

Roscommon Gaels Underage Team Reports Year 2017

U8 Camogie Report 2017

U6 and U8 – Deirdre McDermott and Nicola Crosbie

There were no negative points, the whole year was a huge success. There were 42 registered players coming regularly to training. The coaching team was excellent but they are a group which needs more coaching help. This group could do with a set of jerseys as they were sharing with the U10s and this was not ideal. Teresa mentioned that there had been an offer of jerseys in the Club but they needed to do a full stock take first to see what we have and what we need. Cahal suggested that we could designate a day when people could be asked to provide old jerseys that have gone too small for players and use this to collect up spare jerseys. Imelda suggested that the U10 jerseys could be given to the U8 group as many of these jerseys are not big enough for the U10 group. Nicola spoke of the benefits to the entire group which came from splitting the U6's from the U8's. This allowed more one on one coaching time and evened things out for players; it also gave coaches time to explain to parents what was happening and how they could help at home.

U10 Camogie Report 2017

U10 Camogie started on the 10th February and finished on the 14th October when we participated in the half time demonstration games at the Senior Camogie County Final. Trainings were every Friday 18:15 - 19:30. Throughout 2017 we had 30 training sessions: Attendance ranged from 8 to 29 girls. With the average attendance being 19 girls.

29 girls participated throughout the season. Out of that, only 9 girls had an attendance level of over 80% and 22 girls with over 60% attendance. This needs to be worked on and improved for 2018.

In mid-September the U8 girls that are joining the U10's in February 2018 took part in two training sessions with the current U10's. This worked out well and the said girls are at a good level and have been well prepared by the U8 coaches.

During the season the U10 girls played in the following:

- Four Mini Blitz. Two of these blitzes were held by ourselves in Lisnamult and the other two were held in Oran and Boyle.
- A County Blitz played in Oran but hosted by Tulsk.
- Six Galway North Board (GNB) matches, one of which was the A Shield final that we won. The games were 15 minutes a side, pitch size was 21-yard line to 21-yard line. Full Camogie rules.

After the GNB Final, we had some of our best training sessions. The confidence and desire to get on the ball carried through to the end of the season. Only for the GNB matches, the U10's progress this year would have been extremely limited. The U10 management are not happy with the effort made by the County Camogie Board to arrange enough meaningful play time for the U10 girls in both our Club and County. Examples: The pitch size is too small and minutes per half too short. A parent /player from our Club could be travelling for up to 45 minutes to get to a blitz and then end up with only 10-15 minutes play time. The County Blitz was run off in an hour and you didn't get to play all the clubs.

Over all it was a very successful year and the girls that regularly attended training and matches/blitz improved significantly. However, this would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of the Coaching Team, Assistsances and Referees. They all deserve great thanks for volunteering and giving up their time during the year.

Coaching Team: Imelda Quinn, Marie Cormican, Orla Connaughton, Damien Mc Sharry, Jason Connaughton.

Assistances and Referees: Laoise Ní Chonnailí, Ruth McNeill, Ava Giblin, Lisa Mullen, Niamh McCourt, Michela Bracken and Isabell Cullen

The U10 Team and Management after winning the Galway North Board League A Shield Final 2017



U12 Camogie Report 2017

The Under 12 Roscommon Gaels camogie squad met in February 2017 to start their 6 week indoor training sessions. 28 girls participated in U12 camogie this year and there were two teams the Hawkes and the Eagles. The squad were managed by Una Ni Chuinn, Paula Connaughton, Sinead Killeen and Teresa Hession.

Training moved outside to Lisnamult Pitch at the end of March and between February and October 2016 the squad held over 60 training sessions. The team travelled to Galway for the Camán to Connaught event in Pearse Stadium in March meeting and beating County Galway teams.

The U12 camogie girls took part in three blitzes and played in 7 games in the U12 County league competition. The team won the County C U12 League final in September 2017. This team has progressed well and will make great headway at U14 level.

U14 Camogie Report 2017

This was a fantastic and competitive group of players. There were 26-28 at all training sessions with 90% attendance throughout the year. When they began earlier in the year they didn't seem to believe in themselves but by the end of the year they had developed a winning mentality because they won a number of games and finals. Parents were delighted with the Galway North Board League in 2017. A number of players participated in the County U14 Development Squad.

U16 Camogie Report 2017

This group was not as successful as last year despite having lots of potential. This group got to the final of the Connaught 7-a-side in Began, losing out narrowly to Westport. They also got to the U16 county semi-final but no further. Many of them played well at Minor level. This group reached the Connaught Final in the annual U16 7-a-side competition in Began in July, losing out narrowly to Westport. Nine of this panel were part of the County Roscommon U16 squad in 2017.

Minor Camogie Report 2017

It was difficult to get this group together because of leaving cert, college and work, etc. We got to the Minor semi-final and despite leading by 4 points with 10 minutes to go our lack of training showed and we lost out on a final placing.

U8 Boys Football 2017

Coaches:

We had 13/14 coaches involved:

Declan Hussey / Ciaran Heneghan / Joe Biesty / Enda Daly / Shane O'Donnell / Shane Killian / Derek Dolan / Seamie O'Neill / Ollie McGuinness / Jason Crean / Declan Connaughton / Mick O'Reilly / Mick Byrne / Philip Fleming.

Normal session would have 6-8 coaches available.

Training Sessions:

- Normal Training Sessions took place on Saturday Morning @ 10:00 – 11:00 am.
- In attendance on most Saturday were 45+ players ranging from U6-U8.
- We Started training for U6/Beginners on March 11th, this ran for 3 Saturdays in the Hyde. We ran the ABC programme which felt was certainly beneficial and worthwhile as its starts you to getting the lads focused on core movements (Agility, Balance & Co-Ordination + Running Jumping, Catching).
- Note - we continued with the ABC programme for the beginners once we moved outdoors.
- First outdoor session took place on April 1st.
- We had planned 31 sessions but ended up with 29, we had to surrender the August Bank Holiday as not enough help and also one bad Saturday.

Players:

Players Attending Blitzes (U7 & U8 only – getting 27-30 players on average to go to Blitz days):

- U6 / 17
- U7/ 17-18
- U8 / 25-27
- Total Players attending training: Typical Session would have 45 with 50-55 out of 62 registered participating.

County Blitz & Challenge Games:

At the start of the year we also had to consider our participation on the Go-Games / Blitz structure for the county.

Up until 2017 we were largely in with the larger clubs across the county (Dominic's, Brigids, Pearses etc). However, this year the county was split in 3 regions with each region getting an appointed GPO.

When we looked at the group we were going to be in it became apparent very quickly that it would pose challenges as we were to be paired off with Oran, Ciaran's, Brigids & St. Aidans. We recognised that this wouldn't play out well as we simply had too many

players and our players wouldn't be getting any game time. These clubs typically have 15 – 20 players max so two team @ 7 a side where we wanted to field 4-5 teams.

After some debate between ourselves and Ollie Lennon (And St. Brigids) we had a meeting to discuss the impracticalities around the proposed structure.

The outcome was that Roscommon Gaels ended up in two blitz Groups. While a little challenging on Blitz days (Each groups played the same day) it meant that our lads were getting maximum game time with minimal players standing on the side-line.

The success of this structure needs to be considered carefully into 2018 as to be honest there seemed to be a lack of focus, organisation and buy in from clubs in general. For example, Oran didn't really participate as they're in their own mini blitz.

Over and above the Blitz we reached out to lots of other clubs both inside and outside the county, at U8 level in 2017 there was a lack of desire to facilitate or take part in challenge games over and above the Blitz.

The challenge we have is that we have significant numbers so organising games against smaller clubs is too difficult and the larger clubs are too few and are typically already involved in their own blitz outside the County Structure so a little more thought require in this area.

We had a number of challenge games against Oran & Kilbride for U6 & U8.

Conclusion:

Overall a successful year with good progress being made and great attendance continues to be enjoyed. We also had some good player development with some nice players emerging and going up to U10's

We finished out the year on October 6th in Lisnamult under Lights, a nasty night weather wise but all in all a good finish to the year.

Going up to U10 will be 23-25 players.

Other Considerations:

Have briefly discussed with John Donnellan around splitting off the U6 and beginners into a nursery programme – there is significant merit in this but needs further discussion. As normal, help will be the challenge.

Coaching development continues to be a key factor in how well these session can be ran, structured etc. etc. and key is help and the right type of help to facilitate. We had a lot of coaches signed up this year for help but many of us are stretched with other commitments.

U10 Boys Football 2017

Pella

Our year started indoors with the indoor version of Gaelic Football called Pella on Feb 2nd. This ran for 7 nights during the Spring as we embarked on extending the playing season. The lads enjoyed it and we had strong numbers (average was 39 each Thursday over the 7 weeks). We look upon it as a fun outlet once a week, gaining exercise, building on the continuity of team work from during the year, whilst all the time improving the skills of movement, passing, shooting, defending and ball handling. We are at present in our Autumn Pella nights and are due to have our last night for 2017 on Nov 30th. We believe that the improvements achieved through Pella have transferred to the pitch for a lot of the players.

Training

The year commenced outside in Lisnamult on March 30th from 18.30 – 19.45 each Thursday. All sessions started promptly with coaches arriving 15 - 30 mins early to set up each session. We worked off a list of 53 registered players (active attendance was based around approx. 46 players) with 23 of these turning 10 during the year and the other 30 being available for U10 again in 2018. The average turnout each Thursday was between 30 - 40. As is normal attendance did drop in July and August due to holidays.

Each session aimed to concentrate work on 2 key skills followed by a game for approx. 30 mins. At the start of the year we made a conscious decision to try and improve each player's passing and kicking off their 'weaker sides' – to aid this the first 10 mins of each session involved all players collectively alternating solo practice off each foot. We then broke the group into U9's and U10's for training. During the first half of the year we created a third group for some of the younger and less experienced players to try and give them some more ball time at their own respective levels of ability.

We also tried to give exposure to playing in goal to numerous players in the hope that at older grades teams might have more goalkeeping options available. Where possible the skills practice took the form of modified games where the lads had to try and practice their skills whilst under pressure. When it came to game time, when numbers facilitated, we preferred to keep the games to no more than 7/9 a side and played on a small area. The aim of small sided games is to ensure that all players playing get as much time as possible on the ball and to put the skills learned into practice. We also continued to restrict 'plays' during these games to encourage the notion of team work, moving the ball fast and to assist the development of some of the weaker players, as a restriction on 'plays' would allow more contact time with the ball for everyone. Any players that were struggling with certain skills on occasion were given some extra coaching and encouragement/ praise. Any areas of weakness noted during blitzes / games were worked on with the appropriate drills at the next training session.

Games

After 2016 we were disappointed not to have had more game time for the players and we set about correcting this in 2017. In addition to ensuring more games we also looked at getting more games with clubs outside the county to challenge the players by competing against usually strong opposition. These games were extremely worthwhile and provided the basis for areas of weakness to concentrate on.

- 15 Match days (against 24 clubs, 13 of which from outside Roscommon)
- Celbridge All Ireland U10 blitz – players born 2007 (32 teams from 14 counties – Played St. Judes (Dublin); Celbridge (Kildare); Shrile (Mayo); Kilmacud Crokes (Dublin))
- Rochfortbridge Blitz – All Players (8 teams, 6 from Westmeath and 2 from Roscommon)
- Challenge games against clubs from outside Roscommon included Garrycastle, Athlone, Ballinasloe, Carrick on Shannon and Claregalway.
- Challenge games against clubs in Roscommon included Padraig Pearses, Kilbride, Castlerea, Oran, Elphin, St. Ciarans
- Players born in 2007 played in a blitz group with Padraig Pearses, St. Brigids, Clann Na Gael and St.Dominics.
- Players born in 2008 played in a blitz group with Oran, St.Aidans and St.Ciarans (They were playing teams that had players from 2007 & 2008)

Given our numbers when organising challenge games, we often had to invite 2 clubs to come and play us on the same evening.

In total, we had 52 sessions between training, games and Pella. Details of each training session was communicated to parents on Tuesdays by text (or earlier in the week if trying to confirm numbers for blitz / game attendance). We had a very dedicated group of 12 coaches involved and it's so vital at this age group to have an adequate number of coaches. The group involved (Gary Dunne, Garreth Carroll, Trevor Finneran, Paul Beisty, Marty Rodgers, David Fallon, Derek Dolan, Joe Biesty, Mick Byrne, Gerry Donoghue, John Connelly and Declan Hussey) deserve a big thank you and like all coaches involved should be continually encouraged to keep giving up their time and energy.

Finally, we plan to take the group away to an indoor go karting centre during Christmas to bring the curtain finally down on an enjoyable year.

U12 Boy Football 2017

- 23 Players
 - Spring League – Div 1 - Played St Dominics (lost by 1 pt), Padraig Pearses (won by 5 pts), Lost St Brigids's by 7 pts, Boyle (won by 3 pts), Clan (lost by 6 pts)
 - Finished mid table. Played reasonable well – best performance winning in boyle after being well down at half time
 - Spring League – Div 6 – Kilbride, Padraig Pearses, St Brigids, St Dominics, Clan Na Gael. Due to the small panel we had to work off a lot of players were doubling up. Again we played as many young guys as we could & finished mid Table.
 - Challenge Matches/Tournament Games - Kilbride home & away, Elphin/Ballinmeen, Clonguish Tournament (played Clonguish, Knockmore & claregalway) We had a weakened team at this tournament & we didn't perform as best we could. However the boys learned a lot & kept going in all the games
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- Div 1 Summer League – Started very late and finished on the 20th Oct
 - Played St Dominics (lost by 2 pts), Western Gaels (Lost by 7 pts), St Brigids (won by 9 pts), Clan (lost by 6 pts), Boyle (lost by 8 pts)
 - Played in the Div 1 Shield Competition – Played St Brigids (won by 8 pts) and beat Clan in lisnamult on a cold Friday night to lift the shield on possibly our best performance of the year
 - Div 5 Summer League – forfeited 2 games – Boyle & Clan. Played Kilbride (won by 2 pts), St Dominics (lost by 1 pt) Padraig Pearses (won by 9 pts), St Brigids (won by 7 pts)
 - Qualified for the Cup Play offs – Boyle (won by 7 pts), Clan – Semi Final – lost by 7. That ended our season at Div 5 level

Overall a mixed year after the highs of the previous year. Some lads have really matured & turned into leaders on the field. Other guys have yet to get there but encouragement & willings to learn there is a future in them. Just to keep all the lads we have will be a struggle with Rugby & Soccer but with a good environment around these lads & looked after well the future looks bright.

U14 Boys Football 2017

We had 29 boys registered.



Some of our U14 Football Panel at end of season visit to Caherlestrane

Management Team :

The management team comprised John Donnellan, Mick Dowd, Noel Penney, Chris Grogan.

Training :

Training started in mid-January and was run over two sessions a week – Tuesdays & Sundays.

Over the season, we held 43 Training Sessions.

Fixtures :

- Spring League : We fielded a team in Div 1 and Div 4.
- Championship : We fielded a team in Div 1.

Spring League

Div 1 Team :

We competed against Clann Na nGael, Pdraig Pearses, St Brigids, Boyle, & St Michaels.

We played good football in fits-and-starts in most games but we struggled to compete physically against Clann and Brigids especially. In the best game of the League, we had a hectic tussle against Boyle in Abbey Park. We played very well before letting our discipline slip and losing.

Unfortunately, we had to concede our home fixture to Padraig Pearses due to late withdrawal of some of our players.

On a positive note, we retained our Div 1 status for the championship with a good win against St. Michaels in Cootehall.

Div 4 Team

We played Eire Og, St. Croans, Clann na nGael, St Brigids, Padraig Pearses and Boyle. The lads played well in our league games to eventually finish mid table.

Championship

We competed in Div 1 against Clann Na nGael, Padraig Pearses, St Brigids, St Ciarans and Boyle.

We contested well against Clann na nGael in the first half in Johnstown but were outclassed in the second half. We had a good win against St. Ciarans in a sporting game played by two evenly matched teams. Again, we played well against strong St Brigids & Pearses teams but, lacked the physicality in key positions. In our final championship game away to Boyle, played in atrocious conditions, the lads showed great determination/resilience to secure a win.

Challenge Games

We arranged challenge games against Longford Slashers, Ballinasloe, St Ciarans and St Marys (Carrick-on Shannon). For our final outing of the season we visited Caherlestrane in mid Sept.

Conclusions :

Between Spring League, Championship and Challenge games we played ≈ 25 games across the season. Added to the 43 Training Sessions, the lads got plenty of exercise and the opportunity to play lots of football.

Overall, across the season, the turnout for training and the *attitude* of the lads was mixed. A Training Participation Record was maintained and the poor attendance by some players was very evident.

Notwithstanding the above, the progression of the group was good, with the skill level and tactical knowledge improving over the season.

There is no doubt there are some very good footballers in the group.

Appreciation :

A BIG THANK YOU to the following :-

- Senior Manager Liam McNeil and senior players Cian Connolly and Gearoid Egan who took a training session with the lads.
- Senior player Mark Healy who took a training session with the lads.
- Pitch co-ordinator Philip Mullen for his help through the season.
- Tom Killion for ref'ing some of our challenge games.
- Shane Hoare for retrieving "lost" footballs and the "banter".

U16 Boys Football 2017

Management Team – Kevin Keegan, Jason Hoare and David Hoare

Overview:

We started the year with 29 players on our panel and we finished the year with 27 on our panel.

Injuries: We had a total of 7 players that missed time during the year with injuries.

We had 52 training sessions and 17 matches of which 12 were competitive. Our Division 1 Record was W:0, D:1& L:4 and our Division 2 Championship record was W:5, D:0, L:2.

While the results in the league were disappointing; the form and effort of the lads who played was very encouraging and deserved a better outcome. In our championship run the lads showed their ability and great heart at times, especially the semi final win over Padraig Pearses and the comeback against Castlerea in the league stage, to progress to the county final. Unfortunately this group were, to a degree, the victims of their own success; getting to the soccer and hurling finals as well. The three finals were all played within 10 days of each other. This fixture congestion (Semi Final debacle, short turnaround from Semi Final to Final and Soccer Final 2 days before Football Final) did not allow us to prepare as we would have liked for the final. We inevitably picked up an injury to one of our key players and were missing another key player for the final. Despite this the lads showed great heart and effort after a rocky start to get back into the game. Sadly, the second half was a bridge too far and we were soundly beaten by very strong Castlerea team.

Overall we are pleased with the year and the progression this group have made but very disappointed for the lads at the way the season finished.

As a management team we would like to thank each and every one of our panel for their effort and commitment to their team and our club.

Training:

52 Sessions.

- We started Training at the end of January in preparation for our league matches which started in Mid February.
- While attendance at Training was, in general, good but we were without a number of players due to other sports and this interrupted our early season preparation. The statistics (which have been adjusted to account for Exams, County commitments, Minor etc) reflect this and overall turnout at training was 70%. While attendance improved as the year went on we were still missing a number of players at key times which hampered our tactical preparation. I feel some improvement is needed in this area if we are going to make the step up to being competitive at the top level.
- The effort and commitment given from the vast majority of the lads was excellent and as a result we have several very good training sessions.
- I feel I must highlight some issues with pitches during the year. While we had a pitch booked for training we sometimes had to wait or negotiate to get a pitch to train on. This may be a small point but should be streamlined going forward.

- We lost two training sessions due to hurling fixtures which we not informed about, and in fact we had texts sent about training to be told by parents that hurling was on. Lack of communication such as this within the club should not happen and needs to be worked on.
- County squads also interfered with our training and particularly having players told not to train when there was County competitions up coming.
- I would like to thank David and especially Jason for helping with the preparation of the team with their varied and enjoyable sessions.

League:

- Strokestown was our first game. Missing 8 players. Despite this we gave a very brave and committed performance and were narrowly beaten.
- St Brigid's – Missing 8 players. We were totally outplayed by an exceptional side but the some of the boys that played showed real heart and determination to keep going under the circumstances.
- Clan na Gael - We were missing 3 on this day with one falling injured during the warm up. We kept faith with the lads that played in the first two games. We played very well in the first half and were unlucky not to be ahead. We had a poor second half, even after the introduction of the returning players, we showed the lack of training and cohesion needed and were well beaten.
- St Dominic - Missing 2 players. Arguably our best performance of the league. We played with great determination and skill and were very disappointed only to draw the match. Some great performances and only for a late injury and some wasteful shooting we would have secured a deserved victory.
- Boyle - Missing 9 players. We had a large number of players missing for what was a relegation play off – this was very disappointing. We had some great performances on the day but simply we were missing too many of our main players to keep the game competitive.

Championship:

- Kilglass/St Barry's – Missing 4 players. We had a great start and but a poor 20 minutes at the end of the first half let them back into the game. The boys responded in the second half and we won the game with ease but for lapses in concentration and some poor finishing the margin could have been wider.
- St Michael's – Missing 4 players. This was a facile victory and of no benefit to either side. That said we can only beat what was in front of us and we did that comfortably. Despite making all our substitutions early we had far too much for them.
- Pdraig Pearses – Missing 4 players. We got off to a poor start and were always chasing the game. Our finishing was poor throughout and we would rue and number of easy misses in the end. However, we stood up to strong physical challenge and fought bravely with all the lads that played showing their heart and determination. We were all very disappointed to lose by a point having felt that we had the chances to win the game.
- Castlerea – Missing 7 players. Again we didn't have a great start and gave them a ten point lead but then we really showed our best form. The determination and skill the lads played

with was a joy to behold. Great performances all around the field in what was without doubt our best forty minutes of football in the year. We ran out deserving winners in what was a very enjoyable game to be involved in.

- Ballinameen/Elphin – Missing 9 players. A rollercoaster of a game in which we played some really good football but lapses in concentration and the concession of goals made it a tight affair. To our boys credit the dug in and held on for a narrow victory.
- Semi-Final v Pdraig Pearses – Missing 0 players. Less than 24 hours after the hurling semi-final (against the same opposition) this was all about character. We showed loads of it, we matched them physically and got some very well worked scores, especially in the first half. As we tired in the second half the lads showed great character and guts to grind out a well deserved victory.
- Final v Castlerea – Missing 2 players. We were missing two influential players for the final which led to us having to move around our team. Again we got off to a bad start but again our lads showed great heart and effort to get back into the game. After a brave start to the second half some well worked scores by Castlerea killed the game and we were soundly beaten by the better team on the day. It was a huge disappointment for the year to end like this as it did not reflect the standard we had reached or the progress this group have made.

Conclusions:

Looking at the year as a whole I felt that we had a good year and my overall feeling on it is a positive one. The group matured, showed character and played some very good football. They proved that they are a match for anybody on their day. Over the year we had many great individual performances and they showed that they are more than capable of being competitive at the top level in this county. I don't feel we are that far away from it but to achieve this we need to be at our top level more consistently and our teamwork/tactical know how must improve from what it is. As mentioned earlier in this report I feel a few minor improvements in attendance and commitment to their team would help us make the step up to where we want to be.

Finally I would like to thank everyone in the club for their help and support throughout the year and also the sponsors of the kit for the county final.

Minor Football 2017

Management Team: Shane O'Donnell (manager) Hugh Murphy, Andy Hession

Panel: 17 minor players supplemented with U16s

Matches Played

League Played 5, Won 1, Lost 4

Gaels 4-4	Pearses 2-7
Gaels 1-4	Clan na Gael 2-19
Castlerea 3-12	Gaels 3-6
Gaels 0-6	Brigids 2-17
Strokestown 1-17	Gaels 0-4

Championship Played 5, Lost 5

Gaels 0-8	Castlerea 0-11
Brigids 8-14	Gaels 0-10
Strokestown 1-17	Gaels 2-4
Gaels 2-12	Oran 2-16
Gaels 4-5	Clan na Gael 5-15

Challenges Played 6, Won 3, Drew 1, Lost 2

Training Schedule We trained every Tuesday and Thursday starting in late January. We trained at the weekend when we didn't have a match.

Looking at the above results you would have to say it was a disappointing year. We put in a superb performance in our first league game beating Pearses by 4 points in Lisnamult. We were competitive against Castlerea and were level mid-way through the second half. However Castlerea finished strongly and recorded a somewhat flattering 6 point victory. We suffered very heavy defeats to Brigids, Clan na Gael and Strokestown.

We took a short break after the league and put in a big effort for the championship. We had a team building day in the Rooskey Adventure centre in May. This was a rewarding day and helped develop a good spirit among the lads. I would like to thank the club for subsidising the cost and Liam Mc Neill for providing refreshments. In our first championship game we faced Castlerea in Lisnamult. With 5 minutes left we were level but once again Castlerea got the better of us in the last few minutes and emerged victorious by 3 points. This was a great performance by the lads and a game in which we deserved a share of the points.

Our second game against St. Brigids was very disappointing and they ran out easy winners. In truth it was a very difficult evening for players and management alike. Even though we lost by 11 points to Strokestown we put in a really good second half performance. The boys found themselves in a very difficult situation at half time having played with the wind. However they emerged in

determined fashion for the second half and gave a good account of themselves. In our penultimate game against Oran we lost by 3 points. While we had them rattled at the end we would have to admit that Oran were the better team on the day. Our final game was against Clan na Gael and we did well to field given that we had nothing to play for. A superb first half performance saw us lead by 3-3 to 0-6 at halftime and hopes were high that we could record a win. However Clan turned on the style in the second half to win comfortably.

Judged on results alone this was a very disappointing year. A club such as ours should normally be competitive in Division 1. However this was not the case this year. It must also be pointed out that we lost all five of our championship games last year also. We were far more competitive last year but it was Division 2. This is a worrying situation for us as a club. Hopefully it is just a temporary blip.

There were a few mitigating factors however.

Limited panel... We had a panel of 17 minor players at most. This placed us at a serious disadvantage as invariably some players would be injured or unavailable. This meant that at many of our training sessions we had only 10/12 players training. While it was easy to organise it was difficult to replicate 15v15 matchday situations. It also proved difficult to organise challenge games as we couldn't guarantee that we would have the numbers. On occasion we used U16 players to make up the numbers. I was reluctant to do this too often as many of these U16 lads were also involved in U16 hurling. I would like to thank Kevin Keegan most sincerely for his cooperation in this regard. The Clan na Gael game illustrated the difficulty we had with numbers. We had a panel of 17 available. We started with 10 minors and 5 U16s, we finished with 8 minors and 7 U16s. Needless to say we got hammered.

Injury to key players... Patrick Fannon was one of our key minor players last year and was a Co. U17. He played in our first league game against Pearses but unfortunately didn't play again until the last two rounds of the championship. However he wasn't fully fit and played as a corner forward. He is an excellent player and would have been a huge help to us. I wish him all the best and hope his injury worries are over. Three of our other key players Dylan Horan, Jason Hoare and Tim Lambe were also unavailable for a number of matches due to injury. While injuries were an issue I don't want to make too much of them as every team suffers injuries and needs to be able to respond.

Other sports... on certain occasions we were unable to field our strongest team as some of our players were playing rugby or soccer. The challenge for us is to make Gaelic football the game of choice. However this becomes more difficult if you are uncompetitive in your division and have no chance of winning a competition.

Conclusion while results didn't go our way I have to commend the lads for the attitude they showed. We had some of our biggest training turn outs at the end of the year despite the heavy defeats. Even after the Brigids miss match we had an excellent turn out at training and lads knuckled down to the task at hand. We also fielded in our last game against Clan na Gael ,giving a walk over would have been the easy option. These are a dedicated bunch of lads who did their best in difficult circumstances. I am very disappointed for them that they didn't get a championship win, however I have no doubt that if they stick at it they will achieve success in the future. I would like to thank them for their dedication throughout the year and wish them all the best in the future. I would also like to thank Cahal Mahon, Finbarr Reilly, Philip Mullen and Shane Hoare for their help and support during the year. Finally I would like to thank my two selectors Hugh and Andy for all the time and effort they gave to the cause. They devoted a huge amount of time to the team. It is very much appreciated.

U8 Hurling 2017

Stats of the year

- Coaches:
 - 11 (Shane Nerney, Tommy Mulry, Jason Connaughton, Jason Crean, Stef Walsh, Jer O'Connor, Mick O'Reilly, Chris Gilmore, Nicola Crosbie, Adrian Tully, Frank Murphy)
 - 4 TYs (Aodha, Niall, Conor, Tim)
- Players
 - Total number of players 2017: 59
 - New players 2017: 34
 - Players from last year: 25
 - Highest player turnout of season: 51
 - Number who dropped during year: ~7
- Training Weeks
 - indoors: 8 (from Feb 6th)
 - outdoors: 27 (from April 3rd)
- Matches:
 - U8 Blitzes: 5 (Oran / Ros Gaels / Four Roads / Dominic's / County @ Pearses)
 - U8 Challenges: 4 (Athleague / Oran / Oran & Ath-Tremane / L Slashers & Kenagh)
 - U6 Challenges: 2 (Athleague / Oran)

Indoor training

- Planning of training sessions
 - Drills (Fun drills / skill drills / ABC's)
 - Games
- Hurler splits by experience indoor.
- Equipment
 - Hurls / helmets / sliotars / curran kit.
- Venue – Convent gym
- Hurl & helmet sales

Comments

- U6 training for 1 hour was too long for U6 kids. Suggestion to change to 40 mins.
- Convent gym was loud impacting effective communication.
- Parent in hall. Preference to not permit parent in hall and to set up entrance to deter this i.e. separate section for paying and only kids let past to get equipment in hall.
- U8 skills development were restricted indoor with short touches.
- Curran Kit –
 - U6 - worked very well with beginners. Demonstration session with Proinsias very effective for kids & coaches.
 - U8 – difficult to manage number of participants. Recommendation for U8 to use own hurl on Curran equipment in future.
- Numbers – due to very large numbers, we discussed how best to split U6 / U8 next year. Options discussed as below. No final decision made.

- Book gym for 2 hrs with U6 / U8 / U10 to have 40 mins each. Requires U8 coaches be available for 2 x 40 minute sessions. Impact on coaches with kids participating in 1 session.
- Have indoor for beginners only. Start non-beginners outdoors. Impact on numbers taking up other sport in Feb while waiting for outdoors to start in April.
- Indoor games – initially we had 2 pitches and subs coming in and out. After a number of weeks we set up 3 pitches indoors for small sided games and all participants. Recommend 3 pitches / small sided games.
- Hurl & helmet sales in the gym significantly contributed to a smooth transition to outdoors with their own equipment. Well managed sales of helmets & hurls.

Outdoor training

- Planning of training sessions
 - Drills (Fun drills / Skill drills) & Games
- Hurlers split by age-group outdoor.
- Equipment
 - Sliotars / bollards / cones / poles

Comments

- Appropriate to split kids by age-group outside from split by experience (all beginners grouped regardless of age) indoors.
- We got all the equipment requested during the year and were not left short with any requests.
- Positional sense to have increased focus in 2018. Noted that kids were not maintaining positions during matches. Suggestion to ‘zone’ the pitch and have coaches responsible for marshalling players maintain their zone.
- Hurling skill level of hurlers noted as significantly improving during the season with a number of kids developing strongly.

Blitzes

- Game time / organisation.
- U6 players:
 - no blitz
 - no training

Comments

- Blitzes attended by Ros Gaels U8 were very poorly organised and in effect not organised. The exception being St Dominics. Gaels U8 attended blitzes during the year and clearly communicated request to field 2 – 3 teams. This was not facilitated and led to coaches trying to organise games on the fly with teams / playing games against each other. Proposal to raise at next Coiste meeting. If multiple teams will not be facilitated, recommendation to withdraw from blitzes and arrange challenge matches in Lisnamult organising visiting teams. This significantly undermines the great work and dedication of the coaches and is dis-heartening to our young players and parents support.

- U6 players did not attend blitzes due to age. It was noted that they did not have training also, in effect missing 2 weeks hurling when there are blitzes. Noted neighbouring clubs that play at U6 level are Ath-Tremane / Oran / Ballygar. 2018 Manager to follow-up and schedule increase in U6 games next year.

Bi-Monthly Coach Meeting

Comments

- 2 meeting held in 2017. Intention was to hold every 6 – 8 weeks which did not materialise.
- Recommendation to restart these in 2018 and use them as working meetings for all coaches to take ownership of planning training sessions & drills over following period.
- Noted importance of pre-planning drills and that all coaches are aware of drills to be undertaken at next training session.

Communication

- School visits in advance of season commencing

Comments

- School visit highlighted as significant contributor to large numbers commencing hurling in 2017.

2018 coaches

Comment

- All coaches encouraged to contact potential coaches for 2018. U8 requires a significant number of coaches to assist at this age group.
- Discussed ‘information night’ for parents as an opportunity to discuss the season ahead and recruit coaches. Experience is not required to help out.
- TY’s in 2017 were very good and contributed to the coaching of kids early in the year. Request for 4 TY’s in 2018

U10 Hurling 2017

U12 Hurling 2017

Roscommon Gaels U-12 hurlers began training in mid-March. We came together 36 times during the season which finished on Saturday, 9th September when we were beaten 3-6 to 2-4 by Carrick-on-Shannon in the county B final. It was a year that was at times frustrating, but ultimately rewarding.

The management team was highly dedicated. Liam Corcoran, Fergus Halligan and Noel Fallon gave of their time and energy enthusiastically while the involvement of the Egan family – Noel, Cillian and, in particular, Gearoid was a major addition. It was a huge boost to the U-12 hurlers to have a county hurler coaching them. Tom Mullen was also involved at the start of the year, but had to drop out subsequently due to work commitments.

We had 21 players at our first training session and finished the year with 21 players. In the summer when numbers for matches were tight three U-10s joined us.

We had just 10 players who were in their last year U-12, two of whom were taking up hurling for the first time while another returned after a year's absence. In terms of age and physical strength we struggled against the other teams.

We suffered some heavy defeats early in the year. What was encouraging was that the players stayed involved despite losing matches, and as the summer went on they progressed noticeably. In our last four matches, the team gave its best performances – drawing with Padraig Pearses, beating Tooreen in a challenge, losing narrowly to St. Dominic’s and putting up a brave and committed performance in the county B final.

One particular highlight for the management was that every one of the 21 players got to represent Roscommon Gaels on county final day. Our centre-back Rory Carthy deservedly received the Player of the Match award in the county final.

Our aims from early in the year were twofold: maintain the players’ interest in and love for hurling, and to improve their skill set for their future careers. We as a management team believe we achieved that. We hope that the progress made by the players during the year will be of benefit to next year’s U-12 and U-14 teams.

To complete the year a team of four represented Roscommon Gaels in the county skills competition. They finished third in this final – and the two teams which finished ahead of them finished 1st and 2nd in Connacht skills. Fergus Halligan coached the four players: Rory Carthy, Nathan Halligan, Eoghan Keavney and Thomas King.



U14 Hurling 2017

Management: Tom Killion, John Casey, Teresa Hession (& Pdraig Conlon)

Panel: 24 players but never had more than 19 for any game throughout the year and one player only joined for last couple of games.

Training schedule: Held 45 sessions between Jan 21st and Oct 13th 2017.

Jointly trained with the footballers on Tuesdays in the early part of the year for fitness training outdoors. Trained on Saturdays and/or Thursdays when it could be fit in with other sports

Matches : Competitive games 10 Challenges /Tournaments: 8

Got to the semi-final of both league and feile competitions but lost both. Got into a playoff with Athleague / Tremane for the third place in Feile and lost it by a point.

This was a team with huge potential and reaching the League Co final and qualifying for the Feile national finals would have been our goals this year with this group of players. That did not happen and was very disappointing to all involved.

Whilst there was a core group who were very committed and gave it their all there was a small group who did not fully buy into u14 hurling and seemed to give priority to other sports or interests.

On occasion there were some discipline/focus/lack of commitment problems in a few players who upset the momentum at training etc. The panel was not big enough to offset this behaviour by leaving them on the side line for a time during games etc and we as a management did not deal with it adequately

When we did not qualify for Feile the lads did regroup and gave the League a good shot winning both group games and getting to the semi final. There was a gap from June until Sept with no official hurling games so the campaign died away a little. We did play a few challenges and had some training sessions but the sharpness went out of our hurling. We played Four Roads in the League semi in a cracking game of hurling which we narrowly lost. The gap between June and September probably hindered development as the break was very long and the standard of our striking etc was not as sharp as it would have been without the long break. However holidays, Gaeltacht etc during this time would have meant that we would have struggled to get a team out as the panel numbers were so tight.

All in all it was a good year and this is a talented bunch of hurlers who need to be minded and encouraged as success will come their way again in the future.



U16 Hurling 2017

U8-U10 Girls Football 2017

Training for both U10 & U8 commenced on the 26/04/2017 and ran for a total of 20 weeks finishing up on Saturday the 9th of September.

In total we had 18 U10 girls and 30 U8's, the majority attended consistently every week so we'd be looking at 48 medals for family night (I have a full listing if required)

In relation to matches the U8's played 4 games in total, we played at home to St Dominic's, St Brigid's & Clann na nGael and finished up away to Four Roads, the girls competed well and enjoyed all the games.

The U10's also played St Dominic's, St Brigid's & Clann an nGael at home & played Four Roads & Padraig Pearses away, they also competed in a Blitz in St Barry's on the 9th of September where they played 4 further games on the day. Again the U10's competed very well & enjoyed all games throughout the year.

Great help was provided throughout the year by the following people:

Ann Hynes, Finbar O'Reilly who took the majority of the U10 training sessions, Shane Healy, Trish Gately, Olivia Humborg, Carmel Harlow.

For 2018 I feel it's important that more volunteers/parents come on board to help out which will allow us to coach the kids in smaller groups.

I also feel that the responsibility for U8's and 10's will need to be split as the group is too large to manage as one, continue to have training on the same evening and at the same time but split the responsibility between the groups.

Kind Regards

Michael Burke

U12 Girls Football 2017

It has been a fantastic year for the ladies under 12 ladies football team.

We started our training sessions in March with 30 plus girls training every Wednesday evening, (Hail, rain or snow).

Our season began Sunday 2nd of April @ 6pm, with our first game away to St Faithleachs in the Eastern league. We had a convincing win on that evening and continued on been successful throughout the league and remained unbeaten.

Our u12 Championship campaign began on Sunday 7th May away to Ballinameen. It was a lovely sunny evening with a lot parents from both sides sitting on blankets shouting on their side. This was definitely an exciting game. A free from Siofra Hession in the dying seconds of the game would secure a well deserved draw for our side. Ballinameen were a well drilled side and were only able to field 13 players against us that evening. This formation was something we had not worked on at our training sessions and was difficult for us on that day. This was reviewed and fixed immediately. We introduced 13, 11, and 9 aside formations at training sessions. It proved everyday was a learning day and no better way, than all of us learn together.

We continued on throughout the championship unbeaten and managed to secure a place in the final with a tremendous victory over Four Roads in the semi final.

Sunday 25th June, County Final day had finally arrived. We travelled as a team to Ballyleague, spirit's were high and a large number of supporters turned up to shout on our side. Our opponents Oran were a team with a decent reputation. We played with a strong breeze in the first half and led at half time 1 -06 to 0 -00. Our girls had worked very hard in the first half and unfortunately the second half belonged to Oran and they managed to go on and secure a win.

Final score : Roscommon Gaels 1-06, Oran 2-06.

"Sadly the trophy did not come home with us, but the achievement was so much more than a title"
(Teresa Hession)

It was back to business the following Wednesday evening with a journey to Caltra.

This was a challenge against Caltra u12 ladies who also had been beaten in a Galway county final. It's was evident that our loss the Sunday previous had no impact on our girls. They probably played the best team football we had seen all year from them on a cold wet evening away to Caltra.

All the panel was used, coming away with a convincing win., Roscommon Gaels 4-15 Caltra 1-02
We remained training throughout July and managed to finish off our year winning the Shield.

We played 17 competitive games in the 2017, with only that one loss to Oran.

We also played 8 challenge games in 2017. These were mainly organised for the players that had not got as much game time as others.

We had 22 training sessions with a huge numbers girls in attendance hail, rain or snow.

Conclusion :

The team has grown in many ways and they have learned the importance of being able to win and

loose. The girls have been magnificent and I know I speak for all of the management and parents in saying we really proud of them.

It is our aim to bring these girls all the way to adult football so they can continue the proud tradition of our club.

The management team would like to express our thanks to the members of our Ladies Football Committee, our pitch coordinator Philip Mullen, for all his help and co-operation. We would also like to thank Dermot Hughes, Toyota car sales Roscommon for sponsoring our new jerseys, Tommy & Deirdre O'Conor for treating our girls to a meal after the County Final and Ann Hanly for sponsoring our Shield. We had great support from all areas of the club and parents and would like to take this opportunity to express our thanks.

Serena , Dec, Gerry & Trevor.



U14 Girls Football 2017

We started training in March with a panel of 24 players. Initially training was one session per week but we then added a second day for fitness and conditioning as we realised the players needed this. This was done as a joint session for football and camogie as a lot of the girls are on both panels. These Saturday morning sessions were very popular with the girls and as a result of the joint sessions we had some crossover between the two codes. Three camogie players joined the football panel and became regular starters as the year progressed.

The League started on 10th May and we had some mediocre games winning just 2 out of the 5 games. Our 4th place finish got us to a semi-final against Four Roads in mid June. We played reasonably well that day but lost to a much stronger Four Roads team.

The Summer League kicked off soon after the County League, this was a competitive and fun competition with the aim of getting more games for the teams. We won most of our matches, only losing to St Michaels and Oran, but we could see a marked improvement in a number of players and in the way they played as a team. We played Oran in the A final and although it was a tight and competitive game we pulled away in the last 10 minutes to win well.

The Summer League was a turning point and a big confidence boost, and the players, who now looked like a real team, worked hard and had clear ambitions to continue their success. We could see this in training as we prepared for the Championship.

We started the Championship on 20th August with a big win over Shannon Gaels, and followed this up with another big win over Castlerea. We then went on to play Four Roads away, they had beaten us 2 4 to 5 points in the League and were a team who had consistently beaten this group of players over the previous years. We beat them comprehensively by 5 12 to 2 3 and this was another turning point in the season.

There was a long break in the fixtures list and this was compounded by bad weather, so our final first round game against St Croans was not until October, the team continued their run to win this game and topped the group. In doing so we beat 4 teams who had beaten us well in the League.

During the break in September our priority was to keep the girls playing so we organised a number of challenge matches, including against our own U 16 team, this was a key to keeping the team ready for the last two matches.

We met St Croans again in the semi-final and this was a tighter match, but we won by 2 points to proceed to the final.

The final against Shannon Gaels was played in Kilbride on 26th October. This was a tight, hard fought match between two strong and well organised team. We won on a score line of 6 4 to 4 3.

We have now won 8 competitive matches in a

We had 38 training sessions during the year and through this period we saw a significant improvement in the work ethic of the players. We started off the year with a team who were quite giddy and took time to get organised at the start of each session, but half way through the year they had improved so that by the time each warm up was finished they were ready to train and worked hard at both the drills and the mini games. It was a pleasure to see players develop their skills and awareness and teamwork. We regularly had more than 25 at training sessions, and this made it possible to have proper games at training. As mentors we would like to thank our supporters, who turned out in numbers to encourage and cheer on our team, and especially for the two Finals we played and won. This added so much to the experience for the girls.

This panel is a great bunch of players who improved so much over the course of the season. To finish the year as Summer League Division 3 County Champions is a great achievement. And this was achieved by winning all of our last 8 competitive matches in a row.

During the year we organised a talk with Amanda Mc Loone on healthy eating/body strength.

From that we received very positive feedback and we now have between 27 and 35 girls

Taking part in a winter gym program. We have really enjoyed working with all the girls, it has been 9 months of: hard work, fun, frustration, camaraderie and growing confidence. We are so proud of how they have grown as footballers and as a team. A big thank you to every member of the panel.

Mentors: Paul Beisty, Stephen Lohan, Bernadette Mulry, Mary Kelly, Leo Mc Guinness.

U16 Girls Football 2017

We started training in February. We played 5 games in the championship

March 12th V Kilbride Lost
March 17th V Four Roads Won
March 19th V Castlerea Lost
March 26th V Shannon Gaels Lost
April 2nd V Elphin/Kilmore lost

We had a panel of 23 ladies. They were very enthusiastic, willing to learn. With a small bit of luck they could have won 3 of the 4 games they Lost.

Team Management: Colin Looby, Chris Cleary, Karen Toweey & Anthony McCormack

Minor Girls Football 2017

We started training at the end of June,

We played 5 games in the championship. For the first 3 games we had a lot of girls on holidays and the first game was on the 10th August. Last game on 30th October. That is 7 weeks of a break without a game. The final was played on Saturday 18th November.

10th August Ros Gaels V Shannon Gaels lost
17th August Ros Gaels V St. Ciarans Lost
24th August Ros Gaels V Western Gaels Lost
15th October Ros Gaels V St. Barrys Lost
30th October Ros Gaels V St. Michaels/Kilglass Won

We also could have won 3 of the 4 we lost. The girls were a pleasure to train. A worrying thing for the club is that we had only 3 ladies on the panel of 23 that are over age next year. We need to keep more ladies involved.

Management: Colin Looby, Chris Cleary, Karen Toweey & Anthony McCormack