

Tuarascail an Runaí 2016 (Tipperary Co. Secretary's Annual Report)

Seo an deichiú tuarascáil agam don Chomhdháil Bliantúil. Cuireann sé i gcúntas eachtraí na bliana is torthúla i mo thréimhse mar rúnaí. Cheap mé nárbh fhéidir sárú ar 2010 agus na craobhanna bainte amach san Iomáint Sinsir agus Faoi 21, ach i mbliana leis na gaiscí déanta ag ár n-imreoirí san Iomáint Sinsir agus Mionúir chomh maith lenár bpeileadóirí sinsire, is bliain speisialta í 2016. Bhí lucht leanúna Thiobraid Árann mórálach agus meas na tíre ar fad dírithe ar an imirt den scoith agus na buanna a bhí bainte amach. Chuir seacht Gradam All Stars san Iomáint agus All Star annamh sa Pheil, toilte to maith ag Michael Quinlivan, barr ar shlacht na bliana.

My 10th report to Co. convention will place on record the events of possibly the most successful of all my ten years. I thought 2010 would not be surpassed with SH & U21H All Ireland titles plus the U21F Munster win but in 2016 achieving the SH & MH All Ireland titles plus the performance of our SF in reaching the All Ireland Semi Final marks the year out as very special. This was a year when Tipperary supporters walked tall and proud as the country admired the manner of our success. This was further borne out with seven All Star awards in hurling and a rare football All Star for Michael Quinlivan.

On the club score all our Munster deadlines were met despite the busy Inter County scene and all competitions were completed in the calendar year with the final games, the U21 "A" & "B" County finals played on the weekend before Convention. Following Clonmel Commercial's great run in 2015 it was disappointing that none of our club representatives progressed in Munster, all being beaten in the early stages. Convention in December 2015 installed Matt Hassett as the new Board President succeeding the late Tomás O'Baróid. Other new faces on the Board included Michael Power as Treasurer, Liz Flanagan as Assistant Treasurer and Joe Bracken as PRO. Development at Dr. Morris Park was put on hold with the busy year as the Co. Development Committee sought opinions on the draft plans to ensure we are satisfied with its design. A 1916 centenary celebration was held in the Dome coinciding with the Tipp v Cork Munster Championship game, in Semple Stadium and a very successful day at Galway Races was held in July. Both our Tipperary Supporters Club and Friends of Tipperary Football hosted very successful Golf Classics in Thurles and Dublin and the Friends also held a very successful race night in Clonmel early in the year. Our Tipperary GAA Draw increased its membership in its 29th year with 16,300 now joined. During the year we lost great gaels who represented Tipperary at different levels like Billy Quinn (Rahealty), Jimmy Hennessy (Knockavilla Kickhams), Tony Fitzpatrick (Carrick Swans), Mickey (The Rattler) Byrne, Paddy Verdon (Tipp Limk Association) and many more. We remember all good friends who passed away during 2016 as we recall the events of a truly memorable year. I hope my report recalls many memories and is a true record for historians and authors in years to come.

I will start with a brief account of each of our Inter County teams performance in 2016:

Tipperary Senior Hurling

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE TEAM	SCORE REFEREE
Challenge Games				
10/01/2016	Templemore	Tipperary	2.17 Offaly	1.15 Anthony Stapleton
17/01/2016	The Ragg	Tipperary	0.14 Thurles CBS All Stars	1.07 Fergal Horgan
23/01/2016	Boherlahan	Tipperary	7.29 Mary Immaculate	0.06 Philip Kiely
30/01/2016	Dr. Morris Pk	Tipperary	1.31 Laois	0.17
Allianz Hurling League				
Round 1				
13/02/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	1.23 Dublin	0.12 Colm Lyons
Round 2				
21/02/2016	Nowlan Park	Kilkenny	2.17 Tipperary	0.18 Cathal McAllister
Round 3				
06/03/2016	Semple Stadium	Waterford	1.18 Tipperary	1.17 Colm Lyons
Round 4				
13/03/2016	Pearse Stadium	Galway	2.19 Tipperary	1.22 James Owens
Round 5				
20/03/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	2.27 Cork	2.15 Paud O'Dwyer
Quarter Final				
03/04/2016	Ennis	Clare	2.13 Tipperary	0.18 Diarmaid Kirwan
Munster Championship				
Quarter Final				
22/05/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	0.22 Cork	0.13 Barry Kelly

Semi Final

19/06/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	3.12	Limerick	1.16	James McGrath
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Final

10/07/2016	Gaelic Grounds	Tipperary	5.19	Waterford	0.13	Brian Gavin
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All Ireland Championship**Semi Final**

14/08/2016	Croke Park	Tipperary	2.19	Galway	2.18	Barry Kelly
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Final

04/09/2016	Croke Park	Tipperary	2.29	Kilkenny	2.20	Brian Gavin
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Following a disappointing All Ireland semi final championship exit to Galway in 2015, new manager (and manager elect in 2015) Michael Ryan set about putting his new management team together in October. At the November Co. Board meeting Declan Fanning was announced as coach and John Madden (Lorrha) was named as selector. Conor Stakelum was later added to the management team but the three set the wheels in motion in November. Priority number one was selecting a panel of players and the retirement of Conor O'Mahony, Shane McGrath, James Woodlock and Lar Corbett left the door open for new debutants to stake a claim. The new panel was announced in early December and showed a mixture of recalls and new. The big news was the switching codes of Seamus Kennedy and Steven O'Brien whilst another chance was given to 2014 panel members John Meagher, Joe O'Dwyer, Tossy Hamill, Willie Ryan, Liam Ryan, Adrian Ryan and Sean Curran. Other new players added included Brian Hogan, Daire Quinn, Andrew Coffey, Kieran Morris, Liam Ryan (Drom), Sean Ryan (Sean Treacys) and Dylan Fitzelle. Management also confirmed that Brendan Maher would continue as captain and Paudie Maher as Vice Captain. The new panel met in December 2015 and were given training programmes by trainer Gary Ryan and Strength & Conditioning Coach Lukasz Kirszenstein who were retained for the new season. The new management decided to withdraw from the Waterford Crystal Tournament and decided instead to play a series of challenge games during January. The reason for this was twofold as one, the tournament consisted of pointless games with under strength college teams and two, it demanded that County players give first allegiance to their college team. The January challenge games gave management full access to all their panel and this was the case as friendly games were played versus Offaly in Templemore, Thurles CBS All Stars in The Ragg, Mary I College in Boherlahan and Laois in Dr. Morris Park. Victories were recorded in all these games which gave momentum to the team facing in to the first league game at home to Dublin under lights in Semple Stadium in February. Indeed playing five league games in six weeks would require a strong panel and would surely define the teams prospects for 2016. Over 5,000 patrons witnessed Tipperary record a 14 point win over Dublin on a cold, bitter night in Semple. An early goal by Jason Forde put the Premier in the driving seat as the good blend of new and old paid dividends with Tossy Hamill at full back, Daire Quinn, mid field and Dan McCormack all laying down markers. One week later and a bigger test in Nowlan Park brought the team down to earth as Kilkenny scored two late goals by Kevin Kelly to extend our run of defeats in that venue. Back in Semple Stadium fourteen days later versus Waterford, the story was similar as Tipp dominated most of the game only to allow a late flourish from the Decies and a massive Austin Gleeson 95 yard free to give them a one point victory. Worrying times for the Premier management as our lack of killer instinct to close out games was becoming far too common in recent years. We headed for Salthill the following week and another loss here would have us facing a relegation battle. An early goal from Niall O'Meara settled the team but it was Galway who were in the driving seat in the dying minutes as Joe Canning sent a 60 yard line ball over the bar for a one point lead. But this time the experienced players showed leadership and conjured a movement as Brendan Maher fielded a last vital ball that ended with John O'Dwyer grabbing the equaliser in the 75th minute. Our final Round 5 game against the Rebels in Semple Stadium left matters in our own hands with qualification from victory and a relegation battle from defeat. Cork were already doomed for a relegation battle being bottom of the table and showed this in their general play as Tipp ran out 12 points winners and qualified for a league quarter final place versus Clare. A toss of a coin landed Tipp in Cusack Park, Ennis, a fortnight later. The two week break allowed Tipp an opportunity to have a four day training camp in Breaffy House Mayo after which the panel was reduced as players like Conor Kenny, Joe Dwyer, Joe Gallagher, Kieran Morris, Sean Ryan and Bill Maher were released. Play-off qualification was a welcome boost as there was a positive mood in the County heading to Ennis. Tipperary started poorly and were six points adrift after 25 minutes following a goal from John Conlon but rallied with four points to close the gap to just two adrift at the break. A much improved second half performance had Tipp three points clear with five minute to go but once again we were caught by a late Aaron Shanagher goal and a John Conlon point to give the Banner a one point victory. Another narrow defeat snatched from the jaws of victory left a worrying theme following a six match league run. Also a high average of wides was a concern but at least that could be addressed in the training field during the six week lead into the Munster Championship. Looking at the positives, the performance of newcomers Michael Breen, Dan McCormack, Daire Quinn, Barry Heffernan, Tossy Hamill and John McGrath was encouraging and a settled triangle of Ronan Maher at centre back plus the Brendan Maher / Michael Breen

combo at mid field was a solid foundation to build on. The six week gap allowed the County club championships a good opportunity to advance and a welcome diversion for players to allow them regroup. Clare and Waterford went on to contest the Allianz League Final and a replay was needed before the Banner finally claimed the trophy. During this time Tipperary operated under the radar with “behind closed doors” training and challenge games. Whilst the club games exposed players to injury (like Barry Heffernan’s second concussion) it also threw up new player possibilities and resulted in John O’Keeffe, Donagh Maher, Stephen Cahill and Aidan McCormack all added to the panel. Cork under new manager Kieran Kingston despite having a poor League, ending up at the bottom of the table, still managed to avoid relegation with victory over Galway in a play-off. The Tipp selection showed four new championship debutants in Seamus Kennedy, Sean Curran, Dan McCormack and John McGrath which left a strong bench including Patrick Maher, Niall O’Meara, Kieran Bergin and Jason Forde. In the pouring rain at Semple Stadium Tipp raced into an early lead and were comfortable at half time 0-14 to 0-05 without reaching top gear. Cork had William Egan acting as sweeper to limit the damage but it did little to deter the Premier side from going on for an easy 0-22 to 0-13 victory and qualify for a semi-final against Limerick four weeks later. Once again the club championship filled the void as Waterford turned the tables on League champions Clare and were first to qualify for the Munster Final. Tipp’s starting line up for the Limerick game showed one change with Patrick Maher replacing Sean Curran. Once again the rain poured down in Semple Stadium but it didn’t deter a confident Tipp who raced into an early lead helped by a double whammy of goals by Michael Breen in the first ten minutes. This advantage proved vital following the dismissal of John O’Dwyer in the 14th minute resulting in a strong rally by the Treaty side before Seamus Callanan netted again in the 27th to give Tipp the cushion to see the game out. Tipp were very composed in the second half as they overcame the numerical disadvantage and despite a late goal by Limerick’s Tom Morrissey, held out for a deserving and impressive two point victory. Waterford threw down an early gauntlet by opting to play the Munster Final in Limerick’s Gaelic Grounds rather than give Tipp home advantage in Semple Stadium. Sunday July 10th arrived and Niall O’Meara replaced the suspended John O’Dwyer as once again heavy rain was the order of the day. But the weather, the venue or the absence of John O’Dwyer did not deter Tipp from an outstanding Munster Final performance as the Premier side brushed the sweeper aside and laid siege on the Waterford goals from the start. A John McGrath goal in the ninth minute was the key score of the first half as Tipp led at half time 1-07 to 0-08 with Waterford driving ten wides during that period and falling to score for 20 minutes. Six minutes into the second half the floodgates opened as John McGrath added a second goal and secured his hat trick from a penalty in the 12th minute. Michael Breen scored a fourth goal in between and Seamus Callanan netted the fifth to close out the game in the final minutes. A miserable day in the Limerick rain for Waterford who saw their defensive system collapse around them as Brendan Maher collected back to back Munster trophies for the Premier County. Double double delight as the Tipp minors had earlier won their Munster title in the curtain raiser. So far so good but managing the next five weeks during the lead in to the All Ireland semi-final was going to be a major challenge for the new management team. It was during this period in 2015 the momentum was lost leading to the Galway defeat. For now focus turned back to Divisional club activity plus Tipp’s U21 hurling campaign as the County Senior footballers successful journey kept the focus away from the hurling during this crucial period. August 14th arrived and management kept faith with the same Munster final 15 as John O’Dwyer was kept in reserve. The game started at lightning pace with points exchanged until Conor Cooney goaled in the 7th minute. This goal activated Tipp who showed great character responding by scoring seven points to Galway’s one, but the Tribesmen replied with six more on the trot. A highlight of the first half was a crunching tackle by Padraig Maher on Joe Canning resulting in both leaving the pitch blood stained and returning to the fray before half time as Galway led at the break 1-10 to 0-11. Joe Canning did not re-appear in the second half as he also picked up a hamstring injury but his absence inspired the other Galway players especially Joseph Cooney who goaled in the 8th minute to restore the lead. Once again Tipp rallied with points including two from the Maher brothers in the halfback line but crucially two goals from John O’Dwyer and John McGrath as the Premier boys hit the front with ten minutes remaining. In a hectic finish that had the 54,227 crowd gripping their seats, Tipp held out for a famous one point victory and a place in the All Ireland Final against old rivals Kilkenny. Old failings of poor finishes in the League were now forgotten as Tipp proved they could win a tight game by keeping composure when the real pressure was on in the closing stages. They also had the satisfaction of reversing the one point defeat of 12 months ago to the same opposition. The countdown to the All Ireland Final began with the added bonus of our minors on the same bill. Kilkenny’s record in recent years made them favourites but Tipperary were developing a steely edge to their game which gave them an air of quiet confidence and an inner demand for redemption. All Ireland final day arrived and Tipp kept their usual routine and travelled by bus to the capital on the morning. Pre-match meal was taken at the Gibson Hotel in the Point Village before arriving in Croke Park just over an hour before throw in at 3.30pm. The players and management took in the atmosphere in the stand for a short period by watching some of the minor game as Tipperary youngsters showed the way with a seven point victory over Limerick. Brian Gavin was refereeing his fourth All Ireland final having previously been in charge of the 2011 and 2014 final replay when Kilkenny came out on top on both occasions. The game opened at a ferocious pace which enthralled the 82,016 official attendance. Seamus Callanan opening the scoring with a point in the third minute as Tipp forwards pulled the Kilkenny back line out of position to create plenty of open spaces. As Tipperary scored freely from play Kilkenny were relying on TJ Reid’s frees to stay in

touch. By half time the Premier side led by 0-14 to 0-12 with all but two points coming from play. The Kilkenny reply after half time came as expected with two TJ Reid points followed by a Kevin Kelly goal as Kilkenny hit the front in the 41st minute. Tipp's response was rapid and set the tone for the remainder of the game. Two points from Callanan and another from sub Jason Forde before John "Bubbles" O'Dwyer pounced for a goal in the 48th minute and another goal by John McGrath in the 60th minute after Darren Gleeson denied Kevin Kelly a second green, gave Tipp a 2-25 to 1-19 lead. Within two minutes Kilkenny responded with a Richie Hogan goal and it looked like a revival was on the cards but at this stage Tipp showed their true resolve and circled the wagons to deny Kilkenny any opening to stage a comeback. Patrick "Bonnar" Maher completed the scoring with a point after Tipp outscored their rivals four points to one in the final minutes and went on to claim the McCarthy Cup for the 27th time. Seamus Callanan picked up the "Man of the Match" award having scored 13 points with nine of those from play. But this was far from a one man show as every single Tipp player put their bodies on the line to secure this All Ireland. The celebrations began as the team and their families headed for the Double Tree Hilton Hotel (Burlington) for a banquet hosted by County Board and the Tipperary Association in Dublin. The homecoming in Semple Stadium the following night was a memorable occasion as 30,000 supporters gathered to welcome home their heroes. Another big reception the following Saturday night in the Manager's home parish of Upperchurch completed the celebrations before the McCarthy & Irish Press Cups commenced their tour of schools in the County. Looking back, the 27th All Ireland title was the culmination of years of planning and perseverance in which Mick Ryan played an integral part. As a selector with Liam Sheedy from 2008 to 2010 he tasted bitter defeat before enjoying the sweet taste of victory. He teamed up with Eamon O'Shea as a selector from 2013 to 2015 and suffered the heartbreak and frustration with his manager as their team had most of the qualities but came up short when it came to delivering. Mick's appointment as Manager elect before the 2015 season began was not met with approval in a lot of quarters but surely it makes a lot of sense. At National level the President of the GAA is elected 12 months in advance and even in our county the Chairman serves three years apprenticeship as head of Co. CCC before he assumes the higher office. Mick Ryan truly served his apprenticeship and learned from working alongside Sheedy and O'Shea. When his time came he put his own stamp and cutting edge on the team which added to the flair and skill already there. The maturity of the players over the past six years also played a big part as they took responsibility and were very much self motivated. So well done to the management team, backroom plus all the players for a perfect year and we are looking forward to 2017 already.

Tipperary: Darren Gleeson (Portroe), Cathal Barrett (Holycross Ballycahill), James Barry (Upperchurch Drombane), Michael Cahill (Thurles Sarsfields), Seamus Kennedy (St. Mary's), Ronan Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Padraic Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Brendan Maher Captain (Borris-ileigh), Michael Breen (Ballina), Dan McCormack (Borris-Ileigh), Patrick Maher (Lorrha Dorrha), Noel McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney), John O'Dwyer (Killenaule), Seamus Callanan (Drom & Inch), John McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney)

Subs used: Jason Forde (Silvermines), Niall O'Meara (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Donagh Maher (Burgess), Kieran Bergin (Killenaule), Tomas Hamill (Moyne Templetuohy)

Also on Panel: Stephen Cahill (Thurles Sarsfields), Sean Curran (Mullinahone), Barry Heffernan (Nenagh Eire Óg), Brian Hogan (Lorrha), Aidan McCormack (Thurles Sarsfields), Darragh Mooney (Eire Óg Anacarty), Conor O'Brien (Eire Óg Anacarty), Steven O'Brien (Ballina), John O'Keeffe (Clonoulty Rossmore), Daire Quinn (Nenagh Eire Óg), Gearoid Ryan (Templederry), Liam Ryan (Drom & Inch), Willie Ryan (Clonakenny), Paddy Stapleton (Borris-ileigh).

Tipperary Minor Hurling

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Munster Championship						
Play Off 1						
23/04/2016	Walsh Pk	Waterford	1.20	Tipperary	1.17	Rory McGann
Play Off 2						
04/05/2016	Ennis	Tipperary	2.15	Clare	0.12	Joe Larkin
Semi Final						
30/06/2016	Paire Uí Rinn	Tipperary	0.23	Cork	1.15	Johnny Murphy
Final						
10/07/2016	Gaelic Grounds	Tipperary	1.24	Limerick	0.10	Rory McGann

All Ireland Championship Semi Final

14/08/2016	Croke Park	Tipperary	7.12	Galway	2.12	Cathal
Final						
04/09/2016	Croke Park	Tipperary	1.21	Limerick	0.17	John Keenan

The management team of 2014 and 2015 were given a further two year term so Liam Cahill, John Sheedy, Sean Corbett, TJ Ryan and Coach, Mikey Bevans agreed to continue the steady progress they were making at this level. Following heavy defeats to Limerick and Clare in 2014 our minors claimed the Munster title in 2015 and were defeated in the All Ireland Final by Galway. So unfinished business was the motto for this group as their low key performance in the Croke Park finale left them very disappointed. Once again the County was scoured to unearth new talent as only a few players like Brian McGrath, Cian Darcy and Lyndon Fairbrother of the starting fifteen were still underage. A tricky first round play-off fixture against Waterford away in Walsh Park was a big challenge. This was a repeat of our opening 2015 fixture when Tipp won by one point in Semple Stadium. This year Waterford had the benefit of a first round game where they lost to Cork. Tipp had a good opening quarter and led by three points thanks to an early Dylan Quirke goal, but the Decies physical power came to the fore as they took over to lead by two points at the break. Waterford's use of the sweeper system paid them dividends as Tipp failed to break through for much needed goals in the second half and were very reliant on the accurate free taking of Fairbrother who recorded nine points from placed balls. A three point defeat was a big disappointment and really put pressure on all concerned as we headed for another away play-off game versus Clare in Cusack Park one week later. The Banner had also lost their opening game to Limerick but home advantage was a big bonus for them. For the losers it would mark a sudden end to their 2016 campaign but for the winners it meant an eight week break to re-launch their assault on a Munster and All Ireland title. Tipp lined out in Ennis with four changes and numerous positional switches and it all paid off as the Premier boys dominated the opening half to lead by seven points at the break. Clare rallied in the second half and brought it back to three but Tipp finished in a flourish with goals by Cian Darcy and Dylan Walsh in the final minutes to secure a nine point victory. The reward was another away game, this time in Pairc Ui Rinn v Cork in the semi-final. The Rebels had an opening round victory over Waterford to qualify but with the losers' group play-offs and exams it meant a ten week wait. The long layoff mattered little to Cork as they totally dominated the opening quarter and looked like the Rebels team for the future. Their full forward Josh Beausang was a real handful and scored a decisive goal before the break to give Cork a three point lead. This was extended to six points with three unanswered points after the resumption. Then Tipp clicked into action and gave one of the best performances of a Tipp Minor team in years as subs like Dylan Walsh and Cian Flanagan, combined with the positional switches, to drive on against the odds. Scoring 14 points in the final 25 minutes the Tipp boys romped to victory by five points and qualified for another Munster Final date with Limerick and our fourth game away from home. Tipperary carried the same momentum into the final at the Gaelic Grounds on a wet miserable July afternoon and dominated the opening half to lead 0-13 to 0-07 at half time. A Jake Morris goal minutes into the second half opened the floodgates as Tipp went on to win their 39th Munster Minor Hurling title and their third in five years. Brian McGrath lifted the trophy and Jake Morris received Man of the Match following his 1-04 contribution. In the semi-final Tipp faced Galway, their conquerors in the 2015 All Ireland Final by six points and seven of the squad starting again under the same manager Jeff Lynsky. A tall order one would think five weeks later but a Tipp team gathering momentum is hard to stop and a ruthless streak now added as the Premier boys went for the juggler and bagged three goals in the first half from Cian Darcy, Mark Kehoe and Rian Doody to build up an eight point lead at the break. Three more goals were added from Darcy, Doody and Ger Browne in the first ten minutes of the second half while keeper Ciaran Barrett kept the tribesmen at bay at the other end. As the Galway sweeper system collapsed Tipp swept home with Cian Darcy completing his hat trick of goals to earn "Man of the Match" and Tipp's place in the All Ireland minor hurling final for 2016. In the final Tipp faced a resurgent Limerick side who bounced back from a seventeen point Munster Final defeat to beat Wexford in the All Ireland Quarter Final by eight points and Dublin by six points in the semi-final. Managing the lead-in to this final was a big challenge as expectations, following two major victories, were high but Liam Cahill and Co. worked on the players' mental attitude as well as game plans to keep every one's feet firmly on the ground. Like the seniors the team travelled up on All Ireland morning stopping at the Louis Fitzgerald Hotel for pre-match food before finally entering the Croke Park stadium for the greatest sporting day of their lives to date. Limerick were prepared and set up a sweeper system which Tipp found difficult to break down early on. By the 23rd minute Tipp led 0-08 to 0-03 but Limerick dominated the last few minutes to only trail by one point at half time 0-09 to 0-08. The only goal of the game by Jake Morris four minutes into the second half was a decisive score as Tipp kept their composure against the wind to hold out for a seven point victory 1-21 to 0-17 with semi final heroes Cian Darcy and Rian Doody both replaced, as Jake Morris regained his Munster Final form while dual player Colin English scored four points and substitute Shane Neville scored three points. This proved the strength in depth of the panel as different leaders stood up on each occasion. Captain Brian McGrath was an inspiration and deserved to climb the steps to receive the Irish Press Cup and claim Tipperary's 20th All Ireland Minor Hurling title. The victory was a massive achievement for Liam Cahill and his management team who shipped a lot of criticism in their first year following defeats to Limerick and Clare. The appointment of Michael Bevans as

Coach was the catalyst that drove this group to two Munster titles and to contest two All Ireland finals. It allowed Liam carry out his managerial role by having the freedom to overview all aspects of preparation. Liam, Mikey, John Sheedy, Sean Corbett and TJ Ryan have the interest and future of Tipperary hurling at heart and over the past three years have developed a group of young hurlers who will lead the Premier County to further success. Congratulations to one and all who have made us so proud.

Tipperary: Ciaran Barrett (Clonmel Og), Killian O'Dwyer (Killenaule), Michael Whelan (Carrick Davins), Tom Murphy (JK Brackens), Cian Flanagan (Newport), Brian McGrath Captain (Loughmore Castleiney), Jerome Cahill (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Paddy Cadell (JK Brackens), Ger Browne (Knockavilla Kickhams), Rian Doody (Cappawhite), Jake Morris (Nenagh Eire Óg), Colin English (Fr. Sheehys), Cian Darcy (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Mark Kehoe (Killsheelan Kilcash), Lyndon Fairbrother (JK Brackens)

Subs: Barry Hogan (Kiladangan), Robbie Quirke (Cappawhite), Jerry Kelly (Borris-ileigh), Kieran Breen (Knockavilla Kickhams), Shane Neville (Lattin Cullen), Gavin Dunne (Holycross Ballycahill), Dylan Quirke (Clonoulty Rossmore), Dylan Walsh (Ballingarry), Conor Stalelum (Thurles Sarsfields).

Also on extended panel: Stephen Nolan (Drom & Inch), Nathan Ryan (Knockavilla Kickhams), Adam Hogan (Moneygall), Eoin Barry (Killenaule), Gavin Ryan (St. Mary's), Shane Fletcher (Roscrea), Diarmaid Ryan (Clonakenny)

Tipperary Intermediate Hurling

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Munster Championship						
Quarter Final						
22/05/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	3.20	Cork	1.15	Declan O'Driscoll
Semi Final						
19/06/2016	Semple Stadium	Limerick	2.11	Tipperary	0.15	Damian Fox

Following the departure of 2015 Intermediate Manager John Carroll, County Board opted to combine the grade with the U21 Management team and so William Maher took over as the helm with John Devane and Billy O'Shea, who acted as liaison person with the Senior Hurling Management. This had a two fold advantage as it provided most of the U21 panel with a chance to play on the big stage before their own championship and gave fringe players off the Senior Hurling panel an extra opportunity to make an impression and stay within the framework. This experiment worked successfully with the U21 & Junior Football where Tommy Twomey was a vital catalyst. The only downside is the last minute release of senior panellists when their final 26 are finally announced. In this case the Senior Hurling Manager released Brian Hogan, Andrew Coffey, Sean Ryan, Aidan McCormack, Conor Kenny, Dylan Fitzelle and Tadhg Gallagher but William Maher still managed to field 10 of his U21 squad and finished the game with even more. On this occasion Cork were our Quarter Final opposition as curtain raiser to the senior on May 22nd in Semple Stadium. The Rebels were reigning Munster title holders and bidding for three in a row having last beaten Tipp by 13 points in 2014. They were now also allowed to select club senior players for the first time and so were on an equal platform with Tipp who were doing it for a few years.

Despite weather conditions deteriorating getting closer to the senior game, this intermediate game got the best of the day and was played with little wind or rain. Tipperary dominated the first half with Aidan McCormack on the mark from frees and led at half time by 0-11 to 0-07. In the second half Mark Russell was causing havoc on the edge of the square and won an early penalty which keeper Brian Hogan buried in the back of the net. Cork replied with a similar goal from a penalty but two goals from Russell secured a 13 point victory for the Premier. Their reward was a semi final clash with Limerick again in Semple Stadium four weeks later as a curtain raiser to the senior game between the same counties. In dreadful wind and rain Tipperary opened positively and led after five minutes but drifted behind by the 24th minute 1-06 to 0-03. Four points in a row before half time plus two after the restart had Tipp level early in the second half and despite Limerick adding another goal the sides were still level at 0-15 to 2-09 going into the last eight minutes. But Limerick finished stronger and added two points to claim victory and qualify for the Munster Final. Despite defeat the management and most of the panel could look forward to another dual with Limerick in the Munster U21 Semi Final three weeks later. This marked Tipperary's last game at intermediate level as the County decided to withdraw from the competition in 2016 when Croke Park ruled that Division 1A Counties could only select Intermediate Club players.

Tipp Intermediate Hurling team v Limerick; Brian Hogan (Lorrha Dorrha), Ger Fennelly (Ballingarry), Jack Peters (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Paul Maher (Killsheelan Kilcash), Andrew Coffey (Nenagh Eire Óg), Tom Fox (Eire Óg Anacarty), Sean Ryan (Sean Treacys), Brian Stapleton (Templederry Kenyon), Billy McCarthy (Thurles Sarsfields), Jack Shelly (Mullinahone), Aidan McCormack (Thurles Sarsfields), Tommy Nolan (Drom & Inch), Stephen Quirke (Moyle Rovers), Willie Connors (Kiladangan), Mark Russell (Lattin Cullen), **Subs** Conor Hammersley (Clonoulty Rossmore), Pa Ryan (Newport), Justin Cahill (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Tadhg Gallagher

(Kiladangan), Josh Keane (Golden Kilfeacle), Paul Maher (Moyné Templetuohy), Stephen Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Conor Lanigan (Thurles Sarsfields), Jack Skehan (Holycross Ballycahill), Mark McCarthy (Toomevara)

Tipperary U21 Hurling

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Munster Championship						
Semi Final						
14/07/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	2.12	Limerick	1.13	Cathal McAllister
Final						
27/07/2016	Walsh Pk	Waterford	2.19	Tipperary	0.15	Johnny Murphy

Following the departure of TJ Connolly as Manager who stepped down following the 2015 two point defeat to Limerick, William Maher returned to take over following a brief spell with Waterford. John Devane (Clonoulty Rossmore) and Billy O'Shea joined him and they also took responsibility for the County Intermediate team and used the grade to expose many of the U21 panel to the big stage. Ronan Maher was the only senior player from the starting fifteen but William Maher could call on extended senior panellists like Barry Heffernan (who was just back from concussion injury), Brian Hogan, Sean Ryan and Andrew Coffey. Our semi final opponents Limerick were defending their Munster and All Ireland titles and already had a seven point victory over Cork in the Quarter Final under their belt. They had six of the Intermediate team that defeated Tipp the previous month plus Richie English, Barry Nash, Cian Lynch and Dan Morrissey off the senior panel. So a tall order for Tipp but the players didn't think so as they dismantled the Treaty side from the start. Led by Ronan Maher at centre back they went toe to toe with Limerick and only trailed by one point (0-8 to 1.4) at the break thanks to an Andrew Coffey goal before half time. The introduction of subs Jason Ryan and Ronan Teehan inspired Tipp to a strong finish as they scored 1-3 between them and the Premier side held out for a famous victory by two points. The win rounded off a great week for Tipp hurling following on our Seniors and Minors Munster titles and the added success of our Senior Footballers victory over Derry had the County on a high. Waterford had also qualified for the final following an impressive victory over by 8 points. With six of their seniors and playing the final in Walsh Park the Deise were red hot favourites as Tipp chased a first ever Munster treble. A crowd of almost 9,000 packed into the Waterford venue and they were treated to a drama filled first half as Waterford held a narrow half time lead 1-06 to 0-07. The Waterford goal came from Stephen Bennett in the 27th minute which Tipp disputed as a square ball but to no avail. Following the break Andrew Coffey played as an extra midfielder and the tactic worked for a while as it produced four points from play but Waterford centre back Austin Gleeson eventually took advantage of the freedom in the backs and really imposed himself on the game. Despite trailing 1-10 to 0-08 after half time, Tipp fought back and drew level 0-14 to 1-11 with 15 minutes remaining. But Waterford took over and totally dominated the last quarter outscoring Tipp by 1-08 to 0-01 as they went on to win their fourth ever Munster U21H title. Despite the ten point defeat Tipperary can look back on a famous victory over Limerick against all the odds. Losing to eventual All Ireland champions Waterford having contained them for three quarters of the game was no bad achievement. William Maher and his management team made progress in their first year in charge and boosted the supply of quality players to our senior team. .

Tipp U21H team v Waterford: Brian Hogan (Lorrha Dorrha), Paul Maher (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Tom Fox (Eire Óg Anacarty), David Sweeney (Kiladangan), Sean Ryan (Sean Treacys), Ronan Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Barry Heffernan (Nenagh Eire Óg), Jason Ryan (Toomevara), Willie Connors (Kiladangan), Billy McCarthy (Thurles Sarsfields), Stephen Quirke (Moyle Rovers), Andrew Coffey (Nenagh Eire Óg), Conor Lanigan (Thurles Sarsfields), Mark Russell (Lattin Cullen), Josh Keane (Golden Kilfeacle), Ronan Teehan (Gortnahoe Glengoole), Pa Ryan (Newport), Mark McCarthy (Toomevara), Tommy Nolan (Drom & Inch)

Tipperary Senior Football

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
McGrath Cup						
02/10/2016	Miltown Malbay	Clare	1.10	Tipperary	1.09	Seamus Mulvihill
17/10/2016	Tipp Town	Kerry	0.16	Tipperary	0.10	Kevin Murphy
Allianz Football League						
Round 1						
31/01/2016	Kilmallock	Limerick	1.12	Tipperary	2.09	Brendan Cawley
Round 2						
07/02/2016	Sean Treacy Park	Tipperary	2.07	Clare	1.07	Padraig O'Sullivan
Round 3						
28/03/2016	Cusack Pk	Tipperary	1.08	Westmeath	0.11	Fergal Barry
Round 4						

06/03/2016	Sean Treacy Pk	Tipperary	2.11	Offaly	0.12	James Molloy
Round 5						
13/03/2016	Pearse Pk	Longford	1.17	Tipperary	1.11	Shaun McLoughlin
Round 6						
26/03/2016	Clonmel	Kildare	2.13	Tipperary	1.05	Noel Mooney
Round 7						
03/04/2016	Markievicz Pk	Tipperary	3.09	Sligo	0.18	Niall McKenna

Munster Championship

Quarter Final

29/05/2016	Fraher Field	Tipperary	1.15	Waterford	1.07	David Gough
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Semi Final

12/06/2016	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	3.15	Cork	2.16	Paddy Neilan
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Final

03/07/2016	Fitzgerald Stadium	Kerry	3.17	Tipperary	2.10	David Gough
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All Ireland Championship

Round 4A

23/07/2016	Breffni Pk	Tipperary	1.21	Derry	2.17	Martin Duffy
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Quarter Final

31/07/2016	Croke Park	Tipperary	3.13	Galway	1.10	Conor Lane
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Semi Final

21/08/2016	Croke Park	Mayo	2.13	Tipperary	0.14	David Coldrick
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Following weeks of speculation, Liam Kearns was appointed new manager in November 2015, taking over from Peter Creedon who stepped down due to his appointment as principal in Colaiste Dun Iascaigh, Cahir. Paul Fitzgerald and Shane Stapleton were confirmed as his selectors along with U21 manager Tommy Twomey. Whilst Dave Moriarty was named as strength and conditioning coach. Kearns's hand was very much weakened by the departure of Colin O'Riordan to pursue a career in Aussie Rules, while Steven O'Brien and Seamus Kennedy were called into the SH panel. Added to this was the retirement of Andrew Morrissey and the long term injuries to George Hannigan and Ger Mulhaire. With Clonmel Commercial's having won Munster club, it also meant the absence of Michael Quinlivan, Jason Lonergan, Donal Lynch, Kevin Fahey and Ian Fahey in the opening rounds of the league and their immediate ambition was to gain promotion from Division 3. Still it would give plenty young aspiring players from the successful minor team of 2011 and U21 team of 2015, an opportunity to make the breakthrough and this was the big challenge for Kearns and Co. The season opened on January 3rd with a McGrath Cup tie versus Clare in Milltown Malbay and a new look Tipp football side almost beat the Banner only to be caught by a late goal to lose by one point. Two weeks later Kerry came to Tipperary Town for a dead rubber game as both teams had lost their first round and the Premier boys put up an impressive performance before going down to the Kingdom by six points. In the opening Allianz League game on the last day of January in Kilmallock, Tipp dropped a valuable point against Limerick when a goal in each half from Peter Acheson and Josh Keane was not enough to get over the line. Next up was the visit of Clare to Tipp Town and a late goal by Brian Fox gave Tipp a three point victory and a satisfactory position after two rounds. Three weeks later Tipp survived with an injury time point and a long range free from Alan Moloney to gain another point against Westmeath in Mullingar. Back in Sean Treacy Park, Tipp, the following Sunday Tipperary put themselves in a good position for promotion with a five point victory over Offaly. Strengthened by the return of Commercial players Quinlivan, Lonergan and Kevin Fahey Tipp were still unbeaten with two wins and two draws to sit in joint second place with Clare, on six points each. Five players lined out the following Wednesday night against Kerry in the Munster U21 defeat to the Kingdom as Tipp headed to Pearse Park Longford for Round 5 the Sunday after. Despite scoring first Tipperary were playing catch up with Longford all day and a Jason Lonergan goal just after half time gave hope for a short while but a Conor Sweeney black card shortly after ended hopes of victory. Longford finished the stronger to win by six points but the other two table toppers also lost so this evened up the race for promotion. Two weeks later versus Kildare in Clonmel was a black day for Tipp football as we suffered our worst defeat of the year and suddenly instead of chasing promotion we were trying to avoid relegation. Despite having plenty of chances Tipp were wasteful in the first half and also gave away a very soft goal to trail by 1-07 to 0-01 at half time. Tipp rallied in the second half but the margin was too great in dreadful weather conditions as the Lily Whites cruised on to an eleven point win and promotion to Division 2. Tipp on the other hand headed to Markievicz Park the following Sunday for a must win game to survive Division status. Depleted with injuries going into the game and picking up further ones to Michael Quinlivan and Jason Lonergan during the game made the task even more difficult but Tipp survived with a hard earned draw as results elsewhere combined to keep both teams in Division 3 for 2017. Two wins, two defeats and three draws were enough to retain our Division 3 status even though Clare lost one more game than Tipp and were promoted with Kildare. Westmeath

were relegated with Limerick as Tipp planned for their Munster Quarter Final tie with Waterford eight weeks later. The next three months turned into the most amazing period in history for Tipperary football when the team went from rags to riches as events unfolded. Immediately after the League three more players pulled off the panel as Kevin Fahey, Jason Lonergan and Liam Casey headed for the US before the championship panel was announced. This circumvented the new Rule that you couldn't receive sanction to play in the US if you were announced as a championship panel of 26. It's a startling statistic to read that eleven of the 21 players that played against Waterford at the same stage in 2015 were now unavailable for one reason or another. But there were positives as Bill Maher who was released from the Co. Senior Hurling panel threw in his lot with the senior footballers and George Hannigan was back from injury. Other young U21 players like Josh Keane, Colm O'Shaughnessy & Jimmy Feehan stepped up to the plate during the League and a full forward line of Sweeney, Quinlivan and O'Halloran on their day were lethal. Tipp headed for Fraher Park in a very cautious and vulnerable position following an unconvincing end to their League campaign. Waterford took full advantage of Tipp's nervy disposition and had three points on the board before the Premier side found the target. The rejuvenated George Hannigan inspired a Tipp comeback with three points to give us a two point, half time lead 0-08 to 0-06. A lucky 47th minute goal by Quinlivan was the sealing score as Tipp finished strong to win by eight points in what was always going to be a tricky fixture in a historically difficult venue. This win set Tipp up for a semi-final clash with Cork in Semple Stadium two weeks later. The Rebels were also going into this their first game in a vulnerable position having limped out of the 2015 championship following defeat to Kildare in the qualifiers and relegation from Division 1 in 2016. Tipp took full advantage and stormed into the game. Two first half goals by Quinlivan & Sweeney had Tipp seven points up at half time 2-07 to 0-06 despite missing a penalty. The Premier boys kept the pressure on and led by nine points on three different occasions in the second half. A goal by Cork mid way through got a swift reply as Brian Fox goaled for Tipp to keep us nine in front with ten minutes to go. But a mixture of errors and indiscipline handed Cork another goal and they added points to draw level as the game headed into four minutes of added time. Tipp lifted the siege following Cork's 1-6 without reply and the ice cool Kevin O'Halloran slotted two placed balls between the posts to secure a historical victory for the Premier County. This was the first championship victory over Cork since 1944 and Tipperary supporters celebrated a perfect day. A Munster Final date with the Kingdom three weeks later in Fitzgerald Stadium was our date with destiny as Tipp set out to win their first Munster title since 1935. A goal after just 35 seconds by Jimmy Feehan was the perfect start but Kerry played very defensively from there on thus limiting Tipp of any further opportunity to break their backline. Kerry full forward Paul Geaney was a constant torment and his 2-03 from play was equal to what Tipp scored over the whole game from play. A ten point defeat was a harsh lesson for Kearns and his team as Kerry went on to claim their 78th Munster title and their fourth in a row. Tipperary were still in the last twelve for the All Ireland as they drew Derry in Round 4(A) of the qualifiers. Derry lost to Tyrone in Ulster but bounced back through the qualifiers with wins over Louth, Meath and Cavan to also reach the final 12. The choice of Breffni Park as venue became a big issue being in Ulster and Derry having played Cavan there in the previous round. It required an overnight for Tipperary as a four hour journey on match day was not desirable. Whilst Derry had a succession of games through the qualifiers Tipp had a three week break to regroup following the Munster Final defeat. Tipp raced into an early lead scoring 7 points to 3 for Derry and the quality of football was top drawer. Derry fought back and a goal before half time gave them a one point lead. A Kevin O'Halloran goal mid way through the second half helped Tipp to a five point lead going into the final ten minutes. Derry had a strong bench and their introduction brought fresh impetus to their attack scoring 1-4 without reply as the clock ticked away towards the final minute. But five minutes added time gave Tipp new life as Derry retreated into defence to defend their 2 point lead. A pointed free by Kevin O'Halloran and two points from Conor Sweeney inspired Tipp to victory in a nervy finish where Derry had chances to equalize. The Premier marched on to their first ever All Ireland SF Quarter Final one week later against Galway and most important to the sacred sod of Croke Park. Tipp last played Galway in the 2014 qualifiers losing by four points in an eight goal thriller in Tullamore. Galway were coming into this quarter final as Connacht champions having beaten both Roscommon and Mayo and had a two week rest where as Tipp only had a seven day recovery period. This made little difference as Tipp tore at the Tribesmen from the throw in and moved at pace in numbers but this exposed them at the back and allowed Galway score 0-04 to 0-01 in the first quarter. A Quinlivan goal in the 17th minute put Tipp on the road as they led by three points at half time. With Evan Comerford deadly accurate in finding his own players from kick outs, Tipp took control in the second half as Conor Sweeney bagged two goals in five minutes. Tipp's dominance was so much that they could afford not to score in the last 15 minutes and still win by nine points. The final whistle was greeted by scenes of emotion and disbelief as supporters came to terms with another historic moment with Tipp qualifying for their first All Ireland SF semi final since 1935 and recording their first championship win in Croke Park since the 1920 All Ireland final. The Premier side had won the admiration and hearts of the Country with their open, attacking football and minimum use of sweepers or defensive play. Mayo came through their quarter final with a narrow victory over Tyrone which was a relief to Tipp as Northern teams had proved a major stumbling block for Tipp teams in recent times. A place in the All Ireland SF final was the reward against Dublin or Kerry and Tipp dared to dream as they carried on where they left off against Galway and Derry and raced into 0-06 to 0-03 lead in the first 25 minutes. This despite a controversial black card for centre back Robbie Kiely in the ninth minute which eventually

proved a major blow. The ten minutes spell before half time was a disaster for Tipp as Mayo scored 1-07 to Tipp's solitary point. A Jason Doherty goal opened the floodgates in the 26th minute and half time could not come fast enough as Mayo went in six points up. But this Tipp side were resilient and were not going to die easily on this, their biggest ever day. In the first 15 minutes of the second half they clawed their way back and reduced the Mayo lead to two points as the Western's failed to register a score during this period. Then around the 20th minute disaster struck on the double for Tipp as Mayo's Conor O'Shea got through for a goal and one minute later Bill Maher was red carded reducing Tipp to 14 players. Mayo's superior fitness and experience told in those final minutes as they held out for a five point victory. Tipp got a standing ovation from nearly everyone in the 53,212 attendance as they walked disappointed but proud to the dressing room. This group has brought Tipperary football to new heights and the big challenge now is to maintain this steady progress. Since the arrival of John Evans in 2007 respect for football in the County has gradually grown and Peter Creedon's reign consolidated this during his three years. Liam Kearns in his first year as manager has had to deal with the loss of leading players but this allowed him introduce new blood who seized the opportunity and made a massive impression. The challenge is now to build a stronger panel to carry the Premier County to even greater heights and the vision of a major title by 2020 is now a more realistic possibility.

Tipp team v Mayo: Evan Comerford (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Ciaran McDonald (Aherlow), Alan Campbell (Moyle Rovers), Colm O'Shaughnessy (Ardfinnan), Bill Maher (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Robbie Kiely (Carbery Rangers), Jimmy Feehan (Killenaule), Peter Acheson Captain (Moyle Rovers), George Hannigan (Shannon Rovers), Josh Keane (Golden Kilfeacle), Philip Austin (Borrisokane), Brian Fox (Eire Óg Anacarty), Kevin O'Halloran (Portroe), Michael Quinlivan (Commercials), Conor Sweeney (Ballyporeen)

Subs Used: Shane Leahy (Arravale Rovers), Alan Moloney (Rockwell Rovers), Shane O'Connell (Golden Kilfeacle), Ian Fahey (Commercials), Martin Dunne (Moyle Rovers)

Tipperary U21 Football 2016

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Leinster League						
02/01/2016	Hawkfield	Tipperary	1.11	Down	0.13	
09/01/2016	Dr. Morris Park	Tipperary	1.07	Laois	0.08	
16/01/2016	Piltown	Tipperary	0.08	Wexford	1.14	
Shield						
23/01/2016	Dr. Morris Pk	Tipperary	0.13	Carlow	0.08	
30/01/2016	Kildare	Tipperary	1.14	Down	0.18	AET
Munster Championship						
Quarter Final						
09/03/2016	Austin Pk	Kerry	0.11	Tipperary	1.07	Kevin Murphy

The highs of winning Munster in 2015 and losing the subsequent all Ireland Final to Tyrone was going to be a hard act to follow but manager Tommy Twomey and his fellow selectors from the SF set up prepared well. Tipp had eight of the previous years All Ireland starting line up still available but the loss of Colm O'Riordan and Alan Tynan was immeasurable. Croke Park regulations prevented Tipperary from participating in the Longford based Hastings Cup but Laois Co. Board organised an alternative Leinster U21Football League for the Peter McNulty Cup. Tipperary got the maximum benefit from this with three games in the cup proper plus a further two in the Shield section. Played over the month of January we opened with one point victory over Down in Hawkfield, victory over Laois in Dr. Morris Park and a heavy defeat to Wexford in Piltown. In the Shield section Tipp were victorious over Carlow in Dr. Morris Park but in the Shield Final suffered a one point defeat to Down in extra time in Kildare. Five top class games in preparation for our Munster Championship Quarter Final v Kerry and considering these games were played on the same weekends as McGrath Cup and the early rounds of the Allianz Football League, made entry to this competition well worthwhile. Tipp travelled to Tralee for the Kerry encounter and came up against a Kingdom side buoyed by Minor and schools success over the past three years and managed by Jack O'Connor who had stepped up from the victorious minor grade. When Kerry had their mid fielder Matthew O'Sullivan sent off in the 22nd minute and Liam Casey goaled almost immediately it looked like advantage Tipperary but we failed to kick on as the home side kept their composure and held out for a one point victory. Disappointment for Tipp as we relinquished our Provincial crown and an opportunity lost to build on our success. Most of these players continued to be involved with the senior team and enjoyed a long successful season. A new U21F management team headed up by Tipp All Star Declan Browne has been put in place for 2017 and with most of the panel still underage he has a good platform to build from.

Tipperary team v Kerry: Jake McDonald (Commercials), Colm O'Shaughnessy (Ardfinnan), Jimmy Feehan Captain (Killenaule), Danny Owens (Moyle Rovers), Ross Mulcahy (Moyle Rovers), Kevin Fahey (Commercials), Shane O'Connell (Golden Kilfeacle), Paul Shanahan (Upperchurch Drombane), Liam Casey (Cahir), Emmet

Moloney (Drom & Inch), Jack Kennedy (Commercials), Josh Keane (Golden Kilfeacle), Paul Maher (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Stephen Quirke (Moyle Rovers), Tommy Nolan (Drom & Inch), Luke Boland (Moyle Rovers), Brendan Martin (Kilsheelan Kilcash)

Tipperary Minor Football

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Leinster League						
13/02/2016	Killeshin Laois	Laois	3.19	Tipperary	0.07	
20/02/2016	Darver Louth	Louth	2.11	Tipperary	2.05	
27/02/2016	Donard Glen Wicklow	Wicklow	1.16	Tipperary	1.09	
Munster Championship						
Quarter Final						
13/04/2016	Pairc Ui Rinn	Cork	1.14	Tipperary	1.11	Barry Kelly
Play Off 1						
20/04/2016	Semple Stadium	Limerick	3.08	Tipperary	0.11	Eddie Walsh

Tommy Toomey was also appointed Minor manager but later handed over the reins to Michael O'Sullivan who had as his selectors Johnny Nevin and Mattie Doherty plus trainer Jason Coffey and Strength and Conditioning coach Eddie Costelloe.

Like the U21's, the minors also participated in the Leinster League in February and despite losing away to Laois, Louth and Wicklow it was a great opportunity to try different players and build on a championship panel for April. A quarter final v Cork in Pairc Ui Rinn was always going to be a difficult task and the Rebels raced into an early 1-03 to 0-01 lead after seven minutes to justify this. With the Cork full forward line of Gore, O'Donovan and Buckley rampant Tipp did well to haul them back to 1-06 to 0-06 by half time. A fisted goal by Conor Cashman early in the second half continued to keep the Premier side in touch and when Ben Hyland converted an excellent 45m on the 50th minute it brought the teams level. But the deadly Gore and Buckley duo scored points in the final minutes to give the Rebels victory as Tipp headed into the play offs. Despite losing, the competitive nature of Mick O'Sullivan's squad was encouraging and a home game against Limerick in Semple Stadium looked an ideal game to bounce back. Once again a poor start, conceding 1-04 without reply, had Tipp chasing the game and they were down 1-07 to 0-05 by half time. Despite closing the gap with points, two Limerick goals in the second half sealed victory and a very disappointing Tipp limped out of the championship. Considering the long season contesting both Munster and All Ireland Finals in 2015, this was a very sudden finish to the 2016 campaign and left football followers in the County bewildered and very disappointed. The management team for 2017 has been re-structured with Mattie Doherty taking over as Manager, David Power returning to join Michael O'Sullivan as joint coaches and Johnny Nevin selector plus Jason Coffey as Strength and Conditioning coach.

Tipperary team v Limerick: Jack Dolan (Fethard), Jack Harney (Moyle Rovers), Daire Brennan (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Jake Flannery (Galtee Rovers), Colin English (Fr. Sheehys), Paudie Feehan (Killenaule), Stephen Nolan (Drom & Inch), Conor Cashman Captain (Cahir), Ben Hyland (Fr. Sheehys), Ryan Lambe (Commercials), Calvin Boland (Commercials), Daire Egan (Galtee Rovers), John Lyons (Grangemockler Ballyneale), Michael Barlow (Ardfinnan), Adrian English (Ballyporeen), Shane Ryan (Galtee Rovers), Eoghan Ryan (Loughmore Castleiney), Jack Delahunty (Newport), Andrew Vance (Emly)

Tipperary Junior Football 2016

DATE	VENUE	TEAM	SCORE	TEAM	SCORE	REFEREE
Munster Championship						
Quarter Final						
29/05/2016	Fraher Field	Tipperary	0.16	Waterford	0.15	Richard Moloney
Semi Final						
12/06/2016	Semple Stadium	Cork	1.21	Tipperary	0.10	Sean Joy

Once again Tommy Twomey took charge of the squad assisted by Dave Hennessy, Tommy Fitzgerald and Jason Coffey. For a panel he relied on those off his U21F squad who were still available and not on the Senior Football squad of 26. A trip to Fraher Park Dungarvan against the home side in the curtain raiser to the senior game was Tippi's first outing. Waterford dominated the opening half and led by 0-06 to 0-04 at half time and continued this dominance for most of the second half. David Butler and Joe Ryan kept Tipp in touch with points and the accuracy of Ian Barnes from frees meant we were still in the game right to the end. Last year's minor Aidan Buckley came on as a sub and scored the equaliser and took the game to extra time. David Butler scored three points in extra time but it took a late point from Cathal Dillon to seal victory by the minimum as Tipp qualified for a semi final versus Cork in Semple stadium just two weeks later. For this game Tommy Toomey was down three players from his Quarter Final first fifteen with Ian Barnes (holidays), Aldo Matassa (holidays) and Tadhg Fitzgerald (concussion). Tipp still fielded an

experienced team and despite a poor start kept in touch for the first quarter trailing by just one point, Cork raised the tempo and built up an eight point lead by half time and continued to dominate the second half to run out easy winners by 14 points.

Tipperary Team v Cork: Jake McDonald (Clonmel Commercials), Christy Connors (Newport), Rian O'Callaghan (Ballyporeen), Adrian McGuire (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Luke Moore (Clonmel Commercials), Emmet Moloney (Drom & Inch), Gavin Ryan (Rockwell Rovers), Aidan Buckley (St. Patricks), Cathal Dillon (Aherlow Gaels), Thomas Hanley (Aherlow Gaels), Niall McKenna (Cahir), Jamie Bergin (Drom & Inch), Joe Ryan (Kilmurry), David Butler (Drom & Inch), Jack Kennedy (Clonmel Commercials) **Subs:** Mikey O'Dwyer (Arravale Rovers), Daithi Bargary (Golden Kilfeacle), Seamus Grogan (Aherlow Gaels), TJ Ryan (Rockwell Rovers), David Hayes (Fethard), Gordan Peters (Aherlow Gaels)

Month by Month Summary

November 2015

- Seamus Callanan picked up his second All Star Award being named at full forward on the 2015 GAA/GPA Opel Hurling All Stars Team.
- The November Tipperary GAA Draw was held in The Lisdobber Bar, Ballyneale and the first prize went to Dermot Boland, Newport GAA whilst John O'Halloran Mullinahone won the second prize.
- Thurles Sarsfields bowed out of the Munster SH Club Championship losing to Na Piarsaigh Limerick in the Semi Final by 2-15 to 0-17 at the Gaelic Grounds.
- Eire Óg Anacarty won the Co. Junior Hurling "B" Final by defeating Newport 1-16 to 0-11.
- Conor O'Mahony, Shane McGrath, Lar Corbett and James Woodlock all announced their retirements from Inter-County Hurling after long and distinguished careers.
- The Laochra Ghael Awards were presented to 24 worthy recipients in The Dome by Past-President Liam O'Neill.
- St. Mary's Clonmel won the Co. Minor Hurling "A" title by defeating Kiladangan 2-11 to 0-13 at The Ragg.
- Ciaran McDonald Aherlow Gaels played on the Irish team in the Eirgrid International Rules test game at Croke Park beating Australia 56 to 52.
- Patrick "Bonnar" Maher played on the Irish Shinty team that beat Scotland in Croke Park and scored a great goal.
- Clonmel Commercials made history by winning the AIB Munster Senior Football club championship beating Nemo Rangers in Mallow by 1-07 to 0-09. Earlier in the month they trounced Clare Champions St. Josephs by 1-13 to 0-03 in Clonmel.
- Clonoulty Rossmore captured the Co. Minor Football "B" title beating Loughmore Castleiney 0-08 to 1-04.

December 2015

- Moneygall/Clonakenny won their first Co. Minor Hurling "B" title beating Knockavilla Kickhams 5-11 to 1-07 at The Ragg.
- Clonmel Commercials continued their winning streak by defeating Tir Chonaill Gaels in the All Ireland Senior Football Club Quarter Final by 2-12 to 0-09 in Ruislip London.
- In the Munster Awards, Tipperary picked up Players of the Year with John "Bubbles" O'Dwyer (SH), Lyndon Fairbrother (MH), Steven O'Brien U21F whilst Clonmel Commercials won the Club of the Year. Cait Devane was named as the Munster Camogie Player of the Year.
- In the December Tipperary GAA Draw held in Ryan's Lounge, Newport both top prizes were won by Clonakenny GAA Club with Jimmy Greed Dunkerrin and Sarah Jane Cody Clonakenny the lucky ticket holders.
- Galtee Rovers won the 2016 Co. Junior Football "B" title defeating Clonmel Commercials 1-08 to 0-07.
- At County Convention held in The Dome, Matt Hassett took over as President of Tipperary Co. Board, Michael Power was elected new treasurer and Liz Flanagan Ass Treasurer. Joe Bracken Moycarkey Borris was elected PRO having carried out the role in a caretaker capacity for much of 2015.

January 2016

- Clonakenny followed up on their Co. Intermediate Hurling title by completing the double and winning the Co. Junior Football "B" title defeating Galtee Rovers 1-11 to 0-09.
- Tipp Senior Football lost their first competitive games in the McGrath Cup under new manager Liam Kearns to Clare by 1-10 to 1-09 at Milltown Malbay and also to Kerry 0-16 to 0-10 in Tipp Town.
- The January GAA Draw was held in The Norebrook Lounge Clonakenny and the top prizes went to The Price Family Golden (€15,000) and Ray Drennan Roscrea (€10,000).

- Drom & Inch captured the 2015 Co. Minor Football “A” title with a 0-10 to 0-07 victory over Clonmel Commercials at Gortnahoe.
- Killenaule claimed the 2015 Co. U21 Hurling “B” title with a 0-14 to 2-03 victory over Borris-ileigh at Templetuohy.
- Thurles Sarsfields brought the curtain down on 2015 in U21 Hurling “A” by defeating Sean Treacys/Cappawhite 2-22 to 0-11 in Bansha.
- Billy Quinn RIP (Rahealty) who passed away in January won All Ireland Minor Hurling medals with Tipp in 1952 and ’53 (as Captain). He went on to win a National League Medal in 1954 scoring 3 goals in the Final. He also played football with Loughmore and Hurling with Faughs Dublin.

February 2016

- Tipperary Senior Hurling opened their Allianz Hurling League campaign with a 1-23 to 0-12 victory over Dublin in Semple Stadium. One week later Kilkenny brought us down to earth again in Nowlan Park with a 2-17 to 0-18 defeat scoring 2-2 in the final minutes.
- Tipperary Senior Football opened their Allianz Football League campaign with a hard earned draw against Limerick in Kilmallock on a score line Limerick 1-12 to Tipp 2-09. This was followed up one week later with victory over Clare 2-07 to 1-07 in Sean Treacy Park Tipp Town. The following week against Westmeath resulted in another draw Tipp 1-08, Westmeath 0-11 in Mullingar.
- Clonmel Commercials fairytale journey in the Munster & All Ireland club championship came to an end as they fell to Ballyboden St. Endas in the All Ireland semi final by 0-15 to 0-10.
- The February Tipp GAA Draw was held in The Golden Inn, Golden and the first prize of a Skoda Octavia was won by the Ashlawn Nursing Home Syndicate while second prize of a Skoda Fabia went to Michael & Rita O’Carroll Arravale Rovers.
- Our Lady’s Templemore suffered a heartbreak defeat to Ard Scoil Ris in the Harty Cup Final going down 0-11 to 0-08 in Nenagh.
- Jimmy Hennessy RIP (Knockavilla Kickhams) was President of the West Board and was a Tipperary Senior Hurling selector in 1971 when Tipp won the All Ireland.

March 2016

- Tipperary Senior Hurlers lost to Waterford in the AHL by 1-18 to 1-17 in Semple Stadium when a late Austin Gleeson point won the day for the Deise. One week later a John “Bubbles” O’Dwyer point in added time earned Tipp another draw 2-19 to 1-22 against Galway in Salthill. The following week relegation was avoided and an AHL Quarter Final place was secured with a 2-27 to 2-15 victory Cork at Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Senior Footballers continued their unbeaten run with a 2-11 to 0-12 victory over Offaly at Sean Treacy Park. Seven days later vital points were dropped in Glennon Park as Tipp lost to Longford 1-17 to 1-11. Another heavy defeat at the hands of Kildare 2-13 to 1-05 in Clonmel left Tipp in a very uncertain position going into their last game in Sligo.
- In the March GAA Draw held in Seymours Lounge Portroe the Skoda Octavia was won by John Heffernan Moyle Rovers whilst Paul Booth Roscrea won the Fabia.
- Tipperary U21 Football surrendered their Munster crown to Kerry in Tralee with the slenderest of margins 0-11 to 1-07.
- Our Lady’s Templemore lost to St. Kierans Kilkenny by 2-16 to 0-13 in the All Ireland Croke Cup Semi Final played in Clonmel.
- Dualla NS won top prize in the Public Relations category at the Cuman na mBunscoil National Awards.
- Abbey CBS Tipperary won the All Ireland Senior Hurling “B” Final beating St. Louis Grammer School Ballymena 2-19 to 2-13 (AET) in Semple Stadium and claimed the Paddy Buggy Cup.

April 2016

- Tipperary Senior Hurling suffered a one point defeat in the AHL quarter final going down to Clare by 2-13 to 0-18 at Cusack Park Ennis. Clare went on to win the League following a replay with Waterford in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Senior Footballers preserved Division 3 status with a 0-18 to 3-09 draw against Sligo in Markievicz Park.
- The Co. Senior Hurling Championship commenced weekending April 10th with 14 first round games across the County but inclement weather caused half the games to be postponed for one week. The second round was played by the end of April which placed the County in a good position to meet Munster Deadlines.
- Tipperary Minor Football team were glorious in defeat at Pairc Ui Rinn as they went down to Cork 1-14 to 1-11 but exited the championship one week later with further defeat to Limerick 3-08 to 0-11.
- The Co. Senior Football championship kicked off with ten first round games played during Mid April.

- The April Tipperary GAA Draw was held in The Half Way Rathronan and the Skoda Octavia was won by Gay Hackett Borrisokane and the Fabia went to Liam Bergin Bansha.
- In the Scór Sinsir National Final in the INEC Killarney both the Loughmore Castleiney Trath na gCeist team and Sinead Grant in Amhran Aonair were unsuccessful in their quest for an All Ireland title.
- Tipp Minor Hurling team suffered a first round defeat going down to Waterford 1-20 to 1-17 in Walsh Park.

May 2016

- Tipperary Senior Hurlers opened their championship campaign with a 0-22 to 0-13 victory over Cork in the Quarter Final in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Intermediate Hurlers overcame a fancied Cork side going for three in a row on a 3-02 to 1-15 in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Senior Footballers got their season off to a flying start with a 1-15 to 1-07 victory over Waterford in Dungarvan in the Munster Championship Quarter Final.
- Tipperary Junior Footballers joined the seniors in the Munster Semi Final with a 0-16 to 0-15 victory over Waterford in the curtain raiser.
- Tipp U21H defeated Kilkenny 1-16 to 0-17 in the annual Tom O'Hara Tournament held in Gortnahoe on the May Bank Holiday Monday.
- Tipp MH defeated Clare in the Munster Championship play-off by 2-15 to 0-12 in Cusack Park.
- Celtic Challenge: South Tipp won three of their four group games beating Carlow (3-11 to 0-12), Waterford City (4-21 to 0-10), South Kilkenny (5-13 to 5-12) and losing to South Wexford (3-15 to 1-14).
- Two former GAA Presidents Jack Boothman and Joe McDonagh passed away during May. Jack led the Association from 1994 to 1997 and Joe from 1999 to 2000.
- Clonmel Commercials won their third in a row Co. U21 Football "A" titles with a 4-07 to 1-07 victory over Drom & Inch in Cashel.
- Hawkeye was used for the first time in Semple Stadium at the Tipp v Cork SH Munster Championship game.

June 2016

- Tipperary Senior Footballers shock the football world with a 3-15 to 2-10 victory over Cork at Semple Stadium and qualified to meet Kerry in the Munster Final.
- Tipperary Junior Footballers team exit the championship at the hands of Cork 1-21 to 0-10 in the curtain raiser in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Senior Hurlers qualify for the Munster Final with a 3-12 to 1-16 victory over Limerick in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Intermediate Hurlers fielding most of the U21 panel were beaten by Limerick 2-11 to 0-15 and so exited the championship.
- Paul Carroll (Burgess) won the County Senior Long Puck competition held on Fairy Mount Farm in Knockshegowna. The U16 competition was won by Gearoid O'Connor Moyne Templetuohy who went on to win the Munster Final in The Burren Clare.
- Tipperary Minor Hurlers staged a dramatic comeback in Pairc UI Rinn to defeat Cork 0-23 to 1-15 and qualified for the Munster Final.
- In the Celtic challenge South Tipp's good form continued with a 5-17 to 2-15 over Kildare but exited the tournament in the semi-final following a disappointing 1-15 to 0-07 defeat to Kerry at the Gaelic Grounds.
- The new Tipperary GAA Draw got off to a successful start in June with 16,300 members joining up. In the first draw for May held in the Anner Hotel, Aherlows Sean Russell scooped the super €25k first prize whilst two Belarus born children Edward and Oleg Bourke from Emly won the 2nd prize of €10,000. In the June Draw held 2 weeks later Jim O'Meara Moyne Templetuohy won €15k and Fr. Peter Brennan Clonoulty won €10k.
- The John West Feile na nGael was jointly hosted by Tipperary and Waterford over the week ending June 19th and was a wonderful organisational success with Toomevara's Donie Shanahan, as Chairman, at the helm.

July 2016

- Tipperary Senior Footballers were defeated by Kerry in the Munster Final by 3-17 to 2-10 in Fitzgerald Stadium but four weeks later delivered an outstanding performance to defeat Derry 1-21 to 2-17 in Round 4A of the All Ireland Championship at Kingspan Breffini Park Cavan.
- Tipperary Senior Hurlers laid down a serious marker in the Munster Final with a most impressive and comprehensive victory over fancied Waterford with the score 5-19 to 0-13 in the Gaelic Grounds.

- Tipperary Minor Hurling, team despite losing the first round to Waterford, turned their year around by winning the Munster Final with a runaway victory over Limerick 1-24 to 0-10 in the curtain raiser at the Gaelic Grounds.
- Tipperary U21 Hurlers kept the momentum going in the Munster Semi Final with a 2-12 to 1-13 victory over Limerick in Semple Stadium.
- Tipperary Camogie & Ladies Football also win Munster Finals as our Intermediate Camogie Girls defeated Cork and the Intermediate Ladies Footballers beat Clare.
- Tony Fitzpatrick (Carrick Swans) RIP who passed away in July played Senior Hurling and Football with Tipperary in 1977 after winning a Munster U21 Hurling medal in 1972.
- The Tipperary GAA July Draw was held in Champion's Bar Templetuohy and the Skoda Octavia was won by Ann Torpey, Grangemockler and the 2nd Prize of €10k went to Timmy & Eileen Tully with the Tipperary Hurling Club in New York.
- Galway Races Day was hosted by Tipperary Co. Board in Ballybrit on July 25th and attracted up to 400 supporters.

August 2016

- Tipperary Senior Footballers became the talk of the football world following another famous victory over Galway by 3-13 to 1-10 at Croke Park to reach the last 4 in the All Ireland football championship. This was Tipp's first time reaching the All Ireland Football Semi Final since 1935. Despite a brave effort the dream came to an end as Mayo defeated Tipperary 2-13 to 0-14.
- Tipperary U21 hurlers were defeated by a superior Waterford team in the Munster Final by 2-19 to 0-15 in Walsh Park.
- Friends of Tipperary Football Golf Classic was held during August in Thurles Golf Club and was a great success with 100 teams taking part.
- The August GAA Draw was held in The Trap Bar, Grangemockler and Bridget Fitzpatrick, Carrick Swans won the Renault Megane whilst George Fletcher, Clonakenny won €10k as the second prize.
- Tipperary Senior Hurlers reversed the narrow defeat of 2015 by defeating Galway 2-19 to 2-18 in the All Ireland semi-final in Croke Park to qualify for the All Ireland Final.
- Tipperary Minor Hurlers also reversed their All Ireland Final defeat to Galway in the 2015 final by comprehensively beating the Tribesman in this year's semi-final 7-12 to 2-12 at headquarters in the curtain raiser.
- The Br. Dalton Cup was presented to Tipperary Co. Board by the family of the late brother Patrick Dalton who taught in Roscrea, Nenagh, Thurles and Clonmel Schools. The Cup will be played for in the Post Primary Schools U18 ½ Football "B" competition.

September 2016

- All Ireland Final Day on September 4th 2016 will long be remembered as one of the greatest Tipperary Days ever with our Senior Hurlers & Minor Hurlers recording our first double since 1949 and our All Ireland SH champions of 1991 also being the honoured jubilee team.
- Tipperary Senior Hurling team won our 27th All Ireland title beating old rivals Kilkenny by 2-29 to 2-20.
- Tipperary Minor Hurling team confirmed their superiority over Limerick with a 1-21 to 0-17 victory to win our 20th All Ireland title.
- The Homecoming in Semple Stadium was an outstanding organisational success with over 30,000 supporters present whilst Tipp FM led the entertainment before all the players were introduced.
- Tipperary Supporters Club held a very successful Golf Classic in Castlewarden Golf Course Kildare and a dog night in Shelbourne Park to raise funds on the days leading up to the Final.
- The Kilmacud Hurling sevens saw five Tipperary teams in the Quarter Finals and Upperchurch Drombane contested the final before going down to the host club 7-19 to 10-7.
- Upperchurch Drombane hosted another homecoming on the Saturday after the final, being the home club of the Manager Michael Ryan, Co. Chairman Michael Bourke and player James Barry.
- The September GAA Draw was held in The Old Mill Lounge Carrick on Suir and former Co. Chairman Con Hogan, Marlfield won first prize of €15k whilst Walter Doyle, JK Brackens won the €10k 2nd prize.
- Semple Stadium hosted the All Ireland U21H finals with Meath winning the "B" title whilst Waterford were very impressive winning the "A" Final.
- Tipperary Water were announced as the new sponsors of the Tipperary GAA club championship from 2016 succeeding Clean Ireland Recycling.
- Divisional SH titles were won by Kiladangan, Clonoulty Rossmore, CJ Kickhams Mullinahone and Loughmore Castleiney.

October 2016

- The Minor Football “A” Final was won by Golden Kilfeacle who defeated Clonmel Commercials 1-12 to 0-14 in Cahir.
- The Minor Football “B” Final was won by Cashel King Cormacs who defeated Kilsheelan Kilcash 2-09 to 1-07 in Cahir.
- The Minor Hurling “A” Champions for 2016 are St. Mary’s who defeated JK Brackens 2-15 to 2-11 in Semple Stadium.
- The Minor Hurling “B” County title holders are Cashel King Cormacs who defeated Skeheenarinky/Clonmel Óg by 3-19 to 1-11 and completed a unique double having already won the “B” Football Final.
- Thurles Sarsfields retained the Dan Breen Cup and won their 3rd in a row Co. Senior Hurling titles by beating Kiladangan 0-27 to 1-15 in Semple Stadium,
- Newport won the Co. Intermediate hurling title defeating Thurles Sarsfields by 1-17 to 0-15 in Dundrum and returned to Senior Hurling after being relegated in 2004.
- Fethard won the Co. Intermediate Football title defeating Golden Kilfeacle 1-11 to 2-07 in Cashel.
- The Irish Hurling /Shinty team included players from Tipperary with Michael Breen lining out for the seniors who lost to Scotland 0-14 to 0-05 whilst Andrew Coffey and Tom Fox played on the U21 Irish side who defeated the Scots 4-18 to 2-11. William Maher (Ballingarry) was joint manager of the U21 side and the games were played in Inverness, Scotland.
- The October GAA Draw was held in Murphy’s Lounge, Templemore and Top Prize went to Joan Ryan, Kilruane MacDonaghs winning a Renault Megane whilst Richie Kennedy, Templederry won 2nd Prize.
- Loughmore Castleieny captured the O’Dwyer Co. Senior Football Cup with a 1-09 to 1-06 victory over Moyle Rovers played in Leahy Park Cashel.
- Conor O’Brien (Eire Óg Anacarty) announced his retirement from Inter Co. Senior Hurling with Tipperary after ten years having won 2 All Ireland medals 5 Munster medals and 1 National League. Shortly after came the retirement of Paddy Stapleton (Borris-ileigh) who also won 2 All Ireland medals in 2010 & 2016 plus four Munster and one National League. Gearoid Ryan was the third to step down having also won an All Ireland medal in 2010 and 2016 and he had the honour of being named Man of the Match in the 2010 final.
- Mickey (The Rattler) Byrne passed away on October 16th. He was right corner back on the hurling team of the millennium. He won five all Ireland SH medals in 1949, 50, 51 and ’58 as well as eight National League medals plus two Oireachtas titles. With Thurles Sarsfields he won 14 Co. Titles in their record breaking period during the 40’s, 50’s and 60’s captaining the side in 1955 and 1956.

A new Era for Tipperary Football

The performance of our Football teams in recent years begs the question, have we entered a new era for football in the County. Since winning the Munster U21 Football title in 2010 the last six year years has placed Gaelic football at a new level. Capturing the All Ireland Minor title in 2011 was an achievement that surpassed all our expectation and then coming so close in 2015 to winning the All Ireland U21 Football title. But this year’s achievement by our Senior Footballers in reaching the All Ireland Semi Final proved that we can now mix it with the “Big Boys” at the highest level. Defeating Derry was in itself a milestone as it proved that we can now beat a Northern team, as they have been a major stumbling block with progress in both league and championship in recent years. Our immediate thoughts now turn to the Allianz League in 2017 and it is here that our real progress will be truly measured. In 2016, below average performances against Longford and Kildare cost us promotion from Division 3. Our cause wasn’t helped by the departure of key player’s midyear to the US which weakened our panel. Having started the year minus at least six first team players it gave others an opportunity to step up to the mark which they duly did as many of the 2015 under 21’s grasped the chance to make an impact. We hope our panel has settled now although the loss of Peter Acheson is immense. But this group survived the departure of key players in 2016 and already ten new panellists have been announced for 2017. A strong panel is the key and 5 or 6 impact subs is vital when the occasion demands it. Management must insist on total commitment for the full season as we cannot invest time and money in players pre-season and during the league to see them depart at a crucial stage. At our November Co. Committee meeting the Árd Stiúirthóir told delegates that our footballers are actually a lot better than Tipperary people themselves think. He said this in the context of being able to compete in the last eight Round Robin series in the new football proposals which look like being introduced at Congress in February. Each year we plan that our Senior hurlers will be contesting All Ireland Semi-Finals and Finals, maybe now we should also have the same plan for our Senior Football team but to think at this level we must play in Division One or Two of the National League. When Barry O’Brien during his term as Co. Chairman predicted that Tipp would win an All Ireland Senior Football by 2020 very few would have shared that view. Six years later we were just one step away from contesting the All Ireland Final. A lot of good

work has been done with football in recent years. We have been blessed with good managers over all our football teams who have pushed the momentum forward. The football development squads concept is now an integral part of our structures. As a county Board we invest our finances equally in football and hurling. The Friends of Tipperary football are now stepping up to the mark in providing that extra finance to assist Co. Board. I believe the one area that can be improved is the structure of our Co. Football Committee. We need to examine ways to make it more productive and innovative. Under our Bye Laws over one hundred delegates can be present at a monthly football committee meeting. Usually about 20 turn up as most clubs don't send any delegate. Surely this needs to change as it's very difficult to do business with such irregularity. We also need to draw up new terms of reference for the Co. Football Committee to define their role and purpose as there seems to be a lot of confusion in this area as we saw at their recent convention. I believe the Football Management Committee should examine all of this and bring forward draft proposals to County Board. A lot has been done and achieved by Tipperary Football in recent years but we now need to drive forward from a revised and renewed base.

Understanding the GPA

Over the last 17 years the Gaelic Players Association have grown to become an integral part of the GAA and relationships between both bodies have cemented sufficiently to extend the partnership with a new financial plan up to 2020. Whilst there is strong recognition for the GPA at national level, there is still a lack of trust and an underlying suspicion of a desire for a "Pay for Play" as the ultimate objective amongst the general public. To create a greater understanding I will try and explain the reason and need for the existence of the GPA at this time when we now see a fresh call for a new "Club Players Association". The GPA was founded in 1979 but it took until 2010 before they got official recognition from the GAA as the representative body for Senior Inter-County players. The initial objectives of some of the GPA personnel may have included a desire to explore "Pay for Play" and challenge the GAA's amateur status but this was soon knocked on the head when earnest negotiations began under former presidents Nicky Brennan and Christy Cooney. Meetings between both bodies continued but were often fractured and tense. During that time the initial demands of the GPA were:

- Official recognition by the GAA
- Support from the GAA for Government Grants for players
- Improved welfare Provisions i.e. Medical, Insurance and facilities
- Improved entitlements from Counties with gear, mileage etc
- A percentage of the GAA income to be given to the GPA as an entitlement
- Commercial co-operation from the GAA with the GPA.

On the GAA negotiating side their basic aims in any agreement were as follows:

- Commit the GPA to the amateur status of the GAA.
- Give the GPA a proactive role as a provider of supports for Inter Co. Players (e.g. Player Welfare Programmes)
- Provide base annual funding to deliver these supports
- Establish a joint venture between the GPA and GAA to create additional funding to support player welfare programmes and administration of the GPA.
- Allow for positive interaction between the GAA and its Inter-County players to address damaging disputes and strikes.

Over the last five years, relationships between both bodies have improved and developed significantly as both work together in an atmosphere of mutual respect and to the benefit of both the GAA and its Inter-County Players. The success of this relationship can be seen in:

- A reduction of contentious issues between County Committee and Players
- The development of a series of Player Development Programmes and Supports by the GPA.
- Opportunities for the players through the GPA to have a formal input into player relevant policies
- The protection of the GAA's amateur status.

The monitoring of the agreement was entrusted to a Joint Review Committee which includes the Uachtaráin, the Ard Stiurthoir, the GAA Director for Player Welfare and the GAA Financial Director along with the main officers of the

GPA. So we can assume it's strictly controlled. This body meets quarterly with a small sub group meeting almost on a monthly basis. A joint GAA/GPA Commercial initiative was also set up in 2012 known as "Le Cheile" with a remit to explore "New" commercial areas on which both bodies can collaborate. Their most notable success was the combining of the two All Star Awards into one where it's now called the GAA/GPA Opel All Star awards. Other combined commercial agreements exist with PWA, Opro Mouth Guards, Avonmore Protein Milk, Best Menswear etc. This year 2016, a new framework was agreed between the GAA and the GPA which will run from 2017-2019. A summary of the framework will see an enhanced framework as follows:

- The GPA having increased representations at Congress with a right to submit one motion annually.
- New working group to examine demands of Inter-County players in relation to their personal and professional lives and their club and Inter-County careers.
- Improved travelling and nutritional expenses with Central Council assisting Counties with the additional costs
- GAA to increase their funding to the GPA to 15% of net commercial revenue.

This new agreement proves how serious the GAA are about the Welfare of its players and entrust the GPA to safe-guard that Welfare. The GPA supports over 2,100 Inter County players plus a growing number of former players through the Player Development Programme. This programme includes personal development, coaching programmes, career development supports, business start up programmes, educational scholarships, advice for undergraduate and post graduate studies, leadership development, counselling services, support for serious addiction, cardiac screening, medical surgery support on enhanced injury scheme and hardship support. Due to the growing demand from more and more Inter-County players for assistance with their lives off the field, there is a significant challenge to meet these demands and ensure the continued delivery of this vital support. The recent announcement of the formation of a new Club Players Association which will demand an increase in support from 2,100 Inter County players to over 100,000 club players is a massive challenge and one which at this stage would seem a daunting undertaking.

Semple Stadium and the IRFU

It's ironic to hear the outcry following Semple Stadium's exclusion in the IRFU World Cup bid considering Rugby has never before been played at the venue and the reluctance originally to allow non GAA games be played on GAA pitches. Let us remind ourselves of the history. Up to 1971, Rule 27 prohibited GAA members from playing "foreign games". Rule 27 stated "any member of the Association who plays or encourages in any way Rugby, Football, Hockey or any imported game which is calculated or injuriously affect our national games is suspended from the Association." Congress deleted the ban from the Rule Book, in 1971, under the Presidency of Waterford's Pat Fanning.

On April 16th 2005, the GAA made a further historic decision when Congress voted to amend Rule 42 and open its Croke Park doors to Rugby and Association Football (Soccer). Lansdowne Road was demolished in 2007 to be replaced by the Aviva Stadium which opened in 2010. The Irish National Football teams would have had to play their games overseas if the GAA did not come to the rescue. The Irish Rugby team were first to play in Croke Park losing to France on February 11th 2007. A few weeks later emotions ran high as England played Ireland in Croke Park in a most memorable game. Considering the history associated with the stadium and the British Army, many people felt it would be inappropriate to play *God Save the Queen* but played it was and the heavens didn't fall in. The Irish Soccer team also played there in 2007 against Wales and Slovenia in the Euro 2008 qualifiers. In 2009 Leinster and Munster played in a Heineken Cup Semi Final in Croke Park, before a then world record attendance for a club Rugby match of 82,208.

Under Rule 5.1 (uses of Property) Central Council shall have the power to authorize the use of Croke Park and other Stadiums for games in the Rugby World Cup 2023 or 2027 if this tournament is staged in Ireland. How things have changed over 45 years judging by the public outcry over Semple Stadium being excluded from the list of venues in the bid to host the 2023 Rugby World Cup. Different reasons have been put forward for our failure to make the cut but much of this is sheer speculation as I haven't heard any official reason. We have heard about poor access, lack of accommodation, not a tourist area, but at the end of the day this was an IRFU decision in conjunction with the

consultants and bidding committee headed up by Dick Spring and its Ambassador Brian O’Driscoll. I am sure they had a long list of pre requisites drawn up before they ever visited our Stadium. I believe they went away after two visits very satisfied that our facilities and infrastructure were top notch so it seems when it came to ticking other boxes our location fell short. I believe we fell victim to a strategic decision which geographically selected venues based on capacity, location and tourism. Regarding location I believe they selected eight GAA venues which divided into two in each Province. Cork’s city base and Kerry’s tourism scored a lot heavier than Thurles where we have just an 8,000 population capacity and a low profile tourism tradition . Semple Stadium ranks second only to Croke Park with over 50,000 just marginally ahead of the Gaelic Grounds Limerick which incidentally did not win their favour due I suppose to their close proximity to Thomond Park. Having watched previous Rugby World Cups on TV I saw a lot of mis-matches in half full stadiums which I suppose does not give a good impression. Therefore I believe the bidding committee were well catered for capacity wise with Croke Park, The Aviva and Pairc Ui Chaoimh. These three are well capable of hosting potential big audience games featuring the All Blacks, England and not forgetting the home side Ireland plus the closing stage playoff games and the final which looks destined for Croke Park (if it happens). Semple Stadium’s 50,000 capacity plus our non-traditional tourist area were I believe the biggest factors for our non-inclusion. Nowlan Park ticked the box due to its City Base in the Leinster Province and its 25,000 approx capacity possibly put it ahead of Semple Stadium as its closest rival in the South East Region. Maybe it’s better to get the bad news now as you can imagine the excitement now if Semple Stadium was included and in November 2017 the disappointment if the bid fails. Worse still if the bid was successful and Semple lost out in the possible cut from twelve to eight venues required. If we were lucky enough to survive as a named venue in 2023 and we end up with two games between the less renowned Countries which might attract only a handful of spectators then we would say “What was all the fuss about seven years ago” Worse still we could have lost out on big GAA games as a result. Maybe I am just trying to soften the blow to alleviate the disappointment of not being selected.

Trying to solve our club fixtures

It is ironic that our main club championships in Tipperary have too many rounds making them difficult to complete but despite this many of our clubs don’t play enough competitive games. This is becoming a serious bone of contention as our club players are getting very frustrated with fixture plans that are dependent on the performance of our Inter County teams: The GAA is very different to other codes for the following reasons:

1. Our Inter County players serve two masters Club and County.
2. Most of our clubs players play two codes, hurling and football
3. Inter-County players are allowed mandatory rest days in advance of major games
4. Minor & U21 players also play in the other adult grades.
5. In Tipperary we also run Divisional championships which link into the County Championships.
6. The Inter County championship season is played during the summer months which is peak period with better weather and longer evenings thus pushing most club games towards the end of the year.

Solving our club fixture problem will require change in not just one of these areas but in many of them. Basically our club players want a decent number of games played but in Tipperary there is poor interest in County leagues as different formats have been tried in recent years but have been difficult to finish. Regarding Inter County Players serving two masters, club leagues are the answer and playing worthwhile leagues without county players. I know we have been doing this in recent years and at the November County Board meeting, a motion from St. Patrick’s was passed introducing another new format guaranteeing a minimum of five games and compulsory for a club’s first team in either hurling or football. I hope this works despite being similar to previous efforts but maybe clubs will take them more serious now and use them to fill those gaps when County players are busy. My own club in 2016 did not play Co. League but instead opted to play good club teams in other counties like Clare and Limerick. In all they played a dozen such friendlies which were a huge benefit as they steeled them for later in the year. Therein lies the answer. I believe the Munster Council should put Leagues in place covering all the counties in the Province. We see the success of the Provincial and All Ireland club championships and the manner in which clubs embrace them. Alternatively two or three counties could combine to avoid long distance travelling plus matches could be played home and away which would attract local support and ensure pitch availability. We need a fresh approach to Leagues and I believe clubs would embrace and welcome a new initiative. The dual code issue is probably more of an issue in Tipperary than most, with so many prominent clubs playing both games successfully. Loughmore Castleiney have consistently proved it can be done so if a club is committed it can work. The rules covering free days before Inter County games are constantly being challenged and we in Tipperary have motions to this effect at this year’s Convention. I would prefer to see a group set up to examine this and reach a practical consensus. This group could be drawn from County players and managers, CCC Officers and Rules Advisory people who would all pool their views

and come up with sensible solutions. The changing of minor to seventeen and preventing them from playing adult grades and bringing forward the All Ireland Final dates would also free up September weekends for club games. Finally, separating the Divisional championships from County would certainly streamline the Co. Championships and should be considered if difficulties in reaching deadlines continue. If Divisions want the status quo to remain they will have to produce workable Fixtures Plans allowing for successful Tipperary Inter County teams to be in the closing stages of All Ireland championships. These Divisional championship games can only be accommodated outside of the County Championship dates. Back in the period 1969 to 1976 we had separate Divisional & County championships and they worked well. Maybe it's time to roll back the clock to systems that proved successful in producing Munster club and All Ireland club champions. The new football proposals also allow for more definite fixture schedules with the August focus on Round Robin Quarter Finals. This will mean an almost complete August shut down of club activity for Counties like Tipperary who have fresh ambitions of reaching the closing stages every year. I think club players would really appreciate that, as it gives them an opportunity to plan for holidays without the fear of a fixture.

Have your say in the New Strategic Plan

During the last few weeks our Co. Development Committee have been putting the wheels in motion for a new Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. They have formed a small sub-committee who will work on draft proposals for approval by County Committee. For our previous plan which ran from 2011 to 2015 opinions were sought from various groups through public forums and views were recorded and compiled. For the new plan opinions will be sought through on-line surveys as all ages are now familiar with most mediums of modern technology. This so called "Survey Monkey" has been used to great success by GAA Headquarters, and even our own Draw Committee, under the guidance of Committee member Noel Murray from Templederry, carried out a similar survey before making changes in the new draw structure back in May 2016. Therefore everyone will now have an opportunity from their own computer or phone to complete the survey and have their say in the shaping of Tipperary GAA's future. There are plenty of keyboard warriors who are very reactive on websites and social media when different issues arise. It's always very easy to be wise in hindsight but this is an opportunity for the genuine Tipperary supporters to be proactive and positive about the future. Reform of County Board, the effectiveness of Divisions, the plight of small rural clubs, too many senior hurling teams, more/less focus on football, dual players and many more. In the next few weeks the survey will be sent out to every club secretary and they, with assistance from the club PRO will forward it out to the different selected groups in their club. The following are the targeted groups for which different specific questionnaires have been prepared:

- General Public
- Club Officers
- Juvenile club officers
- Juvenile Club Players
- Adult Club Players

We appeal to clubs officers to co-operate with the circulation of this survey to ensure there is at least three responses for each category from every club. This would guarantee approx 1000 replies which would be a wonderful platform from which to build our new Strategic Plan for 2017-2020.

Pride in Club and County

Personally, 2016 will stand out as one of the most satisfying years of my sporting life where I savoured the taste of success at both club and county level. To win All Ireland SH and MH titles as an administrator with my beloved county would normally be classed as ideal in fulfilling one's sporting ambitions, but to see my own club's first team winning a county title is something very special. Every club should experience it, as the outpouring of joy and celebration spreads out into every corner of the parish and lifts community spirit to no end. Whilst county is almost the same thing on a broader scale, the club victory is shared by family, neighbours and friends we grew up with and shaped so much of what we are today. Preparations are very similar as the club starts out the year in January putting fitness programme and training schedules in place and securing commitments from the panel. This panel can include young minors making the breakthrough right up to the ex-county man who is seeing out his playing career where he started, with the friends and neighbours he grew up and went to school with in his own parish. In between on the panel are some who featured on various County teams over the years and others who are just dedicated to the local jersey all their lives and live for the day when the big break through comes. These guys are the life and soul of the club without whom the fabric would not exist. They suffer far more defeats than victories, more disappointments than joy, but they still turn up at the start of every year to play their part in the sport they love. Every club has its

highs and lows and the graph of my own Newport club is typical of this. I watched as a child in the 1960's the club move to become a formidable senior hurling team in the 1970s. When my time came to play in 1979 we dropped to Intermediate ranks and there my destiny lay for ten years until we won the County final in 1989 and returned to Senior ranks again for the whole of the 1990s. The highlight of this was the winning of the North SH title in 1996 but unfortunately we lost a relegation final to Borris-ileigh in 1999 and returned to Intermediate ranks once again. We bounced back up in 2002 beating Kiladangan in the Co. Intermediate Final but underage structures were not strong enough to survive and the drop came quickly again in 2004. The last twelve years in Intermediate grade have been frustrating with new dawns promised winning Divisional titles and reaching closing stages of County Championships but failing to get over the ultimate line. But during this time the clubs juvenile structures were improving and our teams were performing in mostly "A" grades. The minor team of 2014 who reached the County Final was the real launching pad for the 2016 success as many of the team formed the backbone of the County Intermediate title winners. The path to success this year was not very convincing as Newport struggled to find form until late in the year as we struggled to qualify and also lost the Divisional Final. Deep down the team knew their potential as they displayed it in challenge games against senior opposition in Tipp, Clare and Limerick. The team peaked for their last four games and the County final saw them at their best beating Thurles Sarsfields. I have to say I felt very proud to finally be able to present the County trophy to my own club. This team included my own son, my son's friends, other sons whose fathers I played with in the 1980s, two nephews and of course Conor O'Mahony with whom I shared a Tipperary dressing room during most of his Inter County career. Although All Ireland victories are the ultimate there is something very special about one's own club winning a county title, and really isn't that what the GAA is all about?

Buíochas

- Thanks to my fellow officers for their support during 2016. Chairman Michael Bourke matures with age as his confidence in the role rises, ensuring he has a firm handle on the brief. Vice Chairman John Devane has shown he is strong and decisive but also very fair in his common sense approach as head of the Co. CCC. Co. Treasurer Michael Power has taken this huge role in his stride and shown he is not afraid to put in the hard voluntary work and long hours required. Joe Bracken has established himself as a top class PRO keeping the Public informed with his detailed weekly column and acting as a valued link between the media and Co. Board. Indeed our top table meets regularly (almost weekly) to stay on top of all our briefs especially during the very busy last few months.
- The County Board is supported by a lot of hard working officers like:
 - Ass Secretary Tom Maher whose primary role as Co. CCC Secretary consumes the bulk of his time and he handles this brief very efficiently to ensure our games at club and post primary school level are run to a very high standard. His administration support in Lár Na Páirce is invaluable as the annual workload increases to unprecedented levels each year.
 - Assistant Treasurer Liz Flanagan is always willing to help and her attention to detail is second to none.
 - Co. Development Officer PJ Maher has taken this role to a new level as he brings his professional experience to bear on his dealings with clubs with advice and assistance.
 - Co. Childrens Officer ,Nicholas Moroney, is a very safe pair of hands in this most responsible role and is a vital link between the County Board, Clubs and Croke Park.
 - Co. IT Officer, Lisa Stapleton ,has become a real asset to the Board as she monitors and controls all movement on our website. Her organisational abilities shone through when alongside Joe Bracken, they organised a top class medal presentation function on November 26th in the Anner Hotel.
 - Ofigeach Cultúir, Seosamhain Ní Chathail, is a great ambassador for the Board as she promotes our culture through Scór and our Irish language through the Gaeltacht Scholarships. We are fortunate to have a lady of her ability on the team.
 - Coaching Officer, John Ryan, leads a top class games development team who are highly rated at Provincial and National level. On top of their heavy work schedule they were handed the task of visiting all our schools with the All Ireland cups over the past three months. The school visit programme is now complete and we really appreciate the efficient manner in which they completed this huge task.
 - Our Provincial and Central Council delegates represent us well and John Costigan, Jimmy Minogue and Sean Nugent will never let the county down as they all carry out their duties while maintaining the highest of standards.
 - We are fortunate to have very active and hardworking Co Management and CCC Committees. All these members are volunteers and give their spare time to their Divisions and Co. Board and their work should be always appreciated.

- Thanks to all my work colleagues in Lár Na Páirce both full time and part time for their support and loyalty. Our GAA Shop had a very busy season but the dedication of the staff ensured we were able to cope with the extra demand for merchandise due to Tipperary's All Ireland Success.

Conclusion

Our hopes are high at the end of a busy year as we set out the road for 2017. We are now the team to beat in Senior Hurling and to date we have handled the success well as there is a new maturity and will to win in this squad. Let's hope for more of the same. Our Senior Football team have now set the bar for themselves and tasted the smell of success in 2016. Maintaining this level is a serious challenge with the immediate target of League Promotion from Division 3 the main focus. During 2016 Tipperary was centre stage in both hurling and football which gave us all a great sense of pride. As the Premier County we demand the best from all our teams and as All Ireland Champions in Senior and Minor hurling we can hold our heads high going into 2017. Our Senior Footballers have given us fresh enthusiasm as we look forward with anticipation to repeat performances in the new season. The book is now closed on our club championships in 2016 as Convention maps out our course for another 12 months.

Other targets for 2017 are the launching of a new strategic plan and commencing the development at Dr. Morris Park. Both of these projects will make a big statement for Tipperary GAA into the future.

Thanks to all our clubs, supporters and sponsors for a wonderful year.

Crioch

Is féidir linn féachaint ar aghaidh ar 2017 le muinín agus dóchas. Táimid ag feitheamh le díograis úr ar an éacht céanna a dhéanamh ag na hiománaithe agus na peileadóirí. Tá deireadh déanta le comórtaisí na gclubanna agus imeachtaí 2016. Tá an chomhdháil bailithe chun cúrsa a leagan amach do 2017. Buíochas mór dár gclubanna, dár lucht leanúna agus dár gcomhlachtaí a thugann urraíocht dúinn.

Ar aghaidh le Tiobraid Árann.

Tadhg De Floid

Runáí Choiste Chontae Thiobraíid Árann