

Tuarascáil an Rúnaí 2021

(Tipperary County Secretary's Annual Report)



TIM FLOYD County Secretary

Tosnú

Is mé ag díriú isteach ar mo 15ú bliain mar rúnaí an Bhoird, agus mo bhliain deireanach sa phost, féachaim siar ar 2021 le díomá, mar is é seo an chéad bhliain de mo shealbhaíocht nár tháinig trófaí de shaghas éigin chuig an contae. Rinne Covid-19 deimhin de go raibh 2020 tarraingthe amach maidir le imeachtaí idir-chontae, ach tharla rudaí níos gasta i mbliana de bharr dianghlasáil agus críoch níos luaithe chun an séasúr scoilte a éascú. Is ar ár gcrabhchomórtaisí a bhí aghaidh na ndaoine i 2021. Thosaíomar go luath i mí Lúnasa agus chríochnaíomar le tonn spleodair nuair a bhain Luachmá-Caisleán Laighnigh éacht aonair amach agus iad á thóstadh tríd an chontae (agus an tír nach mó) ar fad.

Bhí cathanna móra againn sna seomraí boird chomh maith, nuair a ghlacadh leis an rún chun uasteorannú 16 foireann a chur ar na craobhchomórtaisí. Níos déanaí sa bhliain d'aithríodh Corn Shéamais Uí Riain go Príomh-Idirmheánach, athrú a bhí conspóideach go leor, ach nuair a shocraíonn an deannach, measaim go mbeidh sé soiléir go bhfuil an réiteach is fearr againn. Beidh na craobhchomórtaisí níos iomaíche, ár gcaighdeáin níos airde agus ár gcluichí níos tarraingtí dár lucht leanúna dá bharr.

Introduction

Once again, we reflect on a difficult year, especially the Inter-County first half, as the challenges of Covid 19 in 2020 continued not just for the GAA but for the wider society in our country and beyond. In this convention book, the various reports will paint pictures of the challenges all our committees faced in carrying out their roles but in all cases, positivity shone through and the will to succeed was dominant. Our club championships were the beacon of light that captured the imagination of everyone both inside and outside the county. Our county finals were all full of excitement and the competitiveness of all our games proves we have got our structures right at last. We all have our affiliations and allegiances accompanied by different colours and different accents but once our own departs the scene we follow the neighboring parish or the club we admire most after our own. I think Loughmore-Castleiney captured the hearts of most in 2021 especially the way they repeated their historic senior double of 2013, but more about that later. Once again, we look forward to a new beginning, especially in hurling as former legends Colm Bonnar and Brendan Cummins take on the challenge of management as they hope to steer Tipperary Senior and U20 Hurlers on the road to success. James Woodlock will be hoping he can learn from his chastening experiences of 2021 and give us hope at minor level while in football David Power and Paddy Christie will try and build on the progress of our U20 Footballers in 2020. John McNamara Jnr carries on a great football family tradition as he takes on the management of the Tipperary Minor Footballers in 2021. We wish all our Inter County team Management the best of luck and even if they don't have success, we hope we will see progress towards it.

County Convention in December 2020 was held virtually from the civic offices in Clonmel and proved to be one of the most eventful of recent years. Joe Kennedy (Moyne Templetuohy) took over the chair from John Devane (Boherlahan Dualla) but the excitement around the elections drew most attention as Jimmy Minogue was elected new Vice Chairman, Jonathan Cullen (PRO) and John Donovan (Ass Treasurer). The motions passed saw the introduction of U19 as well as retaining U21 whilst the administration of U17 (Minor) was passed on to Coiste na nÓg. Progress on the development of our facilities remained in the pause mode as Dr Morris Park awaits a Sports Capital Grant announcement before we can proceed with the refurbishment and extension to our dressing rooms. As I write this an announcement is imminent as our builder Cooldine Constuction is ready to proceed. A full-size all-weather pitch in LIT (now TUS) Thurles is also delayed and it now looks like 2023 as a most likely commencement date. The good news is that the first full-size all-weather pitch in the county will become a reality as the Fethard Town project conjunction with Coolmore is well advanced and should be in operation in January 2022. Tipperary Co Board are in the process of signing an agreement, giving us priority booking which will be a great advantage, especially to our football teams and schools.

Fund Raising was restored in most areas and the Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw consolidated its importance to clubs by increasing membership to 17,000 at its first draw in October 2021 with the addition of a Racehorse called

‘Sean Hogan’ as a novel attraction. Both Tipperary Supporters Club and the Friends of Tipperary Football ran very successful Golf Classics. Streaming of our club games continued as we increased from showing 21 games in 2020 to showing 30 games in 2021 with RTE and TG4 transmitting a further five games. Despite the uncertainty with our games, the commitment from our sponsors TENEO was admirable as they showed their confidence up front in Jan 2021 by honouring their third year of the contract with full payment of the sponsorship retainer. As they now have announced their departure, I wish to thank them for being wonderful sponsors over the past three years.

The year past has brought sadness to many families as we lost some great friends and Gaels. Among them were Tipperary hurling legends like, Theo English Johnny Everard and Tom Moloughney along with great club people like Ger Gavin (Nenagh), Paddy Kelly (Kildangan), Nicky O Shea (Fethard), John McNamara (Commercials), Jim Max (Thurles Sarsfields), PJ Leahy (Moyne Templetuohy) and many more. Over the years all of these had become personal friends and their passing leaves a massive void in the association and in our lives.

The achievements of Loughmore Castleiney will be the standout highlight of 2021 but I’m sure clubs like Moyne Templetuohy, Skeheenarinky, Ballina etc. will celebrate their county titles against all the odds of Covid 19. Over the next few pages of my report, I will bring you my version of the events of 2021 commencing with the Inter County scene as follows.

Tipperary Senior Hurling 2021

Allianz SH League

R1: 8/5/21	LIT Gaelic Grounds:	Limerick	0.20	Tipperary	0.20	(Colm Lyons)
R2: 15/5/21	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	0.22	Cork	2.16	(Johnny Murphy)
R3: 22/5/21	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	2.14	Galway	0.20	(John Keenan)
R4: 6/6/21	Cusack Park	Westmeath	0.16	Tipperary	4.27	(Liam Gordan)
R5: 13/6/21	Walsh Pk	Waterford	2.29	Tipperary	3.21	(James Owens)

Munster Championship

S/F: 4/7/21-LIT	Gaelic Grounds:	Tipperary	3.23	Care	2.22	(James Owens)
Final: 18/7/21-	Pairc Ui Chaoimh:	Limerick	2.29	Tipperary	3.21	(Paud O’Dwyer)

All Ireland Championship

Q/F: 31/7/21	Pairc Ui Chaoimh:	Waterford	4.28	Tipperary	2.27	(Colm Lyons)
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Tipperary Senior Hurlers ended 2020 disappointingly with a two-point defeat at the hands of Galway in the All-Ireland Quarter Final on Nov 21st. Despite this disappointment Liam Sheedy and all his backroom continued in charge encouraged by the fact that if Covid permitted the 2021 championship would be complete by August and not in the horrid weather conditions we played in the winter of 2020. Despite a delay in the lifting of general restrictions, Inter County GAA training was allowed resume from April 19th. Counties were invited to vote on a three or five game league and the five game was favored by the majority including Tipperary. The 2021 training panel of 36 showed little change with only Sean O’Brien (retired), Daragh Mooney and Ger Browne being replaced by Eoghan Connolly, Alan Tynan plus Patrick “Bonnar” Maher and Billy McCarthy returning from injury. Despite only a three week lead in to the first League game Tipp Players were well conditioned under the guidance during lockdown of Cairbre O’Cearallan. So with just ten collective sessions on grass, we headed for the Gaelic Grounds on Sat May 8th to face the 2020 League, Munster and All Ireland champions. In a closely contested game from start to finish, it was Tipperary who nudged ahead in the third quarter taking a five-point lead only to be reeled in by Limerick in the final minutes when they brought on some of their big guns. We failed to score from play in the second half as Jason Forde kept us in the game with placed balls. A Dave Reidy point in added time gave Limerick a draw and Tipp were relieved to hear the final whistle as the Treaty side looked to be taking control of the game. Newcomer Bryan O’Mara who was showing great promise suffered a broken arm which ruled him out for the season. Back to Semple Stadium seven days later, Cork were the challengers as Jason Forde once again was our savior from placed balls scoring 0-10 from frees. The Rebels scored a goal in each half, and it took a levelling free from Jason inside his own half to draw our second game in a row. It was also our second game without scoring a goal and accumulating seventeen wides was also a concern for team management. Next up it was Galway, who were flying high with two wins including a win over Limerick the previous weekend. Tipperary opened in style by

breaking their “no goal” duck within five minutes as Noel McGrath set up Jason Forde for our first League goal. Noel himself had another green on the 30th minute as Galway fought back and reduced a seven-point deficit to just two by half time. The Tribesmen took the lead in the third quarter, but a solid Tipp defence kept them goalless as Tipp dominated the final quarter to record our first league win by an impressive five points. More bad news on the injury front as Patrick “Bonnar” Maher sustained a ruptured Achilles Tendon at training having fought his way back following a cruciate knee injury in 2019. Billy McCarthy suffered a similar fate with a pulled hamstring on his comeback from injury.

Our fourth League game took Tipperary to Cusack Park, Mullingar, and an opportunity to try out some new players. Robert Byrne, Paddy Caddell and Willie Connors started and during the game Craig Morgan, Paul Flynn, James Quigley, Mark Kehoe and John Meagher were all introduced. By half time Tipp led by eleven points and eased to a 23-point victory scoring four goals in the process with 1-8 coming from the subs bench. A red card for Robert Byrne in the second half was the only set back.

Tipperary’s final League Group game was in Walsh Park, and it proved to be a serious wake up call to Tipperary which had repercussions later in the year. The Premier side had an impressive start and were four points up at the first water break with the goal coming from Jason Forde. This was extended to six up on 22 minutes before the tide started to turn for the Decies. Two goals by Dessie Hutchinson helped them into the lead but a Noel McGrath green gave Tipp a slender one-point half time lead. Waterford were rampant in the second half and ran at Tipperary in waves scoring eight points in the third quarter. Despite a Seamus Callanan goal in the 60th minute, Waterford’s dominance continued in the final minutes as they ran out impressive five-point winners exposing serious weaknesses in Tipperary. This gave rise to anxious analysis in the following weeks as we prepared for a possible duel with the same opposition in a Munster Championship. So, Tipperary exited the League once again having last won the trophy in 2008 but the manner of this defeat was most worrying as we crumbled once Waterford upped the ante in the second half. Added to this was injuries to Patrick “Bonnar” Maher and Bryan O Mara plus Niall O Meara now ruled in the short term with appendicitis.

When it looked as if Waterford’s star was on the rise the Banner County stopped them in their tracks two weeks later in the opening round of the Munster SH Championship with a four-point defeat in Semple Stadium. Tipperary now faced Clare one week later in the Munster Semi Final in Pairc Ui Chaoimh. We were now the momentum team with a championship victory under our belts. The Premier needed to also put down a marker as to our position in the rankings of hurling counties. Covid restrictions eventually allowed 3000 spectators in the Gaelic Grounds despite 8000 at the Leinster Semi Final which was a test event. The game opened at a frantic place with an early Ian Galvin goal balanced by a cracking first time pull from Michael Breen that went straight to the net to leave the sides level at 1.7 each at the first water break. A Tony Kelly goal before halftime gave the Banner a one-point lead at half time. The second half commenced with controversy when Clare’s Aidan McCarthy was sin binned for a foul on Jake Morris inside the Clare 20-meter line but close to the sideline. Under a new rule passed at Congress in Feb 2021. Referee James Owens deemed this a penalty which was also part of the punishment as well as the sin binning, which Jason Forde duly put away. During McCarthy’s ten minutes in the sin bin, Tipperary outscored Clare 2-4 to 0-2 with Seamus Callanan goaling in the 45th minute. Despite being ten points adrift, Clare battled hard to the final whistle and added points to bring them within four points at the finish having been denied two goals by excellent defending. Tipp advanced to the Munster Final and another duel with Limerick two weeks later but at least guaranteed an All-Ireland Quarter Final. Limerick were going for their third Munster title in a row, not achieved since the Mackey era in the 30’s. Tipp hadn’t won a Munster title since 2016 having dominated the previous ten titles.

Back to Pairc Ui Chaoimh for a mid-summer Munster Final unlike our duel with the Treaty side in torrential rain in November 2020. For the first half the Premier dazzled in the sunshine as Tipperary outclassed Limerick with slick, precision hurling that has been our trademark in recent years. Goals from Jake Morris and John O Dwyer were route one classics and along with sixteen points, we found ourselves ten points up at half time as Limerick were struggling all over the field. Their customary attacking from the back through the middle was thwarted by Tipp as we turned over ball after ball which our own forwards capitalized on especially Jason Forde who was popping up everywhere with points. The scoreboard read 2.16 to 0.12 at half time in favour of Tipp but by the second half water break Limerick led 1.22 to 2.17 as they outscored us by 1.10 to 0.1. The arrival of Aaron Gillane before half time had a major impact on the game as he was involved in many scores and brought the save from Barry Hogan where Seamus Flanagan goaled from the rebound. He was probably still lucky to be on the pitch as a strike with the hurley on Cathal Barrett only merited a yellow from referee Paud O Dwyer. This could have been a very controversial issue but the manner of Limericks dominance in the second half certainly overshadowed the incident. A typical Kyle Hayes individual effort where he burst through the Tipp defense after the second water

break for a goal was the real killer blow as it put Limerick five points up. In desperation Tipperary management emptied the bench and brought on Willie Connors, Paddy Cadell, Mark Kehoe, Niall O Meara, and Brian McGrath to rescue the situation but the ship had already sunk and Mark Kehoe's goal at the end was only a consolation. Full credit to Limerick who found that extra gear in the third quarter to rein in the Tipp dominance, but that is why they are the best team of recent years as they proved by winning back-to-back All Irelands and their third in four years.

Back to the drawing board for Tipp as one week later the quarter final draw matched us against Waterford back in Pairc Ui Chaoimh again on July 31st. The Deices beat Laois and then overpowered Galway in their qualifier game with their typical power running game displayed against Tipperary in our League game at Walsh Park in June. The same running game was the root of our third quarter collapse in the Munster Final against Limerick. So, Tipperary went into this quarter final forewarned and fore-armed

Tipperary had 13 days to recover from the Munster defeat whilst Waterford had just seven days rest having survived a late Galway comeback to close their qualifier out in added time. Despite the aftereffects of the second half Limerick tsunami, Liam Sheedy and Co. didn't press the panic button and made just one change to the starting line up with Paddy Cadell coming in for Seamus Kennedy. Waterford were quickest out of the blocks and were 0-5 to 0-1 up within five minutes but in the space of two minutes Seamus Callanan goaled twice to put Tipp in front. Despite this Waterford hurled with a greater conviction and were rewarded with two goals by Dessie Hutchinson to give them a slender one-point lead at half time. Once again, the third quarter was Tipp's downfall as Waterford outscored us 1-7 to 0-3 with the goal coming from a controversial penalty converted by Stephen Bennett. In the final quarter Tipp played their hearts out and bit into the lead with points but spurned goal chances especially three minutes into injury when a John McGrath effort was deflected over the bar. A goal here would have given us certain victory but it was Waterford who drove the final nail into Tipp's coffin with a Neil Montgomery goal in the closing seconds to give them a four-point victory. Looking across the three crucial games that decided Tipperary's fate in 2021, there is a consistent theme that led to our lack of success. In our final League game versus Waterford, the Munster Final versus Limerick and now our All-Ireland Quarter Final against the Deices, we struggled to cope with the fast-running game plus our poor level of performance in the third quarter. In 2020 these failures were also evident at a similar exit stage against Galway in the final League game plus the All-Ireland Quarter Final and against Limerick in the Munster Championship. Poor weather conditions and November hurling were blamed for these defeats and Tipperary would be a different team and more suited to summer hurling in 2021. Over the last twelve years, Tipperary have been renowned for our skill with open play passing movements leading to delightful scores. This flair has brought us three All Ireland titles in one decade with Liam Sheedy as manager for two of these.



Tipperary senior hurling management from 2022 - Tommy Dunne, Colm Bonnar (manager), Paul Curran and Johnny Enright.

Liam stepped down as Manager a few weeks following the Waterford defeat having given his total commitment to the Tipperary cause for a second three-year term from 2019 to 2021. He was unfortunate that two of the three years were under the shadow of Covid which really restricted his scope as a manager.

The Tipperary SH Team lined out against Waterford as follows.

Barry Hogan (Kiladangan), Cathal Barrett (Holycross Ballycahill), Brendan Maher (Borris-Ileigh), Padraic Maher (Thurles Sarsfields), Barry Heffernan (Nenagh Eire Og), Paddy Cadell (JK Brackens), Ronan Maher (Thurles Sarsfield), Alan Flynn (Kiladangan), Dan McCormack (Borris-Ileigh), Michael Breen (Ballina), Jason Forde (Silvermines), Noel McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney), Seamus Callanan (Drom & Inch), John O'Dwyer (Killenaule), Jake Morris (Nenagh Eire Og).

Subs: Seamus Kennedys (St Marys), Mark Kehoe (Kilsheelan Kilcash), Willie Connors (Kiladangan), Niall O'Meara (Kilruane McDonaghs), John McGrath (Loughmore Castleiney)

Subs not used: Brian Hogan (Lorrha), Eoghan Connolly (Cashel), Paul Flynn (Kiladangan), Brian McGrath (Loughmore), James Quigley (Kiladangan), Dillon Quirke (Clonoulty Rossmore)

Also on the Panel: Robert Byrne (Portroe), Patrick Maher (Lorrha), Paul Maher (Kilsheelan), Billy McCarthy (Thurles Sarsfields), John Meagher (Loughmore Castleiney), Craig Morgan (Kilruane), Bryan O'Mara (Holycross), Billy Seymour (Kildangan), Alan Tynan (Roscrea), Andrew Ormonde (JK Brackens), Gearoid O'Connor (Moyné Templetuohy)

Under 20 Hurling

2020 Championship

Munster Quarter Final

19-10-2020	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	1-19	Clare	0-12	Thomas Walsh
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Munster Semi-Final

15-12-2020	Fraher Park	Tipperary	5-18	Waterford	3-16 (AET)	John O' Halloran
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Munster Final

23-12-2020	Pairc Ui Caoimh	Cork	1-16	Tipperary	1-14	Johnny Murphy
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2021 Championship

Munster Quarter Final

12-7-2021	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	3-24	Waterford	2-21 (AET)	Nathan Wall
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Munster Semi-Final

20-7-2021	Semple Stadium	Cork	3-20	Tipperary	2-17	John O' Halloran
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Under 20 Hurling 2021

Following All Ireland success in 2018 (U21) and 2019 (U20), Liam Cahill and Michael Bevans stepped down and John Devane was appointed manager in November 2019. John brought in as selectors Ken Dunne, Dan Hackett and Ritchie Ruth. His first year was frustrating as when he had his panel assembled in February 2020, lockdown forced him to pause collective training. They had to wait until September to resume training, were victorious over Clare in October only to have Level 5 re-introduced again until December 1st. The Munster Semi-Final of the 2020 championship eventually went ahead on County Convention night December 15th, 2020. This forced County Board officers to watch the game on the big screen at the Convention Centre in The Civic Offices in Clonmel as our U20 hurlers locked horns with Waterford in Fraher Park, Dungarvan. The Deise had a goal inside four minutes and dominated the first half but a goal by Andrew Ormande in the 18th plus a penalty save by Aaron Browne kept Tipperary within two points at half time. Devon Ryan kept the Premier side in touch throughout the second half with his accuracy from frees but a Michael Kiely penalty goal for Waterford in the 52nd minute had Tipp five points down and in trouble. Six minutes of added time worked in Tipperary's favor as substitute Max Hackett scored the equalizing goal to force extra time at 2-14 each. In an amazing turn around, it was Tipperary who dominated extra time and scored 3-4 to 0-0 in the first ten minutes with the goals coming from Devon Ryan and Conor Bowe. Despite not scoring in the second half of extra time we held out for an eight-point unbelievable victory which did not look likely early on.

The prize was a Munster Final date with Cork in Pairc Ui Chaoimh on Wednesday night July 20th. The Rebels looked very impressive, but Tipp kept them to points only so stayed with them to trail by just one point at half time. We had numerous goal chances, but it was Cork who raised the first green flag in the second half when Jack Cahalane goaled from the rebound of a good Aaron Browne save. This put them five points up and a goal by

Andrew Ormond in added time was too little too late as Cork ran out deserving winners. This Tipperary U20 panel was assembled over 12 months ago and had to endure two level 5 lockdowns which curtailed preparations. Indeed, had we won, the team would have faced another lockdown as the Leinster Final was not played until 2021 and eventually Cork went on to win the All-Ireland Final in May 2021.

2021 Munster U20 Hurling Championship

John Devane and Co. stayed in charge for their second year with over half their panel still available from 2020. Once again Covid disrupted preparations and collective training was not permitted until mid-April, but at least it was summer hurling commencing in mid-July. Once again, we faced Waterford but this time at Quarter Final stage and at home in Semple Stadium. Waterford had twelve of their 2020 starting team still underage and had beaten this Tipp team as minors so it was a massive challenge. Paddy Creedon gave us a perfect start with a goal in the first few seconds and Sean Hayes finished the half with another green flag to give Tipp a 2-5 to 0-6 lead at half time. Waterford rallied in the third quarter and a Michael Kiely goal narrowed the gap, but Tipp held that five-point advantage and the impact of subs like Jack Leamy and Devon Ryan was telling as we entered the final quarter landing 2-12 to 1-11. Waterford pressed hard and had it down to three points as the game entered added time. They were rewarded as sub-Sean Walsh goaled to take the game to extra time just like December 2020 in Fraher Park. The momentum was now with Waterford and, helped by three-pointed Reuben O' Halloran frees, they looked poised for victory in extra time. A goal by Jack Leamy swung the momentum back to Tipp as we added the points in the second period of extra time leading to a surprisingly easy victory in the end. The Premier County had just eight days to prepare for a Munster Semi-Final against Cork in Semple Stadium on Tuesday July 20th. Tipp's strong finish against Waterford was carried into the Cork game as we looked very impressive in the first half. With Devon Ryan unerring from play and frees plus a sixth minute Max Hackett goal, Tipperary were full value for their 1-13 to 0-10 half time lead. In a very similar situation to our seniors two days previously against Limerick in the Munster Final, our U20's were swamped by a Rebel Tsunami in the second half as Cork raised their game to overwhelm Tipperary in the third quarter scoring 2-5 to our 0-1 and suddenly we went from six points up to four points down. Goals from Daniel Hogan and Ciaran Cotter were added to from another sub-Luke Horgan in the final quarter. Kyle Shelly scored a goal for Tipp in added time, but this was only a consolation as the game ended with a reversal of the six-point half-time lead with Cork moving onto contest the Munster Final. A few weeks later John Devane stepped down as manager having served his two-year term. The two extra time victories over Waterford are happy memories for him but defeat to the Rebel County in both years were most disappointing. Covid did not help as preparations during both years were erratic with lockdowns preventing consistent collective training. Still, other counties had also to endure this, and it was down to personal responsibility and being ready for the big days. Tipperary are still very competitive at this level as we proved against Waterford and our first half performance against Cork. There is no need to press the panic button yet and new manager for 2022, Brendan Cummins, has hit the ground running and already has up to eighty players on programmes.



John Devane, U20 hurling manager

Tipperary Under 20H team v Cork:

Aaron Browne (Cashel King Cormacs), Conor O'Dwyer (Cashel King Cormacs), Keith Ryan (Upperchurch/Drombane), Fintan Purcell (Drom & Inch), Conor Whelan (Carrick Davins), Kevin Maher (Borris-Ileigh), Johnny Ryan (Arravale Rovers), Max Hackett (Moycarkey/Borris), John Champion (Drom & Inch), Dara Stakelum (Thurles Sarsfields), Devon Ryan (Cashel King Cormacs), Kian O'Kelly (Kilruane MacDonaghs), Sean Hayes (Kiladangan), Paddy Creedon (Thurles Sarsfields), James Devaney (Borris-Ileigh). Subs: Peter McGarry (St Marys), Jack Leamy (Golden-Kilfeacle), Colm Fogarty (Lorrha), Conor Hennessey (Nenagh Eire Og), Kyle Shelly (Moycarkey/Borris), Sean Phelan (Nenagh Eire Og), Tony Cahill (Drom & Inch).

Also on panel: Michael O'Shea (Mullinahone), Luke Shanahan (Upperchurch Drombane), Rory Brislane (Toomevara), Michael Corcoran (Silvermines), Robert Doyle (Clonoulty Rosssmore), Enda Dunphy (St Marys), Ciaran O'Dwyer (Killenaule).

Minor (U17) Hurling

2020 Championship (Not inc. in 2020 Convention Book)

Munster Semi Final

12/12/20-	Pairc Ui Rinn-	Tipperary	2.23	Waterford	0.12	(Simon Stokes)
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Munster Final

20/12/20-	LIT Gaelic Grounds	Limerick	2.22	Tipperary	0.25	(Rory McGann)
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2021 Championships

Munster Qtr Final

14/7/21-	LIT Gaelic Grounds	Tipperary	2.27	Kerry	1.14	(Ciaran O'Regan)
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Munster Semi Final

27/7/21-	Pairc Ui Rinn	Waterford	2.25	Tipperary	4.11	(Joe Mullins)
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Completion of 2020 Championship

Paul Collins (Drom & Inch) was in the second year of his term having taken over from Tommy Dunne at the end of 2019. Due to Covid the 2020 championship was deferred from May to October and Tipperary accounted for Kerry in the Munster Qtr. Final by 0.32 to 0.9 in the LIT Gaelic Grounds. Immediately after this game the country re-entered Level 5 lockdown until Dec 1st and the Premier County's Semi Final versus Waterford went ahead six weeks later on Dec 12th in Pairc Ui Rinn. Waterford were backed by star players from the De La Salle and Blackwater College teams with Darragh Duggan of Dungarvan Colleges in charge. Tipperary started well and led for all the first half with a Jack Leamy goal before the water break giving us a commanding lead. Despite missing three more goal opportunities, Tipp led at half time 1.8 to 0.5. In a tit for tat second half, Waterford clawed their way back to within three points with ten minutes remaining. Tipperary finished in style and a superb goal by Roscrea substitute Kenny Lee in the final minutes sealed the deal. This victory put us through to a Munster Final versus Limerick who had convincingly beaten a fancied Rebel side coached by Donal Óg Cusack by twelve points. Tipperary headed to LIT Gaelic Grounds for a Munster Minor Hurling Final on Sun Dec 20th seeking their 41st title. Despite the time of the year, the weather and ground conditions were remarkable which led to a high-quality game. Tipp started well and four Jack Leamy frees settled us against a nervous Limerick backline. The concession of a goal in the 17th minute left us chasing the game as we went in at half time 1-9 to 0-10 in arrears. A crucial blow before the break was an accidental collision between our keeper Jason O Dwyer and full back Robert Doyle (both from Clonoulty Rossmore) causing both to be eventually substituted. Despite the setback Tipperary hit a golden patch during the third quarter and scored five points without reply to take a two-point lead by the 50th minute. A Limerick goal by Eoin Hermon in the final minutes needed a Kenny Lee point to take the game to extra time. Indeed, Tipp were unfortunate as a point by substitute Stephen Farncombe was ruled out as the linesman deemed him to step over the side-line before he scored. Limerick dominated the first period of extra time as Adam English and Shane O'Brien shone to outscore Tipp by 0.7 to 0.2. Despite a brave comeback in the second period, it was the Treaty side who ran out winners, but Tipperary fought with unbelievable character despite being handicapped by injuries before and during the game.

2021 Championship

Having served his two-year term as Manger, Paul Collins stepped down along with his management team consisting of Shane McGrath, Tony Shelly and Ger Ryan (Bawn). In early February Paul's fellow clubmate from Drom & Inch James Woodlock stepped into the breach and he was joined by Conor O'Brien, Damien Ryan, Cormac McGrath, and Brendan Ferris. They faced an enormous task as only four players were still available from the 2020 panel and none of these were on the starting 15. James & Co faced a massive challenge in their first year to put a panel together and then coach and train them to Munster Championship standard. Over 100 players were tried over the next eight weeks before a panel of 32 went into an intensive training regime ahead of their first fixture which was a Munster Qtr Final versus Kerry in the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Wed July 14th. In fact, our Championship draw was a repeat of 2020 with a first round against the Kingdom followed by a Semi Final versus Waterford. This time Kerry put up a stiffer challenge as they troubled the Premier side and were within a point until Darragh Guinan (Lorrha) scored the first of his two goals just before half time to give Tipp a four point lead at the

break. Our forwards raised the bar in the second half and players like Orrin Jones (Knockavilla), Darragh Minogue (Durlas Og) and Conor Martin contributed twenty-one points between them over the game. A sixteen-point victory may not have been numerically as big as the twenty-three-point win over the same opposition just eight months earlier but considering the short lead in for the new Management team it was an ideal opener before the stiffer challenges ahead. This challenge came just thirteen days later against Waterford in Pairc Ui Rinn. In this game Tipp started well and were 0.4 to 0.2 in front after ten minutes but Waterford responded with six unanswered points to lead by four at the first water break. They continued to dominate and stretched their lead to 1.14 to 0.5 by half time and extended this to 2.22 to 1.9 heading in to the final ten minutes with Tipps goal coming from Darragh Minogue in the 35th minute. As Waterford took their foot off the pedal in the final minutes, Tipperary scored three goals from Darragh Minogue, Tuarai Shayanewako and Ronan Connolly to put some gloss on the scoreboard. This was a harsh lesson for this new management team who possibly saw the writing on the wall playing challenge games with most oppositions physically bigger and stronger than Tipperary. When Tipperary Co Board handed the manager's job to James Woodcock, we gave him a three-year term as we knew the first year was a massive challenge with the late appointment leading to a very short selection and preparation period. Having given the first six weeks doing trials as the Covid 19 Pandemic deprived management the benefit of U15/16 Development squads in 2020 as school competitions were also cancelled. Over 100 players were trialed in Dr Morris Park before an extended panel of 40 was selected for a short three-month preparation period before championship. This panel was eventually reduced to 32 with a focus also on a long-term approach to 2022. With the 2021 championship now confined to history, management have already started preparation with a panel of 40 on conditioning programmes. Borrisoleigh's Angelo Walsh has been appointed S & C Coach and he is working alongside our partners Setanta to develop these players to compete in 2020. I am confident that "Woodie" and his management team will deliver a minor panel that will hit the ground running in March & April that will compete with the best in 2022.

The Tipperary Minor team which played Waterford was as follows;

Eoin Horgan (Knockavilla Kickhams), Ciaran Woodcock (Durlas Og), Jack Quinlan (Fethard), Jack Collins (Ballina), Stephen Walsh (Moycarkey Borris), Joe Egan (Moycarkey Borris), Ronan Connolly (Cashel King C, Capt), Phil Hayes (Durlas Og), Ben Currivan (Golden Kilfeacle), Owen Harrigan (Carrick Swan), Conor Martin (Cappawhite), Tuarai Shayanewako (Nenagh Eire Og), Orrin Jones (Knockavilla Kickhams), Darragh Guinan (Lorrha), Darragh Minogue (Durlas Og)

Subs: Sam Farrell (Nenagh Eire Og), Tom Delaney (Cahir), Paddy McCormack (Borrisileigh), Paddy Phelan (Upperchurch Drombane), Ciaran Foley (Borrisokane)

Also, on the panel versus Waterford were Sean Collins (Templederry), Oisín Maher (Cahir), Chris O'Donnell (Ballylooby), Daniel Rossister (Durlas Og)

Also, on the extended panel; Adam Brannigan (St Marys) Mason Cawley (Nenagh Eire Og), Cathal English (Fr Sheehys), Dylan Fogarty (Boherlahan Dualla), Jamie Lahart (Holycross), Darragh McCarthy (Toomevara), Sean Ryan (Upperchurch).



James Woodcock,
manager Tipperary
minor hurling team.

Tipperary Senior Football 2021

Allianz League Division

15/5/21-	LIT Gaelic Grounds	Limerick	1.13	Tipperary	0.14	Brendan Griffen
22/5/21-	Semple Stadium	Tipperary	2.12	Wicklow	1.12	Seamus Mulvihill
29/5/21 -	Tullamore	Offaly	1.17	Tipperary	1.12	James Bermingham

Relegation Play Off

13/6/21 -	Pearse Pk/Longford	Longford	1.13	Tipperary	0.09	Seamus Mulcaire
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Munster Championship Semi Final

10/7/21 –	Semple Stadium	Kerry	1-19	Tipperary	1-8	Niall Cullen
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Following the dizzy heights of Nov 2020, Tipperary footballers faced an uncertain period in early 2021. Once again Covid delayed an official start-up date with collective training deferred from Jan 15th to March 5th and then deferred again to April 26th.

Whilst this vacuum allowed our players rest and regroup after a hectic finish to 2020, it also forced a lot of change which impeded our progression ambitions. From the 2020 panel, Colin O’Riordan returned to Sydney Swans, Liam Casey also went abroad, and Philip Austin retired. Newcomers into the side were Conor Bowe, Conor O’Sullivan, Shane Ryan, Mark O’Meara, Stephen Quirke plus the return of Shane O’Connell and Liam Ryan (Commercials). Another newcomer was Philip Ryan from St Bridget’s Dublin who declared for Tipp under the “granny rule” as his father Tommy hailed from Kilcommon.

David Power was facing into his second year as manager with Paddy Christie, Coach plus Charlie McGeever, Declan Browne, Tommy Toomey, and Joe Hayes (Goalkeeping Coach). The players kept in shape since December via their own devices with personal gym programmes and body conditioning under the watchful eye of S&C coach Robbie Cannon. With just a few weeks of collective training in Dr Morris Park, Tipp faced into their first game in a revised shortened League where Division 3 was divided in two groups of four, geographically structured to avoid long journeys during Covid.

Our Southern section pitted us against Limerick (Away), Wicklow (home) and Offaly (away) with the top two qualifying for the Division 3 Semi Finals and the bottom 2 in each group playing off for Relegation. Two challenge games against Waterford and Kildare were used to trim the panel plus sharpening the team to League match requirements. It seemed to have the desired effect as Tipp raced into a 0.4 to 0.1 lead by the first water break at the Gaelic Grounds against Limerick. Despite the Treaty men’s fight back, Tipp held the lead at half time by 0.6 to 0.4. Limerick powered their way into the game in the second half and scored 1.4 without reply in the first 12 minutes. This gave them the cushion to see the game out for victory by two points and suddenly Tipperary were under pressure to survive in Division 3 with just two more games to play.

Next up were Wicklow in Semple Stadium as Tipperary once again wore the green & white jerseys to avoid a clash of blue colors. A Conor Sweeney goal before half time kept the Premier side in touch to be level at half time. A goal by our “Dubs” player, Philip Ryan sealed victory in the second half to give us promotion hopes once again facing into our final group game. This took us to O’Connor Park, Tullamore for a crunch game with Offaly one week later. Here a penalty goal by Conor Sweeney just before half time gave Tipp a one point lead at the break. In a tense second half the teams were tied at 1.11 each at the final water break but the Faithful County finished the strongest and scored 0.6 to 0.1 for a deserving victory.

So instead of promotion to Division 2, Tipperary now faced a relegation battle to avoid the drop to Division 4. This was made even more difficult when we lost the toss for venue with Longford which meant playing them on their home turf in Pearse Park. Positives were the return from injury of key players like Bill Maher, Kevin Fahey, Evan Comerford and Michael Quinlivan but the departure of Alan Campbell to the U.S was a major blow. Tipperary battled in Pearse Park but could not find their winning “mojo” that brought them to the dizzy heights of 2020. We were still level going into the final 12 minutes but a Longford goal by Dessie Reynolds in the closing stages opened the trap door as Tipps challenge faded and our destiny for Division 4 in 2022 was decided for the first time since 2014. It’s hard to believe we were just one point away from promotion to Division 1 in 2018 and winning a Munster S.F. Final a few short months ago. The team was now a far cry from these memories, but the biggest worry was the level of our current form as we faced into a tough month before our Munster Championship Semi Final game versus Kerry or Clare on July 10th.

Despite all the negatives the group stuck together during this period and team was strengthened by the full return from injury of players who struggled through the league. Indeed, the restoration of our 2020 staunch back line of Bill Maher, Robbie Kiely and Kevin Fahey was a welcome boost. Going into a Munster Semi Final as

reigning champions carries its own obligations and doing so in our Semple Stadium should be enough to inspire any Tipperary Team. Kerry accounted for Clare in the Quarter Final and the Kingdom were on their own mission of atonement, having been stung by their shock exit from the 2020 Munster Championship following a late Cork goal.

With just ten of our 2020 Munster title starting team Tipperary had two newcomers in Conor Bowe and Padraic Loomam. Kerry dominated as expected from the throw in and a David Clifford goal gave the Kingdom a 1.4 to 0.1 lead at the first water break. A Conor Sweeney penalty goal in the second quarter gave us hope but Kerry's dominance continued as they led by 1.11 to 1.3 at half time. The second half was predictable as Kerry were happy to keep the scoreboard ticking over as they tacked on the points. Our case was not helped by the dismissal of Michael Quinlivan and the sin binning of Jason Lonergan. The game petered out to an inevitable conclusion, but Tipperary battled it out to the end and never allowed the avalanche of scores we might have expected against such top class opposition. David Power and his management team must now pick up the pieces just seven months after the highs of winning a Munster title and start 2022 from the depths of Division 4 league football. The performance of our under 20's will help to lift the gloom, but David Power is committed and in Paddy Christie he has a passionate and committed ally.

The following is the Tipperary SF Panel who lined out against Kerry

Evan Comerford (Kilsheelan), Colm O'Shaughnessy (Ardfinnan), Jimmy Feehan (Killenaule), Shane O'Connell (Golden), Brian Fox (Eire Og Anacarty), Bill Maher (Kilsheelan), Kevin Fahy (Clonmel Commercials), Robbie Kiely (Ballyroe, Cork), Jack Kennedy (Clonmel Commercials), Conal Kennedy (Clonmel Commercials), Emmett Moloney (Drom & Inch), Conor Bowe (Moyne Templetuohy), Padraic Loomam (Clonmel Commercials), Conor Sweeney (Ballyporeen)(Capt), Michael Quinlivan (Clonmel Commercials)

Subs: Jason Lonergan (Clonmel C), Paudie Feehan (Killenaule), Steven O'Brien (Ballina), Shane Foley (Moyle Rovers), Jack Harney (Moyle Rovers), Colman Kennedy (Clonmel C), Conor O'Sullivan (Galtee), Stephen Quirke (Moyle Rovers), Conor Ryan (Loughmore), Liam Ryan (Clonmel C), Shane Ryan (Galtee), Kyle Shelly (Moycarkey B), Riain Quigley (Moyle Rovers)

Also on the panel: Michael O'Reilly (Clonmel C), Tadhg Fitzgerald (Moyle Rovers), Sean O'Connor (Clonmel C), Mark Stokes (Kilsheelan), Philip Ryan (St Brigids), Kuba Beben (JK Brackens), Daire Brennan (Kilsheelan), Martin Kehoe (Mullinahone), Kevin O'Halloran (Portroe), Mark O'Meara (Grangmockler).



Tipperary Under 20 Football management, from left: Paddy O'Gorman, David Power, Paddy Christie (Manager), Paddy O'Flaherty and Kevin Mulryan.

Tipperary Under 20 Football 2021

Munster Championship

Quarter Final:

8-7-21 - Semple Stadium: Tipperary 0-16 Limerick 1-10 David Murnane

Semi-Final:

15-7-21 – Semple Stadium: Tipperary 0-11 Waterford 0-9 John Ryan

Final:

22-7-21 – Semple Stadium: Cork 3-20 Tipperary 3-10 Brendan Griffin

Tipperary went into 2021 having failed to win a championship game at this level since our Munster final victory in 2015. Tom McGlinchey came so close in 2019 and 2020 but in both years was pipped at the post by Limerick, losing by just one point in both years. Coiste Peil agreed to bring the U20's under the management wing of the seniors with Paddy Christie as manager. Paddy brought in Kevin Mulryan, Paddy O' Flaherty and Paddy O'Gorman as selectors and they commenced the process of selecting a panel in May. This competition was played in February in 2020 just before the onset of Covid and the uncertainty surrounding this virus delayed the 2021 starting date to July.

Once again Limerick were the opposition in a quarter final in Semple Stadium. With no club or school games the selection process was not easy but following trials a panel of 35 was brought together for a few weeks of training in June. Challenge games were played against Carlow and Wexford and with senior players, Sean O' Connor and Mark O' Meara, Tipperary were ready to turn the tables on the Treaty side.

Limerick started well and led 0-2 to 0-1 at the first water break but Tipperary dominated the second quarter with Sean O' Connor kicking five points from frees to give the home side an 0-8 to 0-4 half time lead. Tipp continued to dominate the whole second half and ran out surprisingly easy winners despite a last-minute goal from Limericks Brian Ahern. In the other quarter final Waterford surprised Clare with a five-point victory scoring four goals in the process and so faced Tipperary in Semple Stadium one week later with an air of confidence around them. This confidence was reflected early on as they raced into a four-point lead after nine minutes and were 0-5 to 0-3 up at the first water break. Tipp kept them scoreless during the second quarter and drew level by half time. In a nail biting second half Tipperary finally got their noses in front after 36 minutes and held out for a two-point victory despite Waterford missing two gilt-edged goal chances in the final quarter. So, after five barren years without a victory, Tipperary were now in a Munster final seeking their third title in twelve years and in their history. Cork was the opposition having edged out Kerry in the other semi-final thriller by 3-12 to 3-11. Once again Semple Stadium was the venue for our third game in a row and the Rebels were hot favorites. They showed this as they raced into a three-point lead in the first five minutes, but Tipp rocked them with two goals in the 6th and 10th by Sean O' Connor and Jamie Holloway. Cork immediately replied with four points before the first water break and added a further 1-6 without reply before half time to lead by 1-13 to 2-3 at the break. The Rebels piled on the scores with David Buckley scoring eight points from play. A second Sean O' Connor goal in the 43rd minute only dressed up the scoreboard as a bigger and better Cork side ran out ten-point winners to win the 2021 Munster title. This was a learning experience for Tipperary and despite making massive progress on previous years, we found we are still a long way off in preparation for modern day Gaelic football. Our physicality and athleticism fall very short when up against the top tier counties and it needs to be addressed as a long-term project. To address this, Tipperary have teamed up with Setanta in a development program, commencing with development squads age 14/15 and continuing a pathway through to minor, U20 and Senior. This commenced in October 2020 and will continue under expert guidance of renowned strength and conditioning experts Liam Hennessy and Des Ryan.

For now, we are grateful to make progress at U20 football and reaching a Munster final is a positive step forward. We are delighted to see Paddy Christie continuing as manager along with his three lieutenants Kevin and the other two Paddy's while staying under the control of the senior set up under David Power.

The Tipperary U20 Football team that played Cork in the Munster final was as follows:

Callan Scully (Nenagh Eire Og), Sean Daly (Grangemockler/Ballyneale), Tadgh Condon (Clonmel Commercials), Brian McKeown (Moyle Rovers), Jake Kiely (Cahir), Billy O' Connor (Kilsheelan/Kilcash), Emmet Butler (Kilsheelan/Kilcash), Leon Kennedy (Grangemockler/Ballyneale), Cathal Deeley (Clonmel Commercials), Ben Comerford (Grangemockler/Ballyneale), Conor Cadell (JK Brackens), Ryan Walsh (Fethard), Jamie Holloway (Carrick Swan), Kevin Grogan (Cahir), Sean O' Connor (Clonmel Commercials).

Subs: Jamie Duncan (Knockavilla Kickhams), Barry Kehoe (Kilsheelan/Kilcash), Christy English

(Ballyporeen), Mike Lyons (Grangemockler/Ballyneale), Kieran Costello (Thurles Sarsfields).

Additional panel members were as follows: Mark O'Connor (Clonmel Commercials), Cian O'Mahoney (Ardfinnan), Conor McGrath (Loughmore), Matthew Power (Ballina), Rory Collins (Moyle Rovers), Mark O'Meara (Grangemockler), David Kelly (Aravale Rovers), Brian Keating (Portroe), Eoin McCarthy (Clonmel Commercials), Eanna Ryan (Mullinahone), Jason Madigan (Kilsheelan).

Tipperary Minor (U17) Football 2021

2020 Munster Championship

Quarter Final

12-12-2020	Semple Stadium:	Clare	1-24	Tipperary	1-4	Jonathan Hayes
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2021 Munster Championship

Quarter Final

21-7-2021	LIT Gaelic Grounds:	Limerick	2-9	Tipperary	1-9	Eamon Moran
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Covid-19 disrupted the 2020 Championship which was originally scheduled for April then October. It finally got the go ahead when restrictions were lifted in December and the original 'Daryl Darcy' round robin was abandoned in favor of a knock-out championship which drew Tipperary against Clare in the Munster quarter final on December 12th. It was difficult for manager Johnny Nevin and Coach Peter Creedon to keep the panel motivated over a whole 12-month period. Trainer Chris Ryan and S&C coach Declan O' Rahilly, plus goalkeeping coach Adrian Cooke, kept in touch with the full panel of 35 who were on personal programmes which kept them in shape for the eventual day. With just five of the 2019 panel, James Griffin (goalkeeper), Enda Burler, Rory Collins, Conor Neville and Jack Buckley, Tipp faced Clare in a confident mood. The Banner team dominated from the throw in and were 0-7 to 0-1 up by the first water break. A Toby Lambe goal in the 24th gave Tipp a temporary lifeline but Clare fought back with points to lead 0-11 to 1-2 at half time. Their dominance continued throughout the second half as their pace and physicality proved too much for a younger Tipperary side who had eleven players still underage for 2021. A twenty-point defeat was a harsh lesson for the panel, but the management were committed to a two-year programme and hoped for an improved performance in 2021.

Just seven months after exiting the 2020 Munster championship, Tipperary minor footballers were back in action again in a quarter final clash with Limerick at the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Wednesday July 21st. With the U20's progressing to the Munster final after victories over Limerick and Waterford, following five years without a championship victory, it was hoped the minors would follow suit. Once again Johnny Nevin was in charge with Peter Creedon as coach plus Christopher Ryan and Adrian Cooke as coach selectors. Limerick had the better start going three points up without a Tipp reply until Newport's Diarmuid O' Riordan fielded a route one ball from Darragh McVicker and goaled to stay in touch. The concession of a soft Limerick goal before the water break was costly as it proved to be the difference for the remainder of the game. At half time we trailed 1-6 to 1-3 but a much improved second half performance gave Tipp supporters hope of success. Unfortunately, another Limerick goal before the second water break sealed the issue for the Treaty side despite a spirited finish by Tipp. So, a disappointing end to Johnny Nevins two-year term despite a lot of effort over a disrupted double campaign. Still, he brought a lot of players through the system which should reflect at under 20 level over the next few years. Meanwhile, John McNamara (Clonmel Commercials) takes over as minor football manager from 2022 and we wish him the best of luck.

The Tipperary Minor Football team that played Limerick were as follows:

Tom Bourke (JK Brackens), Michael Ryan (Ballingarry), Sean O'Meara (Grangemockler/Ballyneale), Charlie King (Ballina), Senan Butler (Kilsheelan/Kilcash), Jack O' Neill (Ardfinnan), Charlie English (Ballyporeen), Tadgh Sheehan (Clonmel Commercials), Zack O'Loughlin (Kilsheelan/Kilcash), Eoin Craddock (Holycross/Ballycahill), Niall O' Connor (Clonmel Og), Kian O' Reilly (Clonmel Commercials), Darragh McVicker (Clonmel Og), Paul Mullen (Drom & Inch), Diarmuid O' Riordan (Newport).

Subs: Fionn Fitzgerald (Killenaule), Cian Smith (Clonmel Commercials), Darragh Spillane (Fethard), Jake Canny (Boherlahann/Dualla), Joe Higgins (Clonmel Commercials).

Also on panel of 24: Brian Quinn (JK Brackens), Eoghan Doyle (Rockvell Rovers), Thomas Charles (Clonmel Commercials), Liam Hayes (Gortnahoe). **Other panel members:** Sean Cagney (Clonmel Og), Sean Cannon (Knockavilla Kickhams), Alex Maloney (Durlas Og), Paul McCahey (Loughmore/Castleiney), Conor Neville (Fethard), Paddy O'Keefe (Moyle Rovers), Shane Ryan (Clonmel Commercials).

Monthly Summary

November 2020

- **The Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw** continued with the third of the eleven draws held in Lár Na Pairce live on Tipp FM Radio. Margaret Kennedy, Thurles Sarsfields Camogie Club captured the top prize of €15,000 and the €5,000 second prize went to Maria Brophy Lorrha. Three weeks later in the fourth draw, Lorrha native Seamus Mannion won the first prize with the Tipperary Dublin Ass, whilst Breda Carroll Cahir won €5,000.
- **Tipperary Senior Hurlers** suffered a nine-point defeat to Limerick in the Munster SH Semi Final on a score line 3.23 to 2.17 at a wind and rain swept Pairc Ui Caoimh. Following a bye in opening round of the qualifiers, Tipperary overcame Cork, again in the wind and rain at the LIT Gaelic Grounds by 2.18 to 1.17. Back in the Gaelic Grounds again one week later on Nov 21st, The Premier County exited the 2020 Championship following a 3.23 to 2.24 defeat at the hands of Galway in the All-Ireland Quarter Final.
- **Tipperary Senior Footballers** commenced their historic journey to Munster success on Nov 1st with a 2.11 to 1.11 victory over Clare at Semple Stadium. Six days later in the Munster Semi Final at the LIT Gaelic Grounds, Tipperary overcame Limerick after extra time by 1.15 to 2.11. The Munster Final against Cork was played on the weekend of the Bloody Sunday Commemorations and Tipperary appropriately wore the green and white Grangemockler jerseys. They overcame a fancied Cork side in Pairc Ui Caoimh on Sat Nov 21st by 0.17 to 0.14 to win the Premier's first Munster SF title in 85 years.
- **Tipperary Senior Camogie team** exited the All-Ireland Championship on Nov 29th following a 1.11 to 0.8 defeat to Galway in the Semi-Final at Pairc Ui Caoimh.



A Civic Reception was held for Tipperary who won their first Munster SF Title in 85 years beating Cork 0-17 to 0-14 in Pairc Uí Caoimh. Captain Conor Sweeney and Manager David Power accept presentations from Co Manager Joe McGrath and Michael Smith (Chairman of Tipperary Co Co)

Monthly Comment

Marking the retirement of Liam Ó Donnchú as “The Voice of Semple Stadium”



Looking back over the triumphs and trials of Semple Stadium for all of four decades, one name emerges as its unique and immediately recognizable voice for hundreds of thousands of patrons. Liam Ó Donnchú, imbued with a love of all things Gaelic, music, language, literature, and song but above all hurling, has been the defining figure of the stadium for many years. Seated in his lofty communications room, he has directed patrons to safety, informed them of last-minute team changes and substitutions, calmed the ecstasy of a Munster final day and ensured the smooth running of Ireland’s premier hurling stadium on some of the country’s greatest and most loved sporting occasions. He played an immense role in the staging of the 1984 All Ireland Final. His presence and distinct voice will be forever linked with glorious summer Sundays and the many evenings of the playing season. Remaining calm, clear headed and in control as the stadium rocked around him made Liam the ideal person at the helm. His advice was sought and valued. Drawing upon his immense wealth of lore, history, and passion for this field of legends, Liam made the visit of every individual, young or old, to the stadium an unforgettable experience. Not only has he given so much to the day-to-day operation of the stadium, but he has committed his recollections to print and his recording of its story from beginning to present will be a valued source in the years to come. The standards he set in the production of the Semple Stadium match programme have seldom been matched.

Ta Liam iontach báidhiúil ar an nGaeilge agus nuair a d’fháiltigh sé romhat go líofa is go cruinn sna sainfhocail ”Cuirigí fáilte roimh foireann Thiobraid Árann” d’ardaigh an croí istigh ionat, thuig tú gur Gael thú, gur díreach anseo ba chóir duit a bheith agus ba chuma leat faoin saol maguaird. Maireann an guth séimh údarásach in intinn na gcéadta mílte ar fud na cruinne ach faraor ní chloisfear go bráth arís é sa staid ársa seo. Bhí Liam fial flaithiúil lena chuid ama ach anois tá sé ag túirlingt den seomra cumarsáide. Tá a phort seinnte agus is mór an trua é. Gabhaimidne, cosmhuintir na hiománaíochta, buíochas ó chroí leis as ucht na mblianta a chaith sé inar dteannta anseo i Staid Semple ag déanamh beart de réir a bhriathair. Guímid ráth agus sonas air sna blianta amach roimhe. Go dté tú slán a Liaim ar an gcuid eile d’oilithreacht do bheatha. Ardfhear! Mairfidh do chuimhne. Go raibh míle míle maith agat a Liam

(From the citation composed by Jimmy Duggan).

Monthly Summary

December 2020

- **Tipperary Senior Footballers** historic journey during November when winning the Munster title came to a disappointing end as we fell to Mayo by 5.20 to 3.13 in Croke Park on Dec 12th. Despite the loss, Tipperary remembered Michael Hogan and those who died 100 years ago by laying a wreath on Hill 16.
- **Tipperary Minor Footballers** were on the receiving end of a heavy defeat to Clare in the Munster Quarter Final by 1.24 to 1.4 in Semple Stadium.
- **Tipperary Minor Hurlers** resumed activity on Dec 12th (six weeks after defeating Kerry), with a 2.23 to 0.12 victory over Waterford at Pairc Ui Rinn in the Munster Semi Final. Unfortunately, in the Munster Final one week later we lost to Limerick at the LIT Gaelic Grounds in extra time on the score 2.22 to 0.25.
- **Tipperary U20 Hurlers** who beat Clare in October resumed activity in December after a period of Covid lockdown with an extra time dramatic victory over Waterford in Fraher Park, Dungarvan by 5.18 to 3.16. Our luck ran out in the Munster Final one week later in Pairc Ui Caoimh when we fell short against the Rebels by 1.16 to 1.14.
- **The Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw No 5** was held on Friday December 11th live on Tipp FM from Lar Na Pairce. Eoghan Lonergan Arravale Rovers scooped the €15,000 Star prize and Daniel Madden, Templederry won €5,000.
- **Tipperary Senior Hurlers Fund Raiser** on Wednesday Dec 30th Tipp Senior Hurlers swam for charity and raised over €12,000 for four local Tipperary causes. Players and Management also visited homes of some great supporters young and old.



Tipperary Senior Hurlers Fund Raised €12,000 on Wednesday Dec 30th when they swam for charity and raised over €12,000 for four local Tipperary Hospitals. Picture shows Liam Sheedy and Seamus Callinan presenting the cheques to Peter Murchan (Clonmel Hospital) and Mary and Peggy Eviston (Nenagh Hospital)

Summary of County Convention 15th Dec 2020

County Convention was held virtually on Tuesday December 15th. 241 delegates linked up via zoom with the officers who were in the Civic offices in Clonmel. The start of the meeting was delayed as the Tipperary U20H team went to extra time versus Waterford in the Munster Semi Final in Fraher Park, Dungarvan.

Elections: Following weeks of intense speculation and postal votes returned to the appointed returning officer, Ger Walsh of Tipperary Co Co. Election results were announced as follows.

- Jimmy Minogue (Nenagh Eire Og) was elected Vice Chairperson with 157 votes over 84 votes for Tom Dawson (Eire Og Anacarty)
- John Donovan (Thurles Gaels) was elected Assistant Treasurer with 127 votes over 113 votes for Michael Devlin (Eire Og Anacarty)
- Jonathan Cullen (Loughmore Castleiney) was elected Co PRO on the third count following transfers from a positive first round vote of 81 over Ml McCarthy (Cappawhite) 59, Enda O Sullivan (Nenagh) 60 Lisa Stapleton (Boherlahan) 41. Following the elimination of Lisa and Enda the final third count favored Jonathan who had 120 votes to Ml. McCarthys 113

Tributes were paid to outgoing Cathaoirleach John Devane and outgoing PRO, Joe Bracken who were stepping down having served their terms of tenure.

New Chairperson-Seosamh Ó Cinnéide: Joe Kennedy stepped up from Vice Chairman to become the new Cathaoirleach of Coiste Chontae. In his address he.

- Expressed confidence in Tipperary's chances of success
- Underage coaches must focus on skill development and not "win at all costs"
- Fully supports the "Split Season" but concerned that the pressurized nature of all adult competitions will increase the pressure on venues and referees.
- Stressed the importance of County Leagues during the Inter County season.
- We must build on the noted success of Football over the past decade where we won Munster Minor, U21 and Senior titles.
- The improvements in our finance from Streaming, the new Future Ticketing System, and a successful Tipp Draw.
- He urged every club to source a new referee to allow continuity of our games.

Outgoing Chairman-Sean O Dubhain: John Devane (Boherlahan Dualla) stepped down as Chairman having completed his three-year term and in his parting address he touched on the following;

- The upheaval of Covid and how our games helped us all to cope
- The joy of our Senior Footballers winning the Munster SF title and appropriately commemorating Bloody Sunday wearing the Green & White of Grangemockler.
- The frustration experienced by our U20 and minor inter-county teams with the disruption in their Championships.
- The disappointment of our senior hurlers just falling short of making it to Croke Park.
- The success of our County Hurling Championship with the streamlined 16 teams at each level.
- The predictability of our SF Club Championship and maybe 8 to 12 Senior teams is more desirable.
- Complimented our Games Development Officers who provided valuable on-line assistance to clubs during lockdown.
- The Financial strain on Semple Stadium and becoming more and more dependent on County Board and Provincial contributions.
- Expressed his appreciation to all officers and committees who assisted him during his three-year term.

Finances: Cisteoir, Michael Power presented a surplus of €20,178 up to 31st Oct 2020, which was a massive turnaround from a deficit of €371k in 2019. Covid Grants from our government and Croke Park were essential but new initiatives like streaming, club games and online ticket sales were all very fruitful. The contribution from our sponsor TENEO was much appreciated during very difficult times. Our team costs were down by €1 million on the previous year due to the shortened season and Croke Park paying the Senior players expenses.

Grants: There were no distribution of Munster Council/Croke Park grants due to the absence of income from Inter County gates due to Covid. Commitments were given to back date grants when renewed, to include works carried out in 2020.

Motions: No motion was passed for Congress, but the following two motions were passed which would involve notable changes to our structures.

- Minor(U17) competition will be run and organized by Cosite na nÓg.
- A new grade of U19 was introduced as well as continuing with U21 Grades

Secretary's Review of 2020: Tadhg De Floid detailed the progress of our six Inter-County teams with the Senior Footballers commanding center stage with their special Munster title linked with the Bloody Sunday Commemorations. He described the difficulties experienced with Covid Lockdowns and some of the hidden benefits arising like streaming and online ticketing. The arguments for and against the Split Season were debated and the feats of Kiladangan and Clonmel Commercial in winning County Senior titles were highlighted

Monthly Summary

January 2021

- **Tipperary Senior Hurling Panel** is announced for 2021 and it shows new faces like Alan Tynan (Roscrea), Eoghan Connolly (Cashel King C), and Billy McCarthy (Thurles Sarsfields)
- **Tipperary Senior Football Panel** for 2021 includes eight new faces namely Conor Bowe (Moyné Templetuohy), Conor O’Sullivan and Shane Ryan (Galtee Rovers), Mark O’Meara (Grangemockler), Stephen Quirke (Moyle Rovers) plus recalls for Shane O Connell (Golden) and Liam Ryan (Commercials).
- **Samantha Lambert** retires from Inter-County ladies Football having captained Tipperary to All Ireland Intermediate titles in 2011 and 2019.
- **Declan Carr**, former All-Ireland SH Captain in 1991 took over as Manager of the Tipperary Ladies Senior Football team from Shane Ronayne who stepped down after four very successful years.
- **Tipperary Senior Camogie Manager, Bill Mullaney** added Denis Kelly (Selector/Coach) and Angelo Walsh (S&C) to his backroom team for 2021.
- **Level 5 Covid 19 Restrictions** continue for the months of January and February with March 5th the earliest likely date for returning to Inter-County training.
- **RIP: Theo English (Marlfield)** passed away on Jan 10th at the age of 90. He won almost every honour in the game during his 18 years Inter-County career with Tipperary including five All Ireland medals (1958,61,62,64,65).



The funeral cortege of Theo English through Clonmel

Remembering Theo English- July 1930 – January 2021

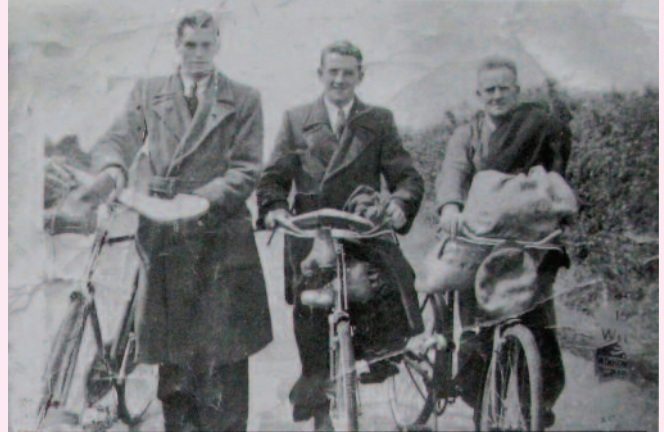


Theo English with Mick Maher and Christy Ring

All through his life, Theo English was a major influence on so many people both on and off the field and indeed outside GAA circles also. He has been described as one of the greatest players to ever play for Tipperary and the best overhead hurler the game has ever seen. In a glittering career which spanned the early fifties to the late sixties Theo won every honour in the game. A member of one of the greatest Tipperary teams of all time his record speaks for itself. 5 All Ireland senior medals in seven appearances, 7 Munster medals, 8 National League medals, 4 Railway cup medals and 5 Oireachtas medals plus a junior hurling All Ireland medal in 1953. He was included at centerfield in Tipperary's hurling team of the century. Not only was Theo a hurler of renown, but he was also a talented footballer, winning county titles with Clonmel Commercials and the Old Bridge and a Munster Junior Football title with Tipperary in 1952. Following a glittering playing career he continued to make a huge contribution to the GAA and was a senior hurling selector for Tipperary's All Ireland successes in 1971 and 1989. Following his time as an inter-county selector Theo went on to make a positive contribution to several club sides and he brought something special to every club he was with and was described by many as the best judge of a hurler in his time. He was also an excellent referee and refereed many important games around South Tipperary. He served on the Tipperary County Board for a time and was Tipperary's representative on the Munster Council for a one-year term. While these were the highlights, they were only the tip of the iceberg in terms of his outstanding contribution to the GAA.



“ A HURLING WE WILL GO “



Tom Quinlivan, Theo English and Mick O'Keeffe transport the jerseys, boots and hurleys to the playing field.

Monthly Summary

February 2021

- **James Woodlock** is announced as the new Tipperary Minor Hurling Manager for a three-year term. His selectors will be Conor O'Brien, Damien Ryan, Cormac McGrath, and Brendan Ferris. James took over from his Drom&Inch clubmate Paul Collins.
 - **Paddy Christie (Ballymun Kickhams)** took over as U20 F Manager from Tom McGlynchy for 2021 and will also continue in his role as SF Coach/Selector. He later added as his selectors Kevin Mulryan, Paddy O'Flaherty, and Paddy O'Gorman with assistance from the SF Management.
 - **Munster Council** launched a new "Club Development Program" to assist and support clubs in Developing a structure which empowers volunteers, delivers appropriate coaching inputs and enhances the club structure to cater adequately for all members.
 - **Covid 19 Restrictions** continue at Level 5 for February which included Inter-County Training with March 5th targeted as a commencement date for Elite Squads.
 - **Conor Sweeney (Ballyporeen)** followed in the footsteps of Declan Browne and Michael Quinlivan by becoming Tipperary's 3rd Football All-Star following his memorable 2020 campaign when he captained the Premier County to their first Munster S.F. title in 85 years. Also nominated for Football awards were Bill Maher, Colm O Riordan, and Kevin Fahey.
 - **Michael Breen** was announced as Tipperary Supporters Club Hurler of the year for 2020.
 - **Cian Treacy (Thurles Sarsfields)** was ratified as the New Tipperary Intermediate Camogie Manager 2021.
 - **No Hurling All Star** for Tipperary in 2020 as Limerick pick up nine awards. Only Ronan Maher and Michael Breen were nominated as Limericks Gearoid Hegarty was chosen as Hurler of the year.
 - **Tipperary Supporters Club** held their 34th AGM and returned all the 2020 officers for 2021. These included Terry O'Neill as Chairperson, Billy Coman as Secretary, Bryan Maher-Ass Treasurer, John Coman-PRO and Jim Reidy- Membership Officer.
 - **GAA Congress 2021** was held virtually on Sat Feb 27th and passed some highly emotive motions like dealing with cynical fouls in hurling and restricting the number of clubs participating in County Championships to 16.
- RIP: Jim Max (Thurles Sarsfields)** passed to his eternal reward on Friday Feb 26th. Jim served as Vice-Chairman of Thurles Sarsfields, Treasurer of the Mid Board and was a proud member of the Semple Stadium Management Committee. He was a well-known figure around the hospitality area on big match days in Semple Stadium.
- **Munster GAA Convention** was held virtually on Jan 30th with Chairman Liam Lenihan(Limerick) presiding over a review of 2020. All officers were returned unopposed including Ger Ryan Tipperary as Vice Chairman.



Jim Max

Monthly Commentary

Highlights of GAA Congress 2021

The GAA's Annual Congress 2021 was held on Sat Feb 27th and due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, it took place virtually, a first in the history of the GAA, which the public could watch live. The conference marked the formal transition of the Presidency from John Horan to Larry McCarthy.

Elections: The only contest was for the election of two representatives of Congress (Trustees) and this was carried out in advance by postal vote. The four candidates were Robert Frost (Clare), John Joe Carroll (Kerry), Ned Quinn (Kilkenny) and Michael Hasson (Antrim). John Joe Carroll was elected after the first count with 112 votes and Ned Quinn got over the line on the second count with 97 votes.

Financial Overview 2020: Director of Finances Ger Mulryan reported on a bleak year due to Covid with a drop in Revenue from €118M in 2019 to €68M in 2020. This was a 58% showing a deficit of €27m. Central Council showed a drop in gates income from €32.4m in 2019 to €3.6m in 2020 with a reduction in games from 360 to 270 and just six remaining to be played. Despite losses 500 staff were retained country wide which includes 365 in Games Development. €20m Government support was forthcoming to be spread across clubs, county, and Province. State funding contributed 59% of income which would normally be 10%. Plans were outlined to limit costs for Inter-County teams limiting panels to 32 and limiting training/matches to three per week.

Ard Stúirthóir Report-Extracts: Tom Ryan highlighted the following.

- Not being able to finish our 2020 championships was disappointing.
- Paid tribute to GAA volunteers and the efforts they made in ensuring championships went ahead in 2020 with special mention for all the Covid Officers.
- Only for Government assistance we could not operate in 2020 and this will also be required in 2021.
- Covid forced us to change everything including our championship structures, our rules, our broadcast arrangements.
- He praised County Boards who maximized the potential of streaming our club games and ensured home entertainment in tandem with our Inter-County coverage on National T.V.
- Our links with Camogie and Ladies Football have never been stronger borne out of simple recognition that our fates are closely intertwined and that we are stronger acting in communion rather than individually.
- Our fixtures structures now show a clearly demarcated period for Inter-County games and for club championships.
- Cashless admittance to grounds saw the growth of new online mobile ticketing scanning applications with associated remote methods of tickets sales, distribution and scanning on entry becoming accepted practice and easing the burden on our overworked treasurers.
- Special interim powers were conferred on management committees to take any decision or implement any measures which would otherwise be undertaken by Congress.
- Bloody Sunday was appropriately commemorated with a simple and solemn ceremony on Nov 21st, 2020, in Croke Park by lighting a torch for each of the 14 victims.

Motions of Note

- The Financial year end for counties, provinces etc. changed from 31st October to 30th September.
- The All-Ireland Senior Finals from 2022 must be played before the 29th Sunday of the year which marks the formal introduction of the "Split Season".
- In the U20 hurling championship the winners of Munster and Leinster will proceed directly to playing each other in the All Ireland Final. Galway and Ulster Teams will now play in Leinster.
- Players who play in a Tier 1 Senior Hurling Inter County Hurling championship cannot participate in the Inter County U20 Hurling Championship in that same year until after his senior Inter-County team has been eliminated from the championship.
- Post Primary Schools All Ireland Championships should be completed by the weekend following St Patricks Day. The Sigerson Final shall be played by the seventh Sunday of the year and the Fitzgibbon Cup by the eighth Sunday of the year.
- County Senior and Intermediate Championships will be restricted to a maximum of 16 teams (Motion 13) following a 66% majority vote.
- The advantage rule was re-enforced allowing a referee to give a five second period to a team with a goal scoring opportunity.
- No unauthorized incursions allowed on the field marked the end of the role of Maor Foime.
- A team starting a game with 13 players can now validly finish the game with 13 players if it must.
- The "Sin Bin" was introduced in Inter-County Hurling with the added addition of a penalty award for a cynical denial of a goal scoring chance inside the 20-meter line and the arc.
- The temporary substitution of a player with a blood injury will be extended to include concussion from a suspected head injury.
- Motions relating to world GAA, the role of County Development Officer, the Audit & Risk Committee, suspended players re walkovers and the much talked about alternative structures to the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship, were all deferred to the Special Congress in October 2021.

Oraid an Uachtaráin at Congress 2021-Larry McCarthy

- The Pandemic gave the GAA an opportunity to recalibrate like planning our games schedule with a "Split Season".
- We need to address the gap between 17 and 21 and linking our National League and Championship.
- It's important to break down barriers and show we all belong. Our lower Tiers need to win All-Ireland medals as much as the bigger lights.
- Welcomed the GPA's commitment to Amateurism and we must recognize a defined closed season and down time for our players. We need to bring the fun back into our lives and games.
- Public commentary needs to be toned down as anonymous people are a corrosive assault on civility and asked for measured criticism and consider the impact of our words on players, officials, and referees.
- He intends to promote the prominence of female members in our association during his term in the office
- He stated his appreciation to his wife Barbara and sons Conor and Shane. He detailed his progress from his home club in Bishopstown Cork, to Thomond College GAA Club in Limerick, to Ratheny GAA club in Dublin before going abroad. For 36 years he has been part of Sligo Football Club in New York.

Monthly Summary

March 2021

- **Munster GAA Awards** were announced for David Power (Manager of the Year), Conor Sweeney (Senior Footballer of the year) and Mary Ryan (Camogie player of the year)
- **Liam Sheedy** was appointed by TENE0 to lead and develop the Irish Operation of its new global TENE0 Performance Business. He will also take up the role of Vice Chairman of TENE0 Ireland.
- **Three Camogie All-Stars** for Tipperary as Áine Slattery (goalkeeper), Mary Ryan (left corner back) and Karen Kennedy (center half back) were all selected on the 2020 Camogie All Stars Team.
- **RIP: Connie Clear (Nenagh)** who passed away in March, won the Handball Hall of Fame in 2008 by the Irish Handball Council having won minor and Senior All Ireland Titles between 1959 and 1972.
- **RIP: Oisín Williams (Kilruane McDonaghs)** who died in March was a member of the Tipperary Development Hurling squad panels in recent years.
- **RIP: Paddy Kelly (Kiladangan)** who died on March 4th captained Tipperary Intermediate team to All Ireland honours in 1972 and was a selector with Tipperary Junior Hurlers in 1992.
- **RIP: Tom McLoughney (Kilruane MacDonaghs)** who passed away in March was a double All Ireland Medal winner in 1961 and 1962 and will go down in history as the scorer of the first ever goal in a televised All Ireland Final.

Tom McLoughney (1940-2021)

Extracts from the funeral eulogy by Gilbert Williams (Kilruane McDonagh's)

The 1962 All-Ireland final between Tipperary and Wexford was the first televised decider. Tom McLoughney lined out at full-forward and scored the first goal of the game thereby becoming not only the first player to raise a green flag but also the first player to register a score in a televised All-Ireland final. The legendary GAA scribe John D. Hickey penned the following description of Tom's goal in the *Irish Independent*: In the opening seconds Wexford needlessly conceded two line balls, and from the second cut in by Theo English, Tom McLoughney fastened on to it to give Pat Nolan no chance with a scorcher to the net for a Tipperary goal inside a minute."

A preview of that final in the same paper had a glowing profile of Tom: One of the reasons Tipperary feel that they can draw level with the "old enemy" Cork is the play of Tom McLoughney. Tom, solidly built with the speed, mobility, intelligence and general know-how to be the ideal man for the job should have a rare battle with the great Nick O'Donnell on the fringe of the Wexford square."

Tom was born on the 23rd of October 1940 and he went to school in Ardcroney. Tom first came to prominence as a



Tom McLoughney



Tom McLoughney in action for Kilruane MacDonaghs

ten-year-old when he lined out at corner-forward on the Kilruane MacDonaghs juvenile team that defeated Moneygall in the 1951 North final. Playing right beside him at full forward was his older brother Paddy. In the late fifties Kilruane MacDonaghs were not a force in minor hurling and unsurprisingly Tom, like many other outstanding hurlers in that period, did not get the call to wear the blue and gold. All that was to change in 1959 when Tom made his senior championship debut against Borris-Ileigh. MacDonaghs ended a fifteen-year barren spell with a victory over reigning champions Toomevara in the North final. A tremendous effort against Thurles in the County final just came up short but Tom gave an impressive display on Mickey Byrne. The county selectors came knocking on his door and eleven days shy of his 19th birthday he wore the blue and gold jersey for the first time in the League against Galway in Pearse Stadium, scoring 1-1 in Tipperary's victory. 1959 had seen a meteoric rise to prominence for Tom. He began the season in the obscure and unglamorous junior championship and by the end of the year he had been catapulted into the Tipperary senior team to play alongside the likes of Tony Wall, Theo English and Donie Nealon.

1960 started on a bright note for Tom when he won the first of his two National League medals as Tipperary overcame Cork in the final. He scored two goals in his maiden championship appearance against Limerick and collected his first Munster medal when Tipperary toppled Cork. Almost 50,000 gathered in Thurles to witness a Titanic battle. In the *Irish Independent* John D Hickey wrote that "he had never seen men on a hurling field who were so utterly contemptuous of their safety when duty called." Wexford caused a major shock when beating Tipperary in the All-Ireland final. On that day Tom was marked by Nick O'Donnell who was later selected on the centenary team and the team of the millennium. Tom regarded O'Donnell as the greatest opponent he ever faced. A win over Cork in the Oireachtas final provided some compensation for Tom and his colleagues.

Tom won his second National League medal in 1961 and in September he realized every young hurler's ambition when he won his first All-Ireland senior hurling medal. He wore the number 14 jersey on the Tipperary team that had a narrow victory over Dublin in the final. Earlier in the year he was at the center of a controversial incident that occurred in the Munster Final. The Tipperary and Cork rivalry reached its peak when a record crowd of 60,177 crammed into the Gaelic Grounds, Limerick. With 22 minutes gone in the second half a flare-up occurred between two of the giants of hurling John Doyle and Christy Ring. In the ensuing melee Tom received a blow to the head which not only forced him to leave the field but left him with a nice souvenir of the match in the form of 12 stitches. One national newspaper implicated Ring in the incident. Tom kept his counsel and to his eternal credit refused to identify the culprit. The affair has always been shrouded in a dense fog of confusion and conjecture somewhat like the third Secret of Fatima. Tom ended the year on a high note, winning his second Oireachtas medal with a victory over Wexford in a replay. Thus, Tipperary had completed the League, Championship and Oireachtas treble. The prestige of the Oireachtas Tournament can be gauged from the fact that 28,034 spectators witnessed the replay in Croke Park.

Tom's inter-county career petered out after 1962. His last appearance in the blue and gold was in the 1963 National League final when Tipperary lost out to Waterford. It had been a short but very successful stint in the blue and gold jersey. Tom had played with and against some of the greatest names in hurling. On the club front Tom collected his second North senior medal when MacDonaghs had a dramatic victory over Lorrha in the 1965 final. Tom continued playing with MacDonaghs until 1971.

When Tom retired from playing, he continued to be active in the club. He was a shrewd hurling judge, and he was a selector on the senior team in 1975 and 1976. He was also on the line when Kilruane MacDonaghs won the three-in-a-row North and County titles between 1977 and 1979. Tom was a county selector in 1980. He was selected at full-forward on the North Tipperary Centenary hurling team in 2001. The Tipperary County Board honored him with a Sean-Ghael Award in 2012.

In later life Tom developed a great passion for golf and he loved the camaraderie involved in the golf and he particularly enjoyed the retired intercounty players golfing trips abroad. Tom was a lover of all sports and appreciated the skill and talent of players whatever the code. In the company of his daughter Mary and great friend John Costigan he travelled all over Ireland supporting Tipperary teams in both hurling and football.

While we will always associate Tom with hurling, he had his priorities in order. Family, faith, friends and farming were most important in his life. In Kilruane MacDonaghs Club he was an iconic figure. Since his passing the warm tributes have flowed in from all over the county and across the country. Friend and foe alike referred to Tom as a gentleman.

Tom McLoughney was a loyal, caring and compassionate character. He didn't forget his former playing colleagues. He kept up the contact and visited those who were confined to their homes or nursing homes. In his message of condolence, a former Tipperary hurler paid this brief but eloquent tribute: Tom epitomized greatness and humility in equal measures in a life well lived.

Solas na bhFlaitheas ar a anam uasal.

Monthly Summary

April 2021

- **Covid 19 Restrictions** were relaxed in April allowing Senior Inter-County training to commence in Mid-May. Underage non-contact training was allowed from April 26th as vaccination rates rise and virus cases and hospital admissions reduce.
- **Friends of Football** launched a new Euro Millions plus Syndicate Fundraiser which proved to be a great success ahead of the first draw on May 4th and running until April 29th, 2022.
- **Munster Championship Draws** in April pitted Tipperary SH against the winners of Clare and Waterford in a Munster Semi Final. Tipperary SF also received a Quarter Final Bye but face the winners of Kerry V Clare in the Semi Final. All games to be played at neutral venues.
- **The Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw** resumed on April 23rd following a three month pause and the sixth draw of the eleven was held in Lar Na Pairce live on Tipp FM. James Ryan Solohead won the €15,000 Star prize and Michael & Suzanne Holohan (Thurles Gaels) won the €5,000 second prize.
- **Philip Austin (Borrisokane)** called time on his Inter-County Football career after 15 seasons with Tipperary Senior Football. Having won three National League in Division 3 (2009 & 2017) and Division 4 (2014) his Munster SF Medal in 2020 was a fitting end to a dedicated career.
- **Dr Brendan Murphy (Roscrea)** who has been Tipperary SH team doctor for the past six years raised a staggering €15,000 for his native Offaly's GAA Fundraiser. Brendan who was an All-Ireland Medal Winner with the Faithful County in 1998 has a G.P practice in Roscrea where he got great support.
- **Mark Dunne (Moyne Templetuohy)** who is Oifigeach Cultúir in Tiobraid Arann was selected as a member of the National Scór Committee by Uachtaran Larry McCarthy.



Philip Austin

Monthly Commentary

Tipperary GAA: An Overview and Recommendations from Liam O'Shea

Background

Having spent the past twelve months deeply immersed in Tipperary GAA as Commercial Advisor to the County Board and over the last number of years as Logistics Manager of the Tipperary Senior Hurling Team, I now feel that I am able to offer my views on some key issues and opportunities within the organization and to offer constructive recommendations on where urgent action needs to be taken if we have designs on remaining at the top level over the next five years or so.

This report is by no means a strategic review of the Tipperary County Board. It is, however, a series of proposals on how revenue can be increased to fund important investment at all levels and codes of Tipperary GAA. Significant investment across a specific timeframe will ensure that players from under 15 to Senior, hurling and football, will be better equipped to compete with other counties who have already invested at grass roots level and on revenue strategies to ensure their success.

I am aware that studies and proposals have been made in the past in relation to revenue. Equally, I have no doubt there will be similarities in content and ambition within former analysis with what I am proposing here. However, what is needed now is action and the delivery of a new investment model for Tipperary hurling.

My focus here will be on the immediate Commercial requirements, as well as looking at the Tipperary Brand overall. More than ever before we need to increase the growth of Commercial revenue to a level that will allow Tipperary GAA to meet their ever-increasing financial demands, not just in the running of County teams but also in the creation of a culture of excellence in all GAA operations within the county.

While there is excellent work being done by the County Board in Games Administration and Management, coaching and player development needs further evolution. The technical ability of young players needs to be upgraded, so too their game sense and overall appreciation of space and team play. The identity and values associated with being a Tipperary player needs to be instilled in every under-age Tipperary hurler, including discipline, respect, application, and resilience. To enable players to physically meet all these requirements Strength and Conditioning also needs to be rolled out across the various age groups with a strong emphasis on flexibility, agility, and athletic ability.

Steps Towards a Commercial Strategy

1. Develop a clear, uniform, and identifiable Tipperary brand across all aspects of Gaelic games in the county. We need a consistent and integrated approach to the promotion of that brand across all platforms. It should be easy to recognize what it means to follow Tipperary as a fan or play for Tipperary as a player in Hurling, Football, Camogie and Ladies Football. Our brand should reflect our history but be modern and forward-looking, embracing women and men, young and old, national, and international and be multi-cultural in orientation.
2. The Development of a tiered commercial structure and resource to ensure the maximization of this Tipperary Brand which is currently undervalued and under promoted. The perfect example of this is our jersey sponsorship, currently at the end of its three-year deal, which has been consistently under-valued given the heritage of the jersey, its international appeal, and the success of the flagship team in the past decade. There are opportunities to sell multiple sponsorship deals in relation to the jersey and the blue and gold banner.
3. The Development of Semple Stadium can yield significant financial rewards over and above existing returns. This can be done through:
 - a. Investment in new hospitality and catering facilities
 - b. Structural update of an ageing Semple Stadium infrastructure
 - c. Naming rights sponsor for the Stadium
 - d. GAA tours, multi-media library and museum in Semple stadium
 - e. New commercial plan for the Stadium that includes Major Concerts/Feile Events.
4. Development of the Dome, an asset that is currently underutilized, as a revenue generating venue for a variety of initiatives and events.
5. The development of new pitches, specifically a 4G Pitch, and other high-performance facilities in association with LIT Thurles. Morris Park is another major asset that can be even further utilized to enhance the Tipperary

Brand.

6. The creation of Tipp GAA TV. This allows Tipperary GAA to control all its own media obligations as well as enabling the continuation and growth of live streaming of games and other events that could generate revenue streams.

Developing the Tipperary brand will generate significant funds. The brand is already well known, but can be taken to a new level, nationally and internationally, by acting on these recommendations. A 'Brand Evaluation' of Tipperary GAA needs to be completed to ascertain what can be realistically expected from the process. I have no doubt that circa €2m+ is a very realistic figure to be generated. We should set a high bar in relation to our goals and objectives and the first step is to value our product properly to reflect our history and ambition for the future.

Recommendations

Commercial recommendation

- All commercial activity within Tipperary GAA should come under an integrated Commercial unit, with a well-defined strategy for maximising financial opportunities.
- An Oversight Commercial Board to be established and to oversee this unit and be comprised of a representative from the County Board, the Commercial Board, the Tipperary Supporters Club and the Friends of Football.
- The Oversight Board should have an independent Chairperson and have one, or more, independent member.
- The Oversight Board would be responsible for the actioning of all things commercial as well as ensuring its proper governance.
- The Oversight Board would be accountable to the County Board.
- The Oversight Board would be responsible for the hiring of a Commercial Director to manage all commercial relationships for Tipperary GAA.
- The position of Commercial Director should be publicly advertised.
- A competitive salary will be required to attract the right person.
- The Commercial Director should work directly to the Chairperson, or nominee, of the Commercial Oversight Board.
- My suggested timeframe for all of above would be:
 - o Formation of Oversight Board immediately, but no later than January 31st, 2022
 - o Appointment of Commercial Director no later than March 31st, 2022

Director of Hurling recommendation

Although it is outside of my remit I would also respectfully recommend: I am respectfully proposing that Tipperary County Board appoint a Director of Hurling. There is an urgent need for the appointment of a high calibre, experienced person with the authority to implement any changes he/she sees fit in how the county's coaching structures are operated, from under-age all the way up to Senior. He/she must also be capable of setting up a first-class technical academy and we must have the patience to allow it to develop and grow as without a doubt this will take a few years to get results. If we do not do this, we will not maintain the elite level status to support the commercial activities.

Strength and Conditioning recommendation

I have, over the past ten years or so, watched excellent players join Senior Hurling Panels who had no problem 'fitting in' with their hurling skills but too many have always appeared to be behind in their conditioning. This cannot continue, and if it does I am certain that we will struggle to win All Irelands, or even compete in the top tier, in the years to come.

My suggestion is very simple. We must create a system where Strength and Conditioning, flexibility and agility, and Injury Prevention expertise is always available to our players and that they are prepared physically, from an early age, to be ready to play at the top inter-county level. Setanta College is right on our doorstep, as well as LIT, both with world class facilities and experts in their fields of Sports Science, so an alliance with either, or both, seems a logical move.

Conclusion

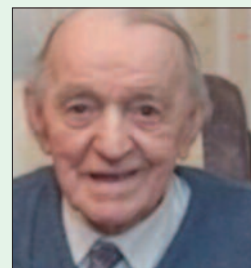
It is imperative that an overall strategic vision for Tipperary GAA is developed as a matter of urgency and that plans, and processes are immediately put in place. Failure to do so will see us well behind our competitors, both on and off the field. There is no time to waste. The way to honour our current and former heroes is to ensure that we develop future heroes through smart and judicious investment now.

Tipperary Co. Championships Streaming 2021					
Date	Championship Game	Teams Playing	Viewers per game	Single Payments	Total Income (Inc Packages)
Season Pass 21/22	337 @ €120 each				40440
Weekend Pass	2020 County Junior (A) Hurling - Final				
02-04.07.21	County Junior (B) Hurling Championship 2020	Cashel King Cormacs V Gortnahoe Glengoole		126	1250
August					
27.08.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championship - Round 1	Loughmore Castleiney V Kildangan	509	131	1210
28.08.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championship - Round 1	Toomevara V Holycross	347	42	420
28.08.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championship - Round 1	Thurles Sarsfield's V Drom & Inch	393	51	510
29.08.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championship - Round 1	Kilruane MacDonaghs V Nenagh Eire Og	393	73	730
29.08.21	Seamus O'Riain - Group 4	Portroe V Cashel King Cormacs	304	14	140
Weekend Pass					
27.08.21-29.08.21	129 @ €25				3225
September					
03.09.21	Co. Senior Football Championships - Round 1	Loughmore Castleiney V Killenaule	133	42	420
Weekend Pass					
03.09.21-05.09.21				12	120
10.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 2	Borrisoleigh V Kilruane MacDonaghs	547	168	1680
11.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 2	Drom & Inch V Upperchurch Drombane	328	59	590
11.09.21	Seamus O'Riain - Round 3	Gortnahoe- Glengoole V Sean Treacy's	363	51	510
12.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 2	Clonoulty V Toomevara	325	73	345
12.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 2	Kiladangan V JK Brackens	284	59	590
Weekend Pass					
10.09.21-12.09.21	101 @ €25				2525
18.09.21	Co. Football Championships - Round 2	Moyle Rovers V Aherlow	87	19	190
Weekend Pass					
18.09.21-19.09.21	4 @ €10				40
24.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 3	JK Brackens V Loughmore Castleiney	430	59	590
25.09.21	Co Senior Hurling Championships - Round 3	Mullinahone V Toomevara	300	76	760
25.09.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Round 3	Thurles Sarsfield's V Upperchurch Drombane	310	71	710
26.09.21	Co. Seamus O'Riain - Round 3, Group 3	Gortnahoe- Glengoole V Killenaule	184	41	410
Weekend Pass					
24.09.21-26.09.21	58 @ €25				1450
October					
03.10.21	Co. Senior Football Championships - Round 3	Ballyporeen V Moyne Templeuohy	80	32	320
08.10.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships -	Loughmore Castleiney V Killenaule	382	113	1130
09.10.21	County U19 (A) Hurling Championships - Final	St. Mary's V Thurles Sarsfield's	212	73	730
10.10.21	Co. Senior Hurling Rel	Moycarky Borris V Roscrea	183	44	440
Weekend Pass					
08.10.21-10.10.21	54 @ €15				810
15.10.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Qtr Final	Borrisoleigh V Mullinahone	668	338	3380
17.10.21	Co. Senior Hurling Championships - Qtr Final	Kiladangan V Upperchurch Drombane	423	213	2130
23.10.21	Co. Football Championships - Semi-final	Kilsheelan Kilcash V Loughmore Castleiney	146	49	490
30.10.21	Co Senior Hurling Championships - Semi-Final	Kildangan V Thurles Sarsfield's	964	439	4390
31.10.21	Co.Senior Hurling Championship - Semi-Final	Borrisoleigh V Loughmore Castleiney	993	682	6820
November					
06.11.21	Co. Senior Football Championships - Semi-Final	Loughmore Castleiney V Moyle Rovers	231	80	800
07.11.21	Co. Senior Football Championships - Semi-final	Clonmel Commericals V JK Brackens	203	91	910
13.11.21	Co. Immediate Hurling Championships - Final	Moyne Templeuohy V Kilsheelan Kilcash	371	207	2070
14.11.21	Seamus O'Riain - Final	Templederry V Killenaule	504	300	3000
21.11.21	Co Immediate Football - Final	Drom & Inch V Grangemockler	208	33	330
21.11.21	Co Senior Football - Final	Loughmore Castleiney V Commercial	582	266	2660
Weekend Pass					
21.11.21	104 @ €15				1560
			Totals		90825

Monthly Summary

May 2021

- Covid 19 Restrictions were relaxed further from May 10th as adult club teams were allowed to commence training.
- **Tipperary SH** opened their 2021 Allianz League campaign drawing with All Ireland Champions Limerick at the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Sat May 8th. Final score 0.20 each with Jason Forde accounting for 0.14 (O-12 frees). Bryan O Mara sustained a broken right arm which would keep him out of action for the rest of the season. One-week later May 15th Cork came to Semple Stadium for round 2 and Tipp salvaged a draw with a late long range free from Jason Forde in added time. Once again Tipp failed to score a goal as they finished 0.22 to 2.16. The following Saturday it was Galway in Semple Stadium as Tipp recorded their first League victory and scoring goals with a 2.19 to 0.20 victory over the Tribesmen.
- **Co Feile Skills Finals** were held in Dr Morris Park in May and the winner in Football was Evan Morrissey (Holycross Ballycahill) and in hurling Jack Hayes (Moycarkey Borris) emerged as winner. Runners up were Tadhg Whyte (Moneygall) in Football and Conor Kennedy (Lorrha) in Hurling.
- **Tipperary SF** opened their Allianz League campaign in the LIT Gaelic Grounds and came up short with a 0-14 to 1-13 defeat to Limerick. Seven days later Sat May 22nd Wicklow came to Semple Stadium and following a good third quarter the Premier side in their alternative green and white jerseys held out for 2.12 to 1.12 victory. The Following weekend Tipp travelled to O'Connor Park Tullamore and ended any hopes of promotion following a 1-17 to 1-12 defeat to Offaly. The final game against Longford was now going to be a relegation battle and away from home added to the challenge.
- **The 7th Tipperary Clubs Draw** was held live on Tipp FM from Lar Na Pairce and Diarmuid McKeogh Chairman of Ballina GAA Club was the Star Prizewinner of €15k. Pat Lyons (St Patricks) won the second prize of €5,000.
- **Joe Bracken (Moycarkey Borris)** was chosen by the Gaelic Writers Associations as the 2020 PRO of the Year following his very successful five year tenure as PRO of Tipperary Co Board. David Power received the 2020 Football Personality of the Year.
- **Patrick “Bonner” Maher (Lorrha)** sustained an Achilles tendon injury at training just two years after suffering a cruciate knee injury. Surgery on this new injury kept him out of action for another season having already missed 2020 with the injury.
- **RIP: Johnny Everard** passed to his eternal reward on May 25th, Age 97, he was the oldest surviving Tipperary man to have won an All-Ireland SH medal which he achieved in 1950. At club and county level Johnny gave great service as a player, coach, selector, referee, and administrator.
- **RIP Ger Gavin (Nenagh Eire Og)** died suddenly on May 21st and his passing was a shock to all who knew him. With Nenagh Eire Og he was the backbone of most Fund-Raising and served as Chairman twice in 1986-96 and 2004-2005. He was awarded Munster Club Man of the year in 1989 and received a Laochra Gael award in 2015. He served on Co Development and Hearing Committees and was on the Tipperary Draw Committee for 30 years right up to his passing. Ger's commitment to his GAA Club and County made all of us privileged to have served with him during his lifetime with us.



Johnny Everard



Ger Gavin

Monthly Commentary

Streaming into the Future

Having dipped our toe in the water in 2020 with the concept of streaming, it has now become almost the norm. Covid 19 forced us down roads that fast tracked ideas into possibilities that eventually became a reality. TG4 have been covering Co Finals in recent years and RTE also saw an opportunity to televise live club games when Covid restricted spectators attending. This is a welcome promotion of our games with top class coverage of the highest standard with the additional bonus of a financial contribution to county boards to compensate for the impact on gate receipts. Tipperary County Board just ventured into transmitting live club games in 2020 even though some clubs, with well-informed IT Personnel were already showing their own games through YouTube and Facebook in recent years. If County Board were to go down the streaming road, it would have to be a high standard transmission with good quality commentary. Engaging a company called “Stream Sport” guaranteed this as their experience and professionalism in this field gave us the comfort and security, we needed to provide a dependable service. Teaming up with our partners Tipp FM for commentators and analysis also proved to be a winning formula as their

experience and knowledge was an essential ingredient to complete the package. Local video production operator, Robert Healy from Two Mile Borris teamed up with Streams Sport this year which allowed us transmit more games from a wider range of venues. Once the venue had a raised platform area in a covered stand with a power supply, Robert and his video operator Noel Maher were able to provide a top-class



Stephen Gleeson (Commentator) and Denis Kelly (Match Analyst) during live streaming from Semple Stadium

production in association with the Tipp FM commentary team usually consisting of Stephen Gleeson, Paul Jenkins and Ronan Quirke. The specialized bonding equipment provided by Stream Sport, allowed matches to be streamed from venues like Littleton, Cashel, Boherlahan etc. offering security and peace of mind to our patrons. Their remote technology reduced single points of failure at venues outside of Semple Stadium. The company’s use of separate new graphics software in 2021 was a serious upgrade to the look of the streams giving it a consistent professional appearance with scoreboards and action replays. In 2020 Tipperary Co Board streamed 21 games in its first year. This rose to 30 games in 2021 with RTE and TG4 covering a further five games. At the outset 323 customers signed up for the streaming season tickets @ €120 which was very reassuring and a further 300 opted for weekend packages throughout the season. Our biggest audiences of the year were our Co SH Semi Finals which attracted up to 1,000 paying customers which includes season tickets. Our football games do not attract the same numbers, but this is consistent with our actual match attendances which are about one quarter to one third of the numbers for hurling. Very often this leads to individual games running at a loss but when some customers pay for season tickets, they expect to see football games and we do our best to provide this as much as possible. Overall, our aim is to provide a consistent professional service which is good for the promotion of our games and still show a small profit in our commercial revenue.

Monthly Summary

June 2021

- **Tipperary SH** travelled to Cusack Park Mullingar on June 6th (Sun) and as expected recorded victory over Westmeath by 4-27 to 0-16. One week later our final group game took us to Walsh Park where we came up against a fast hard working Waterford team that left Tipp reeling in defeat on a 2.29 to 3.21 score. Liam Sheedy and his management team were left with plenty to ponder on ahead of our opening Munster Championship game and a Semi Final versus possible Waterford again or Clare.
- **Tipperary Senior Footballers** travelled to Glennon Bros Pearse Park Longford on Sun June 13th for their final group which was a massive relegation battle for both sides. A lifeless performance from Tipp saw them lose to Longford by 1.13 to 0.9. This was a most disappointing league, losing three out of four games which confines us to relegation and Division 4 football in 2022.
- **The 2020 Co U20 Football “A” Final** was finally played, and Ballina were crowned county champions following a 1-10 to 1-8 victory over Upperchurch-Drombane played in Dolla on Sat 27th June 2021.
- **Co Leagues** resumed in June with a one-off competition based on a current gradings and mainly four team groups giving all clubs a minimum of three league games in June/July with semi-finals and finals in late July/Aug.
- **The Players Injury Fund** “loss of wages cover” was re-instated by Croke Park from June 1st. Following a ballot of clubs and county, a 25% levy was applied to every club’s adult and U20 premium from June 2021 to May 2022.
- **Tipperary GAA Clubs “8th” Draw** was held on Friday June 4th and the €15,000 star prize was won by Declan Boland Upperchurch Drombane GAA. Eamon O Callaghan Ballyporeen won the €5000 second prize and the €5,000 lotto jackpot was shared by Sinead & Cathy McGrath, Newcastle and Eileen Doody, Cappawhite.
Three weeks later the ninth draw was held on Friday June 25th and Moyle Rovers GAA Club Won the €15,000 star prize with Paddy Coleman, Ballina Handball winning the second prize of €5,000.



The New Tipperary GAA Setanta Academy in the former Thurles Handball Alley at Semple Stadium

Monthly Commentary

A New Partnership with Setanta

With a greater emphasis on physical development Tipperary Co Board are investing in a new partnership with Setanta College from 2022. This has already commenced at Juvenile level plus Minor and U20 squads and will extend into Senior level once the 2022 panels are finalized.

Setanta College was the brainchild of former Tipperary Senior Hurling Trainer Liam Hennessy who founded it as “Peak fitness” in 1999 and was re-launched as “Setanta” in 2006. From its roots Setanta has developed from delivering coaching education to Olympic Council of Ireland to working with some of the world’s leading sporting organizations across multiple countries and continents including Juventus and Pittsburgh Steelers. Setanta now delivers strength and conditioning and human performance education from the bottom up to degree and master level and have over 55,000 graduates worldwide in locations like the UK, USA, South Africa and India. In Ireland the broader Setanta team have been involved in most counties across Hurling, Gaelic Football and Camogie and in 2021 alone five leading hurling counties worked with Setanta coaches.

Setanta have been working with Tipperary GAA in recent years through the Development Squads, educating of coaches and the provision of facilities and equipment. Last year during the Covid 19 lockdown, Setanta and the Tipperary GDA’s delivered a highly successful remote youth athletic development program. Tipperary Hurling and Football is currently in a transition period and it’s an ideal time to plan an advanced, Elite Athletic Development Structure to put the Premier County in a position to challenge for major honors in the coming seasons. This new partnership will see the county implementing an integrated approach that will cover both hurling and football across all grades. Central to the partnership will be the design and delivery of long-term development programmes by coaches from Setanta who will oversee the Strength and Conditioning for Tipperary Senior hurling and football teams. This will include access to the facilities, equipment, and technology in Setanta’s Elite performance facility at the Sarsfields Centre beside Semple Stadium. This will mark a new approach by Tipperary GAA, which aims to create a joined-up structure that will prepare players for the transition from underage to senior level. Up to now, S&C Development programmes were delivered to teams separately by their independent coaching staff.

The Setanta Coaching team will be led by Des Ryan, who was formerly head of Sports Science and medicine at the Arsenal F.C Academy and is now Director of Coaching and Performance at Setanta College. Des will be supported in the design and execution of the Program by Founder Dr Liam Hennessy who has vast experience having been previously involved as head fitness coach with Bayern Munich and the Irish Rugby team as well as S&C coach with the Tipperary All Ireland team of 1991. Both Des and Liam have previously led Youth Development Structures across all sports, and they will oversee a team of 12 experienced S&C coaches as part of the implementation process. Many Tipperary coaches are graduates of Setanta College including current senior hurling manager Colm Bonner and coach Tommy Dunne. Current Minor hurling S&C coach Angelo Walsh is also a graduate, as is his recently retired inter-county club mate Brendan Maher who now operates his own Gym in Borris-Ileigh GAA Complex.

The Programme Proposal: The main programme has already commenced with the under-age academies in October 2021, and this will run right through to the conclusion of the championships in July 2022. Tipperary County Board will pay Setanta an agreed monthly amount and this will remove most obligations from Tipperary GAA paying S&C coaches directly for their services.

Elite Performance Centre: Setanta will provide access to the facilities, equipment, and technology at the Setanta location beside Semple Stadium and more recently the facility at the Thurles Handball Centre in Semple Stadium. These includes an Elite S&C Gym, over €250k of Biometric Analysis Coaching Technology and a variety of additional training equipment.

Stakeholder engagement: Programme Director, Des Ryan will deliver an in depth on boarding session to players and coaches while also delivering CPD workshops to upskill and educate all parties across various topics.

Testing Assessment Screening: Setanta will commence with full fitness testing, biological maturation assessment and movement screening. In depth analysis and reporting will be done with feedback to all stakeholders. All testing will be repeated throughout the programme.

Athletic Development: Setanta will design, develop and deliver all components relating to the Athletic Development Program covering stability & mobility, speed, Athletic Development and endurance. This will be delivered by expert practitioners.

Monthly Summary

July 2021

- **Tipperary Senior Hurlers** opened their Munster Championship Campaign with victory over Clare 3-23 2-22 played in the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Sunday July 4th. This qualified Tipp for the Munster Final and another showdown with Limerick on Sunday July 18th in Pairc Ui Caoimh. A rampant Premier side opened impressively and built up a ten-point lead by half time 2-16 to 0-12. A resurgent Limerick side gradually reeled in Tipp and ran out five-point winners 2-29 to 3-21 and consigned us to the Qualifiers and an All-Ireland quarter final in August.
- **Tipperary Senior Footballers** lost their 2020 Munster Crown to Kerry in the Semi Final played in Semple Stadium on Sat July 10th. Final score 1.19 to 1.8 as the Premier side fielded just 10 of the 2020 winning team. The football was a knockout competition with no qualifiers so this defeat ended Tipperary's year so Management must now turn their thoughts to 2022 and commence the building of confidence and structures following a most disappointing 2021.
- **Tipperary Minor Hurlers** started their Munster campaign in the LIT Gaelic Grounds on Wednesday July 14th with a 2.27 to 1.14 victory over Kerry. Two weeks later the Semi Final took us to Pairc Ui Rinn to play Waterford on Tuesday July 27th but a physically stronger and more successful Deise side ran out easy winners 2.25 to 4.11.
- **Tipperary U20 Hurlers** opened their 2021 on Monday July 12th in Semple Stadium versus Waterford and snatched victory from the jaws of defeat in extra time with a 3.24 to 2.21 (AET). The Semi-Final was played one week later again in Semple Stadium versus Cork and despite an impressive first half when we led by six points, Tipperary lost by the same margin following a Cork resurgence with the final score 3-20 to 2-17.
- **Tipperary U20 Footballers** played their first game, a quarter final v Limerick on Thursday July 8th in Semple Stadium and recorded their first victory at this level since 2015 with a 0-16 to 1-10 victory. One week later again in Semple Stadium Tipperary crossed swords with Waterford and after a nail-biting contest we held out for a 0-11 to 0-9 victory and a Munster Final v Cork on July 22nd again in Semple Stadium. Unfortunately, a powerful Rebel force ran out winners 3-20 to 3-10 but a spirited Tipp performance gave hope for the future.
- **Covid 19 Restrictions** were further relaxed with 200 spectators allowed in most venues and 500 in large Stadiums like Semple Stadium. Dressing Rooms must continue to stay closed, and meetings held outdoors.
- **Tipperary Senior Hurlers** faced Waterford in Pairc Ui Caoimh on July 31st and following a gripping encounter Waterford held out for victory 4.28 to 2.27 as Tipperary exited the 2021 SH Championship
- **Arravale Rovers** won the 2020 Co Final Junior "A" Hurling title defeating Holycross Ballycahill in Dundrum by 1-16 to 0-15.
- **Cashel King Cormacs** won the 2020 Co Junior "B" hurling decider defeating Gortnahoe Glengoole in Holycross by 4-14 to 0-10.
- **Tipperary GAA Club 10th Draw** was held on Friday July 16th live on Tipp FM from Lar Na Pairce and top prize winner was Brendan Power, Clonmel Commercials and the €5,000 second prize went to Paddy Maguire Cappawhite GAA. The final draw took place on July 30th with the €15K won by Michael Costigan Clonakenny, and the €5,000 going to Jimmy Hogan Knockshegowna with the €3,000 lotto Jackpot scooped by Annette Loughman, Knockavilla.
- **Tipperary Minor Footballers** opened their championship account on Wednesday July 21st with a visit to the LIT Gaelic Grounds but came up short against a well organised Limerick side who held out for victory 2-9 to 1-9.

RIP: Bertie Fitzpatrick (Roscrea) passed to his eternal reward in July and he will be remembered by many North Division Inter-county players of all ages as he transported them into training in Thurles for 40 years. He also served as Treasurer, Chairman, Board Delegate and selector with his beloved Roscrea over the years as well as being a driving force behind Development at St Cronan's Park.



Bertie Fitzpatrick

Monthly Commentary

New 3 -Year Plan for Primary Schools Coaching Scheme (2022-2024)

Tipperary Co Board in conjunction with the Coaching & Games Committee have launched a new Primary Schools Coaching Scheme to commence from Jan 1st, 2022. The new Scheme will be a continuation of the current Primary Schools Scheme but with all the selected coaches being appointed by the Co Games Development Officers in consultation with the respective clubs. Payments will be made through a grant scheme administered directly to the clubs by Co Board. Clubs will pay the coaches agreed expenses for their services subject to meeting with the agreed protocol between all concerned. The estimated annual budget for the scheme is €60,000 and this cost will be borne three ways as follows.

1. **Divisions Contribution** =€30,000 p.a. (€7,500 x 4)
The contribution from the four Divisions has been reduced in recognition of the loss of minor grade gates revenue which is some way compensated for by the addition of the U19 grade to their fixtures calendar.
 2. **Coiste na nÓg** = €10,000 p.a.
Coiste na nóg have benefited in recent years from the sale of Senior Bord match programmes and will benefit in the future from the addition of minor (U17) to its fixtures calendar. They may opt to share their contribution with the divisional Bord na nÓg's.
 3. **Co Senior Board** = €20,000 p.a.
The County Senior Board will cover its share of the cost with grants from the Tipperary GAA Draw but will also seek out an overall sponsor for the scheme to cover its contribution.
- Clubs wishing to participate must apply to the Co Coaching Committee through their Divisional GDA. An application form must be completed stating the number of schools in the parish, number of pupils, and a proposed coach for the role (if available).
 - The grant will be pro rata based on the number of pupils and numbers of hours coached per week. Minimum standards will be set to qualify as an adequate coaching programme.
 - Co Games Development will train the appointed Coach to the required standard.
 - A dedicated reporting mechanism will be applied to verify the completion of each coaching programme which will be signed off by the GDA, the Teacher and the Club Representative.
 - Clubs will appoint a School Liaison Person to assist with the scheme administration.
- Tipperary Co Board is looking forward to the support of the four Divisions and Coiste na nÓg as we renew the Primary Schools Coaching Scheme which has served the County so well over the last ten years.



Primary school children wearing the jersey.

Monthly Summary

August 2021

- **Liam Sheedy** stepped down as Tipperary SH Manager after three years in charge which included an All-Ireland title in 2019, following on from similar success in 2010 during his first term.
- **Brendan Maher** retired from Inter-County hurling after 16 years having started his career as a county minor in 2005.
- **Co Hurling Leagues** were concluded in August with Templederry capturing the Group 3 title with victory over Sean Treacys 0-31 to 1-18.
- **Feile Na nGael** celebrated its Golden Jubilee Week ending August 22nd with a festival of hurling involving over fifty teams playing all over the county in an internal competition. On the following weekend week ending August 29th a similar celebration was played out with Feile Peil.
- **The All-Ireland SH Final** was won by Limerick who defeated Cork. Fergal Horgan (Knockavilla Donaskeigh Kickhams) was referee for his third All Ireland Final and his Tipperary Umpires were Mick Butler, Alan Horgan, Sean Bradshaw and John Ryan (Bob).
- **John Devane** stepped down as U20H manager following his two year term along with his management team of Richie Ruth, Dan Hackett and Kenny Dunne.
- **Kiladangan** retained their North SH title with victory over Kilruane MacDonaghs in the Final on the scoreline 2-18 to 1-16.
- **Derek O'Mahoney (Ardfinnan)** refereed the All-Ireland Minor Football between Meath and Tyrone. His umpires were Peter Macken, Michael Kennedy, Liam Barrett and Evan Barrett.
- **Tipperary Ladies Football** retained their senior status with a resounding 7-10 to 3-16 victory over Tyrone in the relegation final. Shortly after Declan Carr stepped down as manager following one year at the helm.
- **The FBD Tipperary County Hurling Championship** kicked into action with 24 games played in Round One across the county. Attendances were capped at 200 in all pitches except for Semple Stadium which was allowed 500. Five matches were streamed on this first weekend with €120 Season ticket a big attraction.



Brendan Maher

Monthly Commentary

Tipperary Club Championships-Finding our True Level

The structure of our club championships has given rise to passionate debates in recent years leading to much commentary on various platforms. In a mad hurling county, the discussion has focused more on the small ball as there is an acceptability that the top tiers of football are confined to a limited number of clubs who have dominated in recent years. This has changed fairly dramatically since the noughties when nine different teams won the Senior Football O' Dwyer Cup as follows; Fethard(2001), Commercial(2002), Cahir (2003), Loughmore Castleiney(2004), Ardfinnan (2005), Aherlow (2006 & 2010), Moyle Rovers (2000, 2007, 2009), Galtee Rovers (2008), and Thomas McDonaghs (2011). Over the last ten years the scene has been dominated by three clubs with Clonmel Commercial to the forefront winning six, Loughmore Castleiney three and Moyle Rovers one. Whilst Commercial are currently dominating, Moyle Rovers have the most county titles since 1995 when they arrived on the scene with 8 titles, followed by Commercial with 7 and Loughmore 4.

Our hurling championships are a different story as the process of promotion and relegation over the past twenty years has led to competitive competitions leading to some great county finals. Whilst Thurles Sarsfields dominated the early part of the last decade winning five titles, there is currently not the same dominance by any one team with four different teams winning the last five county SH Titles. Since 1995 ten different teams have won the SH title with Sarsfields and Toomevara dominating with eight each. 2021 consolidated this with a classic Dan Breen Cup Finale between Thurles Sarsfields and Loughmore Castleiney following the 2020 spectacular finish between Kiladangan and once again Loughmore Castleiney. The Seamus O Riain Cup has thrown up some great games with Templederry Kenyons this year and Mullinahone in 2020 giving dazzling performances in the finals at Semple Stadium to earn their place in the prestigious Dan Breen Cup. The Intermediate final this year between Moyne Templetuohy and Kilsheelan Kilcash was exceptionally high standard and was anyone's game until the final whistle in Littleton. The Junior "A" hurling final in Golden ebbed and flowed until the last quarter when something in the water at the final break gave Skeheenarinka a new lease of life. Coming from four points down against Holycross Ballycahill, they scored ten points to capture the DP Walsh Trophy and promotion to Intermediate Status in 2022.

Relegation is a dreaded word in any club and once you enter that zone it creates a sense of panic whilst the scene is played out. For some clubs this can become a regular scene as they hover over the trap door until eventually the inevitable drop occurs. For some clubs this can be a sense of relief as training each year for a championship they have little chance of winning becomes a chore, whereas now at the lower level, there is a chance of a trophy at the end.

Back in the 70's clubs decided themselves to be relegated usually encouraged by Divisional Boards. Compulsory relegation was introduced in the 80's on a Divisional basis with one in each Division going down but not allowing any Divisions go below four senior teams. This process existed until 2018 when voluntary promotion allowed four teams to step up to senior grade bringing the total number of Senior teams to 30. Also, in 2008 the Seamus Ó Riain Cup was introduced for teams knocked out in the early rounds of their Divisional championships. The following year both finalists in the Seamus Ó Riain re-entered the Dan Breen at Preliminary Quarter Final stage playing divisional qualifiers. During this time relegation was suspended as the number of senior teams rose to 32 in the county. I wrote in my Convention report in 2011 "we are now playing senior games that have no value to the paying public or to hurling in our county". The same year 2011 relegation was re-introduced with one team going down but replaced by the Intermediate winners thus making no impact on the 32 senior games. In 2014 a new championship system was introduced relegating two teams each year until 2018. There was no relegation to Intermediate in 2019 and 2020 even though a team came up each year to Seamus Ó Riain. By 2021 the ideal championship was arrived at with 16 teams in Dan Breen, Seamus O Riain and Intermediate Hurling thus allowing four groups of four at all three levels.

The journey to arrive at this present structure has been frustrating and testing but the result is most rewarding. With all teams now playing at their own level, this should lead to more competitive games resulting in higher standards in our own county. Every team will play the three games in the group for either qualification or survival. Our county Quarter Finals should be between the best eight teams and with the advent of streaming and live TV we should be proud to present our GAA product in the best possible light from our "Field of Legends" in Semple Stadium with every opportunity we can. The concept of our Seamus O Riain competition being now called "Premier Intermediate" will become part of our mind-set as clubs settle into their true level. I believe there is a twofold bonus to this change of title with an extra possibility of qualifying from one's Divisional Championship at your own level, thus strengthening the Divisional link plus the carrot of a Munster Club qualification at the other end if you win the county. Despite views to the contrary, I have always been in favour of preserving the link once it was at the level the club is graded. I also believe this will make the Divisional championships even more competitive as the risk of one-sided games is greatly reduced. Many clubs have suffered the trauma of relegation over the years and become stronger as a result. To earn the right to be called a senior club in Tipperary we must play in the Dan Breen Cup which means we must be in the top 16 in the county. This means we must be capable of competing with the 16 best teams in the county and earn the right only by winning our Tier Two Hurling competition – The Premier Intermediate Championship and the Seamus O Riain Cup.

Monthly Summary

September 2021

- **Covid Update** from September 6th venues were allowed up to 50% capacity of grounds and meetings at 60% unless all participants are considered immune. Use of dressing rooms and gyms was permitted in pods of 6 participants.
- **Darragh Egan** was announced as the new Wexford SH Manager as successor to Davy Fitzgerald.
- **Declan Carr** stepped down as Tipperary Senior Ladies Football Manager after one year in charge.
- **The FBD Tipperary Hurling & Football Championships** continues with rounds 2 & 3 played during September to decide contestants/or preliminary and county quarter finals in October.
- **TENEO** announced they would not be renewing their sponsorship of Tipperary GAA at the completion of their three-year term in 2021.
- **Simple Stadium- Field of Legends** written by Liam Ó Donnchú released for sale during September and is the first book on the History of the Stadium since it opened in 1910.
- **Colm Bonnar** was announced as the Tipperary SH Manager for a three-year term from 2022. His management team was later announced as Tommy Dunne, Johnny Enright, and Paul Curran.
- **Brendan Cummins** was confirmed as the new Tipperary U20 H Manager from 2022. His Management team was announced as Fintan O Connor (Coach), Martin Maher and Shane Stapleton.
- **Tipperary Friends of Football** held their annual Gold Classic in Thurles Golf Club on September 24th and 25th.
- **RIP: Michael Ormonde (Loughmore Castleiney)** played Inter County Football for Tipperary minors, juniors and seniors from 1956 to 1960 but a second leg break in 1960 put an end to his Inter County Career.
- **RIP: John McNamara (Clonmel Commercials)** was a player, selector, officer, team manager and committee member for many decades as well as playing with and managing Tipperary Football teams.



John McNamara

Monthly Commentary

Loughmore -Castleiney's Double Ecstasy

The 17-week road to winning the double

1.	Aug 8th	Mid SH Qtr Final	Templetuohy	Loughmore C	3.23	JK Brackens	0.12
2.	Aug 15th	Mid SH Semi Final	Templemore	Loughmore C	0.22	Moycarkey B	0.20
3.	Aug 22nd	Mid SH Final	Holycross	Thurles Sars	3.22	Loughmore C	1.19
4.	Aug 27th	Co SH Rnd 1	Semple Stadium	Kildangan	2.23	Loughmore C	2.22
5.	Sept 4th	Co SF Rnd 1	Littleton	Loughmore C	2.10	Killenaule	0.11
6.	Sept 12th	Co SH Rnd 2	Holycross	Loughmore C	1.26	Moycarkey B	3.17
7.	Sept 18th	Co SF Rnd 2	Templetuohy	Loughmore C	0.10	JK Brackens	0.10
8.	Sept 24th	Co SH Rnd 3	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	0.21	JK brackens	1.13
9.	Oct 2nd	Co SF Rnd 3	Holycross	Loughmore C	2.10	Rockwell R	0.09
10.	Oct 8th	Co SH Pre Qtr Final	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	2.21	Killenaule	0.12
11.	Oct 16th	Co SH Qtr Final	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	4.15	Kilruane McD	0.21
12.	Oct 23rd	Co SF Qtr Final	Cashel	Loughmore C	0.09	Kilsheelan	1.05
13.	Oct 31st	Co SH Semi Final	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	1.18	Borris-Ileigh	1.15
14.	Nov 6th	Co SF Semi Final	Golden	Loughmore C	1.08	Moyle Rovers	1.07
15.	Nov 14th	Co SH Final	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	0.23	ThurlesSarsfields	2.17
16.	Nov 21st	Co SF Final	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	1.12	Commercials	1.11
17.	Nov 28th	Co SH Final (Replay)	Semple Stadium	Loughmore C	2.14	Thurles Sarsfields	2.13

The Tipperary Club Hurling and Football story 2021 has been dominated by the remarkable feats of Loughmore Castleiney over the past three months remaining unbeaten since Sept 4th. Their championship road started in early August with victories over JK Brackens and Moycarkey Borris in the mid play offs before giving second best to Thurles Sarsfields in the Mid Final. Five days later on August 27th in the opening game of the FBD Co SH championship under lights in Semple Stadium they once again suffered a one-point defeat, this time to Kildangan in a repeat of the 2020 final. Since their opening Co SF gave v Killenaule on Sept 4th in Littleton, they have gone 13 games unbeaten including two draws. Being a dual club, they accepted these games week after week with little complaint. Even after the drawn Co Hurling Final, there was a call to play the replay the following weekend and defer the football final one week, but not from Loughmore. Maybe that football game was the psychology they needed before the replay. Loughmore Castleiney always got on with their business and remarkably managed the situation in between all the games. Despite injuries along the way to key players like Brian McGrath and John Meagher, they could still field their best 15 in the replay which is a testament to their management skills. This was a group on a mission following their double disappointment in 2020. The addition of a fresh voice in the experienced Mick Dempsey was a master stroke as he just tapped into what was already there- a proud tradition and culture and they know no other way. In an interview afterwards, Mick admitted there was no secret formula in Loughmore, only the attitude and composure they bring to it as they always seem to get the best out of themselves in a game situation.

Other dual clubs like Kilmacud Crokes have achieved the double but drawing from a pool of thousands in population. Loughmore Castleiney pull from less than 1000 people in the parish and their performance is unequalled in modern times. We are all extremely proud of their achievement as we salute them as true champions in both codes.



Monthly Summary

October 2021

- **The new Tipperary GAA Clubs Draw** commenced on Friday Oct 8th in the Dome, Semple Stadium and numbers increased by 500 to 17,000 members. The star prize of €25K went to Maura Ryan, Garnakilka Upperchurch who was joined with the Borrisoleigh GAA Club. Maura also won the bonus of a racehorse called Sean Hogan for one season.
- **Tipperary received 3 nominations for the 2021 All Stars**, Cathal Barrett, Ronan Maher and Jason Forde.
- **The Michael Hogan Festival of Football** was a great success during October with 1000 U11 and U13 players taking part in venues throughout the county.
- **Covid Restrictions** were relaxed allowing opening of dressing rooms and gyms on a controlled basis. Personal responsibility became more important where immunity among patrons was a deciding factor for admittance to buildings.
- **Henry Shefflin**, in a surprise move, was announced as the new Galway Manager for 2022.
- **The 50th anniversary of Feile na nGael** was marked was a mini festival of hurling in various venues in Tipperary culminating with the finals in Dr Morris Park and Semple Stadium. A plaque was unveiled in honour of the three founders at the front gates of Semple Stadium by Uachtarain CLG Larry McCarthy.
- **The 2020 Munster Senior Scór Final** was held in Halla Na Feile Cashel with six of the eight Tipperary acts winning and advancing to the All-Ireland Finals. These were the Moyne Templetuohy Quiz team, Newcastle Figure Dancers, JK Brackens Set Dancers, Newport Novelty Act, Siobhan Egan, Newport in Solo Song and Noel Joyce, JK Brackens in Recitation.
- **The FBD Tipperary Co Championships** had now reached the finals to be played in November. The SH decider will be between two mid teams Thurles Sarsfields and Loughmore Castleiney whilst the Seamus O Riain will be decided between Killenaule and Templederry.



At the Féile na nGael Golden Jubilee ceremony at the entrance to Semple Stadium on Thursday October 28th (from left) Larry McCarthy (GAA President), Philip Ryan (rep. his late father Séamus O'Riain, a founder member), Eamon De Stafort (founder member), Roseanne Barrett (rep. her late father Tommy Barrett, a founder member) and Diarmuid Cahill (Féile na nGael Chairperson).

Monthly Commentary

GAA Special Congress October 2021

The GAA convened a Special Congress on Sat Oct 23rd to consider ten motions that were all deferred from the GAA Congress in Feb 2021. Of the ten motions up for decision Motion 18 and 19 from Congress 2021 were the most notable as they related to the restructuring of the Inter County Gaelic Football Championship. 168 delegates representing units from all over the world convened in Croke Park with each county's delegation halved due to Covid restrictions. Tipperary were represented by Joe Kennedy, Tim Floyd, Michael Power, Conor O'Dwyer (Coiste Peil) and Central Council Delegate Michael Bourke.

The following is a summary of the Motions considered.

- The Splitting of the role of Co-Development Officer to a Planning Training Officer and a Co Safety and Facilities Officer was passed by a 2 to 1 majority. A further motion for Counties and Provinces to amend their Bye Laws to accommodate this change was also passed.
- The appointment of an Audit and Risk Committee in each county was approved by a large majority.
- A Fermanagh Motion seeking that "A walkover shall not constitute the next game in a competition for those players and team officials involved in the team that has conceded the game" lost by 51% to 49%.
- Four motions from Ard Comhairle/International Workgroup and the Rules Advisory Committee relating to "World GAA" were deferred to a later date.
- Motion 18 which became known as **Football Proposal "A"** was seeking for the football championship to return to its traditional Provincial and All Ireland series with the qualifiers coming back into the mix as well as the new second Tier Championship for eliminated teams from Division 3 and 4-something that was due to come into place in 2020 before the Covid-19 Pandemic struck. This motion also required teams eliminated in the Preliminary Rounds in Ulster and Leinster crossing provinces to make up 8 teams in each Province. This Motion never gained traction in the debate leading up to the Special Congress and was heavily defeated on the day 90 to 10%.
- Motion 19 known as **Football Proposal "B"** became central to the debate and was really the main focal point of Special Congress. Tipperary were mandated by Co Committee to support this motion following urgings from Coiste Peil and our Co Senior Football Players and Management. The total eligible poll was 183 with just 90 of those split amongst the 32 counties with a further 34 votes from overseas units while 52 votes come from Central Council/Costi Bainisti itself. Many counties like Tipperary came out in advance and declared their intentions in favour of "B" along with Cork and Clare in Munster. As expected most the Leinster counties favoured the "B" proposal which was not surprising considering the dominance of Dublin in recent years. There were 22 speakers over the course of the debate on the floor at Congress with 10 in favor and 12 against (the majority from Ulster). After a 74-minute debate 168 delegates present voted and it needed 101 in favor to have the motion carried. Only 85 voted in favor which is 51% and not sufficient to carry the motion.



Former Uachtarán John Horan pictured above proposing the Football Proposal "B" Motion

Prior to the vote being taken, a few counties urged the proposer John Horan to defer a decision due to the uncertainty, but the former Uachtaran insisted on a decision which in hindsight may have been an error of judgement considering the weight of speakers against it. This included Coisti Bainisti member and world GAA Chairman Nial Ersking from Donegal who urged Delegates not to pass it. Considering the Croke Park Management Committee were divided on this motion it was a massive gamble not to defer it until next Congress to allow the necessary tweaking to carry it across the line. Afterwards there were calls for this subject to be re-visited especially from GPA's Tom Parsons who spoke passionately in favour on the floor of Congress. Uactaran Larry McCarthy agreed to review the result considering the demand for change so it looks like a new All-Ireland football championship structure will eventually happen but not in 2022.

Buíochas

Despite the lack of success in 2021 at Inter-County level we have enjoyed tremendous club championship over the past six months. The introduction of online ticketing has been challenging but our gate-checkers have responded tremendously, and we really appreciate their co-operation, and we are so fortunate to have them. Our I.T Advisor Maggie Fahey has been of great assistance in all this area as well as the streaming of our games. Following on from the high standards set by her predecessor Lisa Stapleton she has taken to the role and seamlessly adapted to the transition from a voluntary role to being now part of the full-time operations from Lar Na Pairce. Indeed, we have a top-class structure in Lar Na Pairce where everyone knows their roles, and all are willing to help out others as the need arises. Thanks to Siobhan, Maggie, Karen and Tom for their dedication and friendship and to Bernie who operates our payroll on a professional consultancy basis. Marion is still on hand to help with team gear which is a specialist role that only Marion could handle. We are fortunate to have five super GDA's who are totally committed, and their work is greatly appreciated. Co Games Manager Dinny Maher retires after Convention, and I thank him for his friendship and dedication over the years and hope he enjoys good health in his retirement.

Dr Morris Park is still kept at a high standard thanks to caretakers Pat Callaghan and Andy Fox under the watchful eye of John Ryan, Holycross who continues to act on an advisory capacity which is really appreciated. The appointment of new groundsman in Semple Stadium Padhraic Greene was a life saver following the departure of Dave Hanley and Pa Bourke who for many years had the Field of Legends in prime condition. Padhraic has brought his expertise from Croke Park and Abbottstown to bear on Semple Stadium and Dr Morris Park which are all-in top-class condition.

Tipperary Co Board and Semple Stadium Management Committee work in harmony which was required more than ever during the Pandemic over the past year. Thanks to Con, David, and Toby for embracing this concept which I hope will be progressed even further over the coming twelve months.

Our Sub Committees continue to toil under restricted conditions, but all are still very Pro Active, and we really appreciate their commitment. My working colleague Tom Maher is spread across many of these committees including CCC, Semple Stadium, Post Primary Schools and Coaching and his experience is a vital asset as he keeps all running smoothly in his own quiet and efficient way. Our Co Management Committee meet regularly as the Covid Restrictions landed us with additional powers to make decisions normally reserved for Co Committees. All of the Management Committee carry out the role of Designated Officers at match venues which is important in the current climate and are all happy to do so. Their presence is respected and appreciated by most. Jonathan Cullen and Jimmy Minogue joined the top table this year and they have built up a good working relationship with the other three "seasoned" campaigners. Joe Kennedy and Michael Power have soldiered with me over the past five years, and we have a loyalty and respect for each other that has played a big part in getting our objectives through in sometimes very challenging situations. I look forward to all five of us continuing this strong bond that leads to the effective running of County Board.

Conclusion

I sometimes feel like Robert Burns who wrote.

"The best laid plans of mice and men will often go astray and lead us nought but grief and pain, for promised joy".

My targets for the past two years all failed to come to fruition with my hope for more senior hurling success and continued senior football progress running aground. My dream of a new building in Dr Morris Park was delayed by Covid originally as we have our contractor, Cooldine Construction on standby for over 12 months. We decided to apply for a Sports Capital Grant from the 2021 Scheme during the pause period but an announcement here is deferred possibly until early 2022. One of the conditions of this scheme is if an application is successful, you cannot commence work until advised to do so. Unfortunately, rising prices due to Covid & Brexit will consume any possible grant at this stage. Regardless of this my hope is for a successful outcome to our grant application and a February 2022 commencement. If this happens, we should have brand new dressing rooms and a multipurpose room plus stores in Dr Morris Park before County Convention in 2022

One of my 2020 aspirations did come to pass with the successful introduction of the "Split Season". I think when we look back in years to come, we will realise how ridiculous it was trying to play club and Inter-County at the same time, leading to frustration and chaos. Apart from this the change has reduced costs for County Boards and improved the standards of our club championships. I look forward to even better club competition in 2022 as our new structures continue to bed in especially with the incentive of Munster Club now added to our Seamus O Riain, and raising it to championship status.

Our Cathaoirleach Joe Kennedy enters his second year with a steady hand at the helm. Over the next few weeks,

we hope to be in a position to make some major sponsorship announcements with new partners. Having companies placing their confidence in the Tipperary brand, it will put Tipperary GAA and Semple Stadium on a more firm financial footing. New managers putting up their hand and taking responsibility is very encouraging and I am very impressed with the enthusiasm they are showing to date. I am also hearing great reports from the high standards of games coming from our Post Primary School blitzes and the Peadar Cummins Tournament. We have over 200 young players currently in training or on programmes from ages 13 up to 19 in both hurling and football. All these players are being monitored under the supervision of the Setanta Academy. The future is bright for Tipperary GAA once it is managed by officers and committees who are dedicated and not restricted by parochial and self-interested visions. Tipperary will never be too far away from provincial and national honours, and we will continue to keep it that way. Roll on 2022-The Premier County hasn't gone away.

Crioch

Tá aithbhreithniú ar an mbliain atá thart faoi bhun ins an chuid is mó den leabhar comhdhála seo ach tá cuid mhaith pleanáil dos na toadhcháil le feiceáil freisin. Beidh cúpla fógrai móra ag an mBórd go luath, a iompróidh go mór ar imeachtaí CLG i dTiobraid Árann. Ina measc beidh nuacht ar Urraitheoirí nua dos na fóirne go leir, Cearta Aimniúcháin ar Stáid Semple, Comhphártaíocht le Foireann Setanta (ina ceanncheathrú nua in Áras na Sáirséalaigh) chun cláir a chur i bhfeidhm do Neart & Aeroiriúnaithe agus Ionad Acadamh nua do CLG Thiobraid Árann i gCúirt Liathróid Láimhe Dúrlais ar an mbealach isteach go Staid Semple.

Beimid ag súil le tosú úr i 2022 le foirne bhainistíochta nua i bhfeidhm san Iom Sin, Iom Faoi 20 agus Peil Min. Táimid dóchasach go dtógfáir an foirgneamh nua i bPáirc Uí Mhuiris agus go gcríochnófar an chéad Páirc Uile-Aimsire sa chontae i Fíodh Ard (i gcomhphártaíocht le Coolmore).

B'fheidir nár cheart breithiúnas a dhéanamh ar chontae ar an méid trófaí atá buaite ach ar na huimhreacha atá ag imirt ár gluíchi agus ar chaighdeán na háiseanna atá againn. Tiocfaidh torthaí maithe má bhíonn na bunúsacha go leir i gceart agus ní bhíonn Lá na Maithreas rófhada uainn riamh i dTiobraid Árann.

Tiobraid Árann abú

Tadhg De Flóid

Runaí



Tipperary County Board officers at 2019 convention.