

- Michael Breen (Ballina) was named on the Bórd Gáis U21 hurling team of the year at corner back.
- The Tipperary GAA Draw was held in Stapleton's Bar, Borrisoleigh and Grangemockler Ballyneale's Stephen John Burns won the €15k star prize whilst the €10k second prize went overseas to John Kissane with the Tipperary Hurling Club New York.
- Colin O'Riordan (JK Brackens) signed a two year contract with Sydney Swans, Australia as an International Category "B" Rookie.
- Clonmel Commercials captured the County SF title with victory over Moyle Rovers 1-02 to 3-05 at Semple Stadium. Seamus Kennedy received the Man of the Match award. Two weeks later they got over the first Munster hurdle with a 0-12 to 1-07 victory over Newcastlewest in Clonmel following a great comeback.
- Roscrea won the Co. Junior Hurling "A" title beating Clonoulty Rossmore 1-17 to 2-12 at the Ragg.
- Thurles Sarsfields retained the Dan Breen Cup following a 1-18 to 3-11 victory over Nenagh Éire Óg in the Co. Senior Hurling Final at Semple Stadium. Stephen Cahill also won two in a row Co. Final Man of the Match awards.
- Clonakenny claimed the Jacksie Ryan Cup as they won the Co. Intermediate Hurling title for the first time in 48 years by 2-13 to 3-09 in a thrilling curtain raiser on Co. Hurling Final day at Semple Stadium. Their centre forward John Costigan won the "Man of the Match" award. The Clonakenny dream continued as they overcame Portlaw (Waterford) 1-17 to 1-13 in the Quarter Final at Templetuohy but the dream came to an end in the Semi Final as they lost to Newcestown Cork by one point 0-14 to 0-13 in Cloughduv.
- Clonmel Commercials won the Co. U21F "A" title by defeating Loughmore Castleiney 0-16 to 2-08 in Golden.
- Upperchurch Drombane captured the Co. Intermediate Football title with victory over Clonmel Óg in New Inn 2-07 to 0-11 but fell to St. Mary's Cahirciveen 2-12 to 1-10 after a brave effort in Cashel.
- Golden Kilfeacle won the Co. Junior Football "A" title defeating Emly 2-08 to 1-06 in Lattin but were beaten by Bandon 0-14 to 0-07 at Cashel in the Munster Club Championship.
- Tipperary were beaten by Clare in the U17F Daryl Darcy Cup Final 1-11 to 1-10 at the Gaelic Grounds in Limerick.
- Ballylooby Castlegrace represented Tipp in the Munster Junior hurling but fell to Ennistymon 2-08 to 1-09 in the Quarter Final.
- Brendan Cummins launched his autobiography "Standing My Ground" in the Dome, Thurles.
- **Jackie Griffen RIP (Thurles Sarsfields)**; was tragically killed in a road accident outside Thurles on October 31st. Jackie was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Defence Forces and was trainer and selector with the Thurles Sarsfields team that won the Senior Hurling title just seven days earlier. His death was a devastating blow to the Army, Thurles Sarsfields GAA Club and especially his wife Trish and three children.
- **Bobby Mockler RIP (Thurles Sarsfields)**; passed away during October. He played on the very successful Sarsfields team of the 60's and captained the 1963 team that captured the Dan Breen. He won a National League medal with Tipp in 1957 and travelled to the USA with the team that year. In recent years he took great pride in maintaining the pitch surface in Semple Stadium. Today his son Jim speaks very proudly of the achievements of Bobby during his lifetime.

November 2015

- Seamus Callanan was Tipp's sole All Star in 2015 and he received his award at the Convention Centre Dublin
- At the November GAA Draw held in The Lisadobber Bar, Ballyneale, Newport's Dermot Boland won €15k whilst Mullinahone's John O'Halloran won the second prize of a Skoda Fabia or €10k.
- Tipperary Senior Hurlers Conor O'Mahony, Shane McGrath, James Woodlock and Lar Corbett all announced their retirement from Inter Co-Hurling.
- Thurles Sarsfields battled with emotions following the tragic death of Jackie Griffen, as their Munster Club Semi-Final v Na Piarasaigh was postponed for one week. Despite a good first half they eventually lost to the Limerick side by 2-15 to 0-17 at the Gaelic Grounds.

- Eire Óg Anacarty captured the Co. Junior Hurling “B” title with a 1-16 to 0-11 victory over Newport in Lattin.
- Clonmel Commercials continued their good form by defeating St. Joseph’s Clare 1-13 to 0-03 in Clonmel and qualified for the Munster Final v Nemo Rangers. In between they added the Co. Premier Football League title by defeating Ardfinnan 1-14 to 0-07 at Ardfinnan.
- Ciaran McDonald (Aherlow) played for the Ireland International Rules team as they defeated Australia by three points to capture the Cormac McAnallen Trophy at Croke Park.
- Patrick (Bonnar) Maher played on the Irish Shinty team that defeated Scotland by two points in the opening International game at Croke Park.
- Laochra Ghael Awards were presented to 24 recipients who gave significant service to the GAA during their lifetime. Ex President Liam O’Neill presented the awards in The Dome to the following:

| <i>North</i> | <i>South</i> | <i>Mid</i> | <i>West</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Joe Brennan (Newport) | Daniel Fogarty (Killenale) | Sean Russell (Thurles Gaels) | Martin Condon (Emly) |
| Ger Gavin (Nenagh) | Jimmy Ryan (Davins) | Tom Lowry (Upperchurch) | Ann Holmes (Cappawhite) |
| Mi Phelan (Roscrea) | Pat Flynn (Fr. Sheehy’s) | Dan Smyth (Clonakenny) | Mi Ryan (Sean Treacys) |
| Mi Berkery (B/hinch) | Billy Moloney (Ardfinnan) | Paddy Guidera (Brackens) | John Marnane (Galtee Rvrs) |
| Paddy O’Brien (Ballina) | Pat Woodlock (Fethard) | Martin O’Grady (Moyné T) | Lar O’Keeffe (Solohead) |
| Tom Ryan (Portroe) | Dick Strang (Kilsheelan) | Patsy Dorney (Sarsfields) | George Ryan (Lattin C) |

- St. Mary’s recorded a historic victory winning the County Minor Hurling “A” title defeating Kildangan 2-11 to 0-13 at The Ragg.
- **Jim Leahy RIP (Moycarkey Borris);** who passed away in November was a big promoter of the Tipperary GAA Draw and was also one of the longest serving club officers in the County.
- **Pat O’Shea RIP (Thurles Sarsfields);** died during November having attended games in Croke Park this year right up to the All Ireland Hurling Final. Apart from his dedication to Sarsfields and Tipperary GAA, Pat had the distinction of working on the first Coaching Initiative in the County with Mick O’Connell back in the late 1980s.

County Championship Structures

The November County Committee meeting brought in new systems for running our County Championship. After much debate and anticipation with 28 motions on the Clár, delegates came down in favour of a consistent formula in Senior Hurling and Football plus Intermediate hurling which will see knockout championships in all divisions plus groups of three or four in the County Championship played out in league format as in 2015. In all cases it will see a reduction on the number of rounds replayed which will allow us meet Munster club deadlines with more ease. The Senior Hurling championship has been much criticised in recent years mainly because of the excessive number of teams and the imbalance in standards. The new motion passed, addresses this with only the top 16 teams playing for the Dan Breen cup in 2017 and the rest playing for the Seamus O’Riain Trophy. With promotion and relegation from Roinn 1 to Roinn 2 to Intermediate to Junior, this will add more cut and thrust to our championships. Having listened to players and club officers over the past year, their demands are simple and should now be more achievable by County and Divisional CCCs. They have four simple requests which are as follows:

1. A definite starting date for Championship.
2. Regular Championship games, on average one per month.
3. A definite break period to plan holidays for club players and families.
4. A definite final date for Divisional and County Finals.

I believe the new structure should be able to accommodate these four requests. Once the County fixtures plan is drafted, discussions should take place with County selectors and agree free week-ends before major games allowing for Inter County teams championship progress. Divisional Boards must make more efforts to play rounds of Junior and U21 intermittingly throughout the year especially on those free week-ends for Senior Inter-county players. This bottleneck of U21 Hurling and Junior football in October, November and December is totally unnecessary and comes as a result of complacency. Put the fixtures down and force the clubs to play so that by October 1st we have divisional winners ready to complete the county series.

Dr. Morris Park Development

Dr. Morris Park continues to be the central hub of all our Inter-County activity and is possibly the busiest sports facility in the county. In response to demand, development at the facility has been at a fairly aggressive pace in recent years with:

2012 – The purchase and development of the new sand based pitch complete with floodlights,

2013 – New floodlights installed on pitch 2,

2014 – Erection of hurling wall with astro-turf surface plus installation of new floodlights on pitch 1.

With three fully lit pitches plus a floodlit all-weather training area incorporated with a hurling wall, we are in a very good position facility wise. During 2015 we pulled back on rushing into any further development whilst we consider the best way forward. In last year’s Co. Convention book we showed sketches of our very elaborate plans for a new building complex in Dr. Morris Park incorporating eight new dressing rooms, a conference hall, Gym, physio & medical room plus a fully fitted kitchen and dining room. The costings on this were averaging around €2m which in the current climate is serious exposure. We have used this breathing space during 2015 to explore similar structures elsewhere e.g. The Connacht GAA Centre in Ballyhaunis and the Tyrone GAA Centre in Garvaghey. We have also worked with a small advisory work group, who have met on a few occasions and discussed all options, including the possibility of purchasing extra space to allow for future development. We met a representative from Croke Park who gave us advice on all aspects of development plus the costs of maintenance afterwards. The most practical and alarming information he gave us was to allow 15% of the project cost for maintenance and upkeep afterwards. In other words if we invest €2m in the installation of a new structure we should expect to spend €300,000 annually on running

costs in the subsequent years. This is something all clubs should be aware of when they lay out development plans. Grants, Loans and Savings will cover the original cost and these are all included in budgetary plans, but whilst a club is struggling to make loan repayments, the new running costs start to surface with crippling consequences. Our own running costs in Dr. Morris Park are rising every year with the added facilities and are now running close to €100k per annum. Almost 25% of this is attributed to the cost of running the floodlights alone e.g. generator fuel. Whilst no further development plans are yet finalised, I have scaled back my own expectations to a maximum budget spend of €1.25m. I suggest we reduce the size of our building by including just four dressing rooms instead of eight and confine the other rooms to what is urgently needed. Our plans could allow for a further development at a later stage but for now we should retain our existing four dressing rooms where we are currently investing €20k approx in refurbishment. These "old" dressing rooms are still a sound solid structure and with this small investment now, it should extend their usefulness for five to ten more years at least. Overall a new extra building including four dressing rooms will give us eight dressing rooms overall and with the addition of a gym, physio and medical rooms, plus kitchen and dining facilities, we should have everything we need within our own complex. If we budget a spend of €1.25m and a commitment already from Munster Council of a €500k grant and further possibilities from Croke Park and Sports Capital Grants we should have a very manageable situation which we can be very proud of.

Co. Board Finances

It appears our financial position is in a healthy position as we show a surplus in 2015 for the third year in a row. Our gate receipts are boosted by the late Co. SH final in 2014 which means it includes two Co. SH Finals with the 2015 event coming in on time. Match pass sales and season tickets add further to the total which is 20% up on the previous year. Our failure to reach the League Final cost us about €45k on the previous year but when planning our budget pre-season we cannot allow for any qualification so playing in Quarter and Semi-finals meant we came in almost €60k over budget. Commercial income was boosted by a new sponsorship deal with Intersport/Elverys whilst we retained existing arrangements with Clean Ireland Recycling, O'Neill's, Thurles Milk, Tipperary Water and Lucozade. The hidden benefits of the Intersport/Elverys deal comes from the supply of Boots and nutritional products to players which we normally purchased in previous years adding to our team costs. The tremendous success of our Cúl Camps in 2015 ensured our coaching account is balancing as we continue to employ five full time Games Development Officers across our four Divisions. The Tipperary GAA Draw arrested the slide in 2015 with over 16,000 members supporting the venture and returning €180,000 surplus to the Co. Board. This profit is ring fenced mainly for coaching, schools and Dr. Morris Park Development. The Tipperary GAA Shop had a very busy year and is in a position to return €75k to County Board plus a further €80k from royalties (mainly O'Neill's). Fund-raising events in London and Galway races were very successful and achieved the €100k target as per budget. Controlling expenditure is the big challenge and if not monitored can very easily spiral out of control. Our club match expenses are steady with medals, rent of field and referees expenses holding at €100k approx annually. The cost of maintaining Dr. Morris Park increases parallel with the addition of extra facilities. Extra floodlighting on all three pitches plus the new hurling wall has added to our fuel costs whilst general repair to our four dressing rooms escalates with age and usage. Board Administration costs are constantly monitored and while the salaries of three full time office staff is the stand out expense it also includes the overheads of Lár Na Páirce office structure like Light & Heat, Printing & Stationery, Postage & Telephone, Insurances & Water Charges, etc. On top of this, Board Admin also incorporates IT & Website Costs, meeting expenses, Programmes, accountancy fees and travelling expenses of officers & committees. Team administration costs account for almost half of Co. Boards Expenditure with coaching accounting for approximately one quarter. Control of team expenses is the key to viability as we all acknowledge our County teams are the big focus and whilst their needs are essential to success, we must strike a balance between affordability and necessity. Players are entitled to travel expenses which are almost one third of team expenditure, but better use of car-pooling of players coming from the same area can bring savings. Team catering after training and matches is subject to strict negotiations and we have been making considerable savings in this area. Medical and team support are the most difficult areas to control as modern training of Inter-County teams demands the best of Physios, Strength & Conditioning, facilities, trainers etc which come at a big price. As a result an industry has grown around all this and unless we embrace the concept, our County will be left behind. Fortunately we in Tipperary have kept pace with this in both codes and our participation in three of the eight All Ireland Finals in 2015 is testimony to this. We have paused our development plans in Dr. Morris Park whilst we are pondering on all possibilities. During 2015 we repaid all loans to the four Divisions which they so generously gave to us in 2012 for Dr. Morris Park development. We are also maintaining our monthly loan repayment of €8,000 per month to Croke Park. In all we have repaid €300k in loans during 2015 which is a massive achievement whilst trying to maintain a steady cash flow. Our accounts will show a sizeable sum in sundry creditors as at October 31st but we have paid off most of this during November 2015. So all in all 2015 showed continued improvement in the County Finances.

The Seamus Callanan Appeal

The sending off of Tipperary Senior Hurler Seamus Callanan led to a bizarre series of hearings which showed up glaring inconsistencies in the G.A.A disciplinary system as one Appeals committee overruled another. Seamus was sent off in the Allianz League Quarter Final versus Offaly on March 29th in Tullamore. He was shown a red card following an incident in the 38th minute when Offaly full back Dermot Shortt fell to the ground as both players advanced to the ball. The referee John Keenan (Wicklow) reported Seamus for striking with minimal force which is classed as a category 111 playing infraction and carries the appropriate penalty as per rule 7.2(b) T-O 2014. This rule carries a minimum penalty of "One match suspension in the same level applicable to the next game in the National League". This meant Seamus would miss the League Semi-Final versus Waterford three weeks later. The incident actually went unnoticed to the spectators and to the referee as video footage later showed the Umpire calling back the referee who at that stage had moved on with play to the other end of the field. Seamus Callanan had 1-6 scored in the first half and his loss could have been disastrous, but fortunately his team mates rallied and finished ever stronger to win by six points. This was in spite of also losing Kieran Bergin to injury and Cathal Barrett for a second yellow later in the second half. Tipperary County Board appealed both Callanan's and Barrett's dismissal to the Central Hearings Committee. Whilst Barrett's second yellow was unquestionable his first was very trivial and that was the one the appeal was based on. Even though his suspension finished at the end of the Offaly game, it would mitigate against him if he was sent off on two yellows

again in 2015. We were not surprised to lose Barrett's case but we were very confident of winning Callanan's case. Damien Young showed video evidence where both players approached the ball together trying to impede each other's route. Eamon O' Shea explained how he coached this exercise for a player to impose himself physically across the path of his opponents run up to the ball. Seamus confirmed this as being part of his game. The video evidence also showed that the umpire was unsighted and could only see the Offaly player on the ground and so presumed he was struck. Incidentally the same player got up and played on showing no ill-effects of the incident. The Chairman of the hearing argued on a legal basis that whilst we had shown on the video no visual sign of striking, it did not prove he did not strike. This formed the basis for the failure of our appeal as it concluded that the video provided was not sufficiently compelling to contradict the Referee Report. Naturally we were bitterly disappointed and immediately felt it was pointless appealing it further. Even though the hearing was held on April 1st we did not receive the verdict in writing until April 9th which allowed us time to reflect and reconsider. At the training camp in Spain we discussed it and concluded that we had to make every effort to see justice done and so on return we appealed to the Central Appeals Committee which is the final level of appeal before going to the D.R.A. The Oral hearing of the appeal was held on April 16th in Croke Park and this time we could only appeal the decision of the central hearing committee and how they reached their verdict. We based our appeal on the failure of the Central Hearing Committee to seek clarification from the Referee when there was doubt. We also appealed they were not entitled to conclude "the infraction alleged is more likely to have occurred" when the video did not show a strike. We also appealed that the Central Hearing Committee failed to consider a lesser offence like a cautionable infraction which would only merit a yellow card. We got a very fair hearing from Central Appeal under the chairmanship of Matt Shaw and there was no legal argument being put up this time against our case. Our efforts were justified as we were verbally informed on the night that our appeal was upheld. The written verdict later confirmed that and stated that "whilst the Referee' report is presumed to be correct on matters of fact Central Hearing Committee had, in failing to accept video evidence as compelling evidence, made a decision of fact which in the view of the Central Appeals has been shown to be manifestly incorrect. They also added that "the Central Hearing Committee infringed a rule in finding that the infraction "striking with minimal force" was more likely to have occurred than not to have occurred because in the view of the Central Appeals no Hearings Committee acting reasonably could have come to this view". To me this was a conflicting difference of opinion by two committees dealing with discipline and fully justified our efforts in proving that the original sending off was a miscarriage of justice. With just over 48 hours to spare Seamus Callanan was cleared to play against Waterford in the league semi-Final. Despite all our efforts and Seamus on the day Tipp playing below form, lost to the Decies side by one point. Still it is nice to know that there is justice in the disciplinary system but we had to go through an exhaustive process to achieve it.

Insurance...Serious Implications for GAA Clubs

Annual insurance renewal terms for the Gaelic Athletic Association could not be agreed at Oct 31 and the policy was extended to Nov 13th to allow for further negotiations. Renewal terms have now been secured with a premium increase of €600,000. Over the past 3 years the GAA's Insurance fund reserves have been used to offset premium increases of €800,000 across both the Property and Liability Insurance placements. The Level of Increase across both Property and Public Liability covers of €750,000 in the current year cannot be offset by the Insurance Fund. The increases will have to be passed on to Units which are mainly clubs.

Public Liability--The claims experience highlights that serious exposures exist across all units when GAA club facilities are provided for use to Non GAA Users and for the support of non-GAA activity. Liability Insurance terms are provided on a 5 year claims experience basis. Unfortunately since the 2014 renewal the Associations 5 year's claims experience deteriorated by €2m. There are currently approximately 250 open personal injury claims being pursued against the Association. A max of 25% relate to core GAA activities i.e. playing of Gaelic Games. Renewal terms have been secured subject to a targeted review of the current open claims in advance of the next renewal in October 2016. Continued deterioration in the claims experience may result in the continued provision of Insurance cover in its current format being unsustainable for the Association. We will be unable to provide our facilities for the wider community if the claims cost arising from this becomes unsustainable.

Property – Renewal was secured on the existing basis but however due to the continued deterioration of claims experience a premium increase of €150,000 was incurred. There are in addition some internal aggregate limits in relation to certain covers which will affect the financing of the Insurance fund but should not impact on the current cover afforded to clubs by the Insurance placement.

GAA units have always been proactive in ensuring that our members enjoy the best possible facilities at our clubs. In developing facilities for members we have also opened our facilities to support increased level of non-GAA use. Examples include but not limited to;

- Provision of meetings rooms and indoor halls to community and other groups for events
- Provision of halls for Private recreational use
- Provision of Playing fields and All Weather facilities for private recreational use
- Provision of halls, playing fields and all weather fields for private fitness classes
- Opening recreational facilities such as walkways and playgrounds to non GAA members
- Provision of function rooms and bars to community groups, charity groups and for private social events.

Whilst recognising that the club is at the heart of our communities, we cannot continue to offer our facilities unless serious steps are taken by all units to;

- Implement safe systems of operation
- Ensure effective management and control of access to properties
- To ensure all Non GAA users of our facilities have their own insurance in place to enable risk to be diverted away from the Associations Insurance
- To ensure that excluded or prohibited activities do not take place at events or on properties
- To implement effective maintenance and upkeep across all properties so that they do not deteriorate and become hazards

In investigating claims with our loss assessors we are being found exposed as we cannot demonstrate that we are managing the risk associated with providing facilities for this use. There are;

- We are not engaging competent contractors to design and build facilities
- Safety statements or risk assessments in place at most units

- No record of usage – no booking forms or other controls are in place at most units
- Accident books / incident reports are not in place or maintained at most units
- Cleaning procedures for premises are not in place at most units
- Premises and facilities are not being maintained and records of maintenance and upkeep do not exist
- No provision in place for ongoing costs to maintain, upkeep and replace facilities
- Staff are not trained or supervised .

One claim example involved the hiring of a club hall to a group for a family party where a fee to the club of €30. The family hiring the hall engaged multiple other persons to provide services for the party caterers, entertainment, hall decoration and at least €2,000 was paid to these persons. One of the persons engaged by the family to provide a service suffered a fall from a height at the club and High Court proceedings have been issued. Little or no control was in place by the club and minimal controls would have avoided this claim in its entirety.

The Players Injury Fund

The Croke Park Risk and Insurance Committee have undertaken reviews of claim trends in certain counties with the counties directly and supported by the relevant Provincial council. The feedback from these meetings has been very positive and suggestions to better manage the Injury Fund have been received.

A full review of the Injury Fund in its current format is underway with the assistance of the Medical Welfare Committee, Willis and other identified key stakeholders. This will ensure the core purpose of the fund to provide for the reimbursement of medical expenses incurred as a result of accidental bodily Injury can be met for future years, whilst also ensuring the fund is in place to assist in ensuring best outcomes for Injury recovery and return to play for all members. As part of this review a claims loading will be implemented to clubs who have consistent poor claims experience. An equitable and sustainable method will be reviewed over next 12 months with implementation in 2017. Further proposals will be presented to Management in 2017

Buíochas

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to my officer colleagues over the past twelve months;

- Eamon Buckley completes his seven years as County Treasurer having taken over from the late Michael “Spike” Nolan in 2008. His prudent financial management has steered us from a rocky deficit period before 2012 to healthy surplus balances these past few years. He organised the gates with professional precision especially on the big days in Semple Stadium. He was highly respected by Croke Park and Munster Council plus all the Divisional treasurers. We have been great friends during his term and we experienced the highs and the lows together always retaining the greatest respect for each other. I am sure he will stay actively involved in some capacity but for now we express our thanks to Eamon for a job well done.
- Chairman Michael Bourke has grown in stature in his first year and has kept a firm rein on all activities. John Devane is an able deputy and with Tom Maher they have guided the CCC through a successful season meeting all the Munster deadlines in a difficult year. Joe Bracken stepped into the PRO breach midyear when Andy Fogarty had ill health and proved a great impact sub performing in a cool and efficient manner.
- We have very dedicated members on our County Management Committee with each one making their contribution in their own individual way. We have very active hard working sub-committees as you will see from their reports in this book and I thank them all for their commitment. We are fortunate to have five very competent Games Development personnel and the positive feedback from our clubs and schools throughout the County bears testament to this. John O’Keeffe is the latest recruit and he has settled in extremely well in his first year in North Tipperary. Lisa Stapleton took on the role of IT Officer and her first task was to complete the revamping of our web-site which her predecessor Ed Kinane had commenced. To all my officer and committee colleagues I say a Míle Buíochas for all their support and co-operation during 2015.
- The staff in Lár na Páirce have been through a tough year adjusting to many changes which we hope will be for the better. The shop saw a new jersey launched this year following the change of sponsor and it has now been a 15 year success story since we opened the doors in May 2000. To all my work colleagues in Lár na Páirce building both full time and part-time, I thank you for your dedication and hard work and I look forward to all your support in 2016.

Conclusion

2016 beckons and once again we look forward with renewed hope and expectations. New managers at the helm in Senior Hurling and Senior Football will bring a fresh and new approach which we hope will pay dividends. Mick Ryan has worked very hard over the past few months knowing he was stepping into this very responsible position carrying the hopes of the county. His experience and enthusiasm will drive him on to make a success of the role and his no-nonsense style maybe the formula we need to get us over the line. We welcome Liam Kearns on board and he also brings a wealth of experience to his new role as SF manger. With Tommy Toomey at his side he will be well advised as no one knows more about Gaelic Football in Tipperary than Tommy and also as Minor and U21 Manager he will be the busiest man in the County. Willie Maher makes a comeback with the U21 hurlers and his fellow Ballingarry native Liam Cahill carries on in charge of the minor hurlers. Last year in the conclusion of my report, I highlighted our U21F, MF and MH as potentials to win All Irelands. How close we came as we enjoyed the journeys of all three despite the end results. We face difficult early rounds in Munster in 2016 but the Premier County is always up for the battle and next year we will be challenging for honours in all grades again.

I wish the very best of luck to all our team mentors and players.

Críoch

Trí Chraobh na Mumhan buaite agus trí Chraobh na hÉireann sroichte againn i 2015 – mar sin tá Tiobraid Árann in iomaíocht go seasamhach le na contaetha is mór le rá sa pheil agus san iomáint. Ta mé cinnte go meidh 2016 mar an gcéanna agus go dtabharfaidh lucht leanúna an chontae lán-tacaíocht dár bhfóirne chun an Gorm & Ór a choimeád in airde ar na laethanta móra i bpáirceanna na Mumhan agus Páirc An Chrócaigh.

Ar aghaidh le Thiobraid Árann

Tadhg De Flóid, Rúnaí Choiste Chontae, 8-12-15.