



# ROSCOMMON GAELS

## Gaelforce News

CHRISTMAS EDITION: DECEMBER 21<sup>st</sup> 2020



*Ni Neart go  
chur  
le Cheile*



**GAA**



**LGFA**  
LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL





# End of Year Message

Club Chairperson, Teresa Hession

As we close what was a such a strange year in every way, we should take some time to reflect on what 2020 was to us in Roscommon Gaels club. It was both weird and wonderful, it was split and yet condensed, it started and finished for most and didn't start or finish for some. It opened and closed and swung from individual training, to pods, to matches and back to pods and individual again. There were normal meetings, then small group meetings and then it all moved on line with an abundance of patience required in this format. We had training, then matches with spectators and then matches behind closed doors and streamed matches on TV. We have had to be flexible, resilient, proactive, reactive and innovative. The cloud of COVID-19 has hung over all the world since early 2020 but it has brought us in Roscommon Gaels some silver linings.

The absolute joy and delight of returning to play and realising the value of our GAA club for our social, physical and emotional well-being was evident in Lisnamult in June 2020. In order for this to happen our COVID-19 subcommittee, chaired by Maire Allen, and all the COVID-19 team supervisors stepped up and oversaw the ever-changing protocols which allowed almost all teams back, with the exception of our new Academy members, the All Stars and our club school links. Massive thanks to all who volunteered to do the Covid-19 roles as without you the teams could not have returned.

Well done to all teams and their coaches for the trojan work and commitment in 2020 in what, were often, difficult and uncertain times. Congratulations on the many successes in so many age grades across all the codes. Covid - 19 meant that many adult players were at home in 2020 so we had three adult male football teams and extensive panels at junior camogie, LGFA and senior hurling which was a huge positive for Roscommon Gaels.

Our club officers and administrators had a long and busy year and served the club so well in so

many ways this year. Even when on field activity was suspended there was a lot of work being done by the Executive and the subcommittees to plan and prepare for all that 2020 threw at us as a club. It was often very difficult but we are lucky to have energetic and positive people in administrative positions in the club who will give of their time generously and go the extra mile for the benefit of all in our club and community.

Our facilities in the Hyde and Lisnamult, as always, were maintained to the highest standards all year even when there was no playing activity during lock down. Our grounds are meticulously cared for and maintained by a group of unsung heroes of the club – the Parks and Development Committee.

Our Subaru Fundraiser was a phenomenal success which was run by an innovative and hard-working subcommittee under the guidance of Garreth Carroll and Ollie Moran. They harnessed our club spirit and drive and raised an incredible amount of money as well as creating a great buzz of excitement around the place especially in the month of August. It was lovely that the winner had links to our club and that it was his first car! The profits will be invested in improving the infrastructure and facilities in the carpark and sports wall area in Lisnamult in early 2021 for the benefit of all our members.

In the Hyde Centre the lounge / meeting area was renovated, having new windows and doors and a disabled toilet installed. This was done with the assistance of John Gaynor and our members using their DIY skills to complete this project within a deadline using a grant of over €20k awarded by Roscommon CoCo. It is a credit to all involved in this project.

Our Strategic club plan was drafted, had a low-key launch by the Executive Committee and a lot of it has been delivered on as per EOY review despite COVID-19 restrictions. The restructuring of our club subcommittees commenced and we have more to do in this area. **Any member with a specialist skillset that they would like to share and be involved with some of our club subcommittees please**



**let us know and we would welcome you with open arms.**

Another measure of success of Roscommon Gaels was the recognition by external bodies and the awards that were won by the club. The Mc Namee National Media Award and Irish Pride of Place in the category “Community Youth Led” initiative runners up award. Well done to all involved in the winning of these awards in particular our club PRO Orla Fleming and the Communications committee. Our social media and newsletter was even more important during the pandemic to get info out to our members and it was brilliantly done throughout the year.

There are two massive infrastructure projects, carpark, sports wall and spectator stand in the pipeline in Lisnamult which must be self-financing and will be delivered in 2021.

Roscommon Gaels were not found wanting as part of our parish community in 2020 when our members participated in community assistance initiatives in lock down, raised €10,000 for Pieta House by a virtual and socially distanced run which was driven by our adult players and we featured in an “Irish Times” article on Roscommon on the strength and resilience of our town & community. The Subaru sub-committee also promoted local businesses that have supported us and we continue to encourage our members to shop local at Christmas and all year around and support those businesses who have always supported us in what are especially difficult economic times.

2020 has left us with some worries going forward – our finances, uncertainty of format of the playing season for clubs in 2021, the absence of our club school link, full academy and our All-Stars team, on line meetings instead of people meetings, non-attendance at matches, lack of a main club sponsor and new sponsors are required for some team jerseys which need to be replaced etc etc. However, as a club can we can, and we will, overcome all of these. The finances of the club have always been well run and the Lotto has been relaunched on line and

in hard copy. We would appeal to all club members to join as annual lotto subscribers and to assist with the selling of it which will ensure that we will be as sound as we can financially in 2021.

We cannot let 2020 close without paying tribute to Liam Mc Neill who has stepped down as senior football manager after 6 years of immense service to the senior panel and to the club. He and all the managements that he has been part of have run the panel in a manner that is akin to the level of senior co team training set up. He has given a huge amount of time both on and off the field to prepare the seniors to be in two semi-finals and two co finals in the past 6 years. We can never repay him for the energy, enthusiasm and professional manner in which he prepared the teams over this period and whilst the silverware has eluded us, he has left a legacy of quality footballers, a culture of meticulous preparations, an expectation of success and the foundations to be built on to progress these players onto the next level. We are indebted to you Liam and thank you sincerely for being an exemplary clubman and for your incredible dedication to senior football in our club. We are sorry we could not honour you in some way due to the restrictions in 2020 but please God we will do something at some stage in 2021.

Thanks to;

- the Club Executive, the administrators, the officers, co board delegates and all the subcommittees that have served the club this year,
- To the players and coaches who gave sterling work and service and represented our club with such pride and brought many honours to us both on and off the field,
- To all the volunteers and Covid-19 supervisors who gave of their time generously,
- The Subaru committee for the successful, positive and energetic fundraiser that they ran,





- The finance committee for the way they managed the club finances in such difficult economic circumstances and
- To the members who supported the club in a myriad of ways and complied with the many Covid-19 restrictions that were put in place this year
- Thanks also to the other officers who are stepping down from their positions for their work on behalf of the club with a special thanks to John Donnellan, who is stepping down as club secretary after two years. John has been a pleasure to work with and his dedication to his club is beyond exemplary.

To those who have had illnesses, bereavements or personal difficulties this year our thoughts and support are with you all at this most sad time. We have lost some great servants, friends and supporters of Roscommon Gaels in 2020 and whilst we were not able to honour them in the usual way, we remember them fondly and extend our sympathies to their families.

We are at a very exciting and invigorating stage of our club's development in so many areas and we are really looking forward to 2021 with renewed enthusiasm. We should acknowledge how well we have done to get ourselves through 2020 as a club. I am very proud of everyone in Roscommon Gaels for the immense year they have put in in very strange and difficult circumstances. Following on from the resilience, positivity and dedicated work put in by everyone in our great club during an extraordinary 2020 we can have no doubt that whatever next season throws up Roscommon Gaels will be able to deal with it as a united, hardworking and motivated club with great people and a common sense of purpose.

Happy Christmas to you all, keep safe, follow the guidelines, reduce your contacts and please God we will find ourselves in a much better place in 2021.

*Nollaig shona agus  
athbhliain faoi mhaise  
daoibh go léir.  
Ní neart go cur le chéile!*

## Annual General Meeting 2020

The Club held it's Annual General Meeting on December 5th via Microsoft Teams. All-be-it being an extraordinary way to hold an AGM, it ran off successfully.

Club Chairperson Teresa Hesssion directed the meeting along with Club Secretary John Donnellan and Club Treasurer Harry Hoare communicating end of year reports. All club members will have received these reports via email prior to the meeting.

The Election of Officers for 2021 is as follows:

Chairperson:	Teresa Hesssion
Chairperson:	Vice
Secretary:	Seamus Carthy
Treasurer:	<b>Vacant</b>
P.R.O.:	Harry Hoare
Asst. P.R.O.:	Orla Fleming
IT Officer	<b>Vacant</b>
Registrar:	Jerh O'Connor
Officer for Irish Language and Culture	Niamh Kilmartin
Children's Officer	<b>Vacant</b>
Players' Rep, Men's	Maire Allen
Players' Rep, Ladies	Brendan Quinn
Development Officer	Niamh Madden
Executive Coaching Officer	Ollie Moran
Football Board Chairperson	Seamus O'Neill
Ladies Board Chairperson	Seamus Carthy
	Declan Walsh



Hurling Board Chairperson David Waldron  
 Camogie Board Chairperson Tricia Torpey  
 Pitch Co-Ordinator Philip Mullen  
 Health & Wellbeing Officer Mary Tarpey  
 Assistance Secretary Cahal Mahon  
 Assist Treasurer Tom Fitzmaurice

The Club is always looking for new faces to assist with the running of the Club and will welcome anyone with open arms if interested in joining. Please don't hesitate to contact any of the executive if you wish to put your name forward to assist.

## Relaunch of Club Lotto



<https://www.roscommongaels.ie/lotto.html>

The Roscommon Gaels Lotto was very successfully re-launched on Sunday the 6<sup>th</sup> of December at the Hyde Centre. It was a great re-opening after a 38 week postponement due to the Covid-19 situation.

A Lotto sub-committee was formed in August with a view to getting the Club Lotto off the ground again. Plans were put in place, however, the recent Level 5 lockdown put paid to an earlier planned launch. As soon as Phase 3 was announced, we put our plan in to action and re-launched for December the 6<sup>th</sup> with a Jackpot of €7,250. A long time from the last Lotto draw of March the 15<sup>th</sup> earlier in the year. Our Lotto sub-committee decided to upgrade our online system to cater for those who wished to continue to purchase a club lotto ticket, without having to leave their homes. The Lotto sub-committee looked at a number of options, and choose to partner with

“Lottoraiser” as their online platform was extremely user-friendly and had multiple purchase options. Club lotto tickets can now be purchased from as little as a single €2 ticket on the Roscommon Gaels website at :

<https://www.roscommongaels.ie/lotto.html>

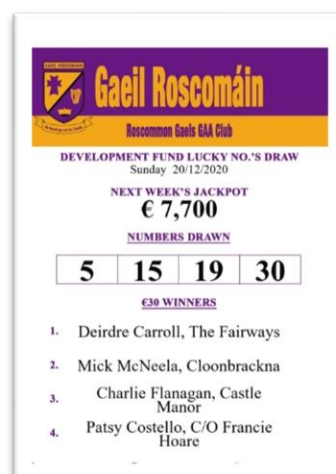
We also have setup a stall at the Square in Roscommon Town the last two Saturdays, with lots of volunteers generously giving their time to sell tickets. This in conjunction with our online lotto system has capitalised on the loss of revenue from pub sales. However, the club is funded through the lotto especially all expenses for facilities in Lisnamult, such as coaching equipment, footballs, sliotars, physios, grounds maintenance etc, so this is a key fundraising activity for the club. The lotto funds pretty much run the club financially on a yearly basis, such is its importance.

We ask all our club members and indeed anyone within the community who wishes to assist for an hour on any given Saturday, you are more than welcome. Roscommon Gaels want to take this opportunity to say thanks to all our Yearly Lotto Members, and everyone who have supported Roscommon Gaels lotto over the last two weeks. And in particular to the volunteers who have assisted in the running and re-launch of our Club Lotto. Without your generous time and efforts, this could not have been made possible.

Lotto sub-committee members: David Waldron, Finbar O'Reilly, Francie Hoare, Declan Hussey, Cahal Mahon, Harry Hoare, Tom Fitzmaurice, Niamh Kilmartin, Philip Mullen, James Gleeson, Anthony Clogher and Hughie Waters.

The current Jackpot stands at **€7,700**, with the next draw taking place in the Hyde Centre at 8.30pm this Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> of December.

Sunday nights numbers were:

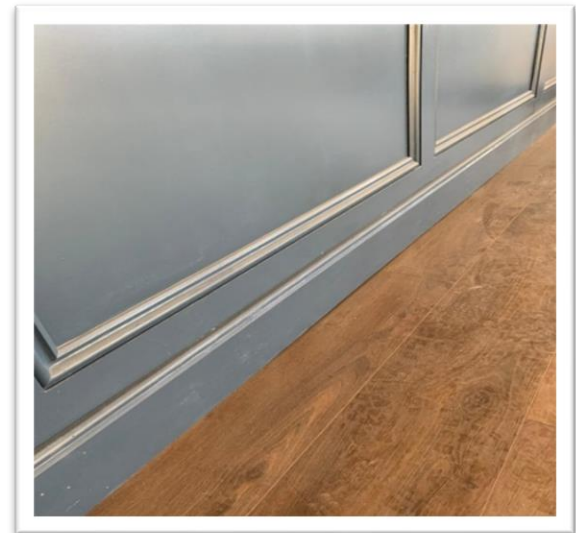
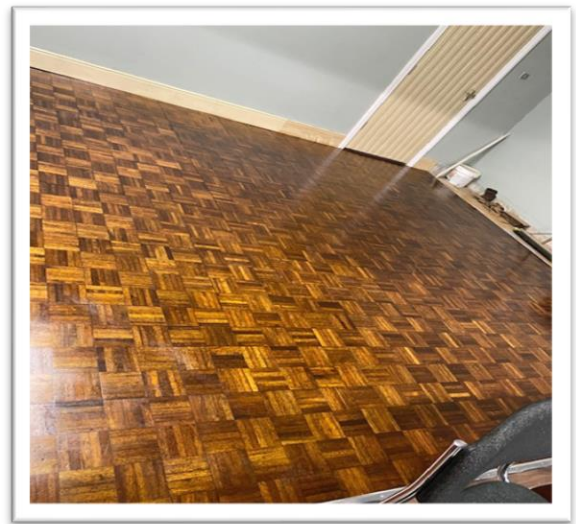




# Refurbishment of the Hyde Centre

In the newsletter of September 26th, it was announced that the club was successful in obtaining a grant under the Community Enhancement Programme from Roscommon County Council. The grant is to go towards the refurbishment of facilities in the Lounge area of the Hyde Centre along with the installation of a wheelchair accessible toilet in the main hall area. Works have been happening over the past number of months headed up by John Gaynor Developments along with the Parks Committee and a small group of volunteers and their families to help get this project over the line in a safe manner. See below the progress of what has been happening.

Here's some sneak peak pictures.....when all is finished, all will be revealed.



When all is completed and Covid 19 is a distant memory, Roscommon Gaels will have a revived Social Centre where we can run social gatherings and return meeting each other and socialising with each other freely.

## Football

### Child Health & Well-being Core Pathway

The Football Minor Board has put in place two initiatives recently (1) Health & Wellbeing (2) Core Pathway – Running / Strength & Conditioning Programme.

The initiatives are designed to build on children's health and well-being and the running programme which will be implemented with our Under 14 tea. The Strength and Conditioning program will be implemented with our 15 to 18-year olds.

These are all pilot programmes that we hope we can





learn from this year with a view to rolling out over the entire club in the future. For further details, contact Seamus Carthy, Football Minor Board Chairperson, Finbar O'Reilly, Secretary and Seamus O'Neill, Coaching-Officer.

Thank you to Cathal Dineen for the use of his gym – Full-Body-Workout and to Martin McIntyre for the provision and supervision of this programmes.



## Underage Football

Our football minor board held a brief Meeting this month to discuss the year just gone with our underage managers. Hopefully, we can have a proper football review meeting early next year once this pandemic is over and it's safe to do so.

Overall, in what was an extremely difficult year, we managed to get all our under-age teams out on the field. Thanks to our managers and all our underage coaches and covid supervisors for the tremendous efforts put in to ensure our lads got back on the field and enjoyed themselves. The highlight of the year was the success of our Under 12 team. Fifty-five lads in total with 3 teams fielded, with the Division 1 & Division 5 title secured. Our Under 14 and our Under 16 lads fielded two teams ensuring all our lads secured plenty of game time with both age groups in Division 4 finals and also Division 1 Semi Finals. Best of Luck to Managers, Coaches and Players in these Games when they are played off. Our Minors performed at the top table this year in Division 1 and the game against Clan na nGael, will live long in the memory of fantastic Roscommon Gaels comebacks. Great days ahead for these lads. As the year is coming to a head, its being tough, strange, difficult, inspiring all in many different ways, but to see the enjoyment, commitment, honesty, passion of our lads is superb to witness and be a part of. I was delighted that our two initiatives – Running Programme and Core pathway (s & c) have got up and running for our underage players. Our goalkeeping academy is going from strength to strength also.

Great days ahead and many people involved in the Journey so thanks to all, best wishes to you all and a very Happy Christmas.

**Finally, I would like to reach out to anybody who would have an interest in helping out with underage football to contact me. I promise you, you will enjoy it.**

*Seamus Carthy* Chairperson, Minor Board



## News Just In

**The Roscommon Minor Football Board has informed the Club that competitions for 2021 will be run at Under 13, Under 15 & Under 17.**

**Féile will be an U15 Competition in 2021.**

**Go Game Blitz's will also be organised at Under 7, Under 9 and Under 11 age groups.**

**The Senior CCC will also look at running a competition for players over 17 &**



Are you interested in getting involved with a team?

If you are interested in becoming involved with a team in any way (management, coaching, assisting, covid supervisor, other) our doors are always open!

Don't hesitate to contact Finbar O'Reilly, Secretary or

Seamus Carthy, Chairperson



## Football Goalkeeping Academy

Huge thank you on behalf of all our underage managers and coaches to Decie Hoare on his massive commitment to overseeing and establishing a Goalkeeping Academy that is now sustainable on a yearly basis for our club. It is 3 years in the making and many sessions later. Decie has put together a goalkeeping template that was handed out to our club and all our codes at the end of year Skills presentation recently held in Lisnamult. Personally, it's exciting to see the 11 young men that committed to this academy develop and be it 6.30pm of a winters evening or 9 am on a Sunday Monday, full attendance by these lads





showed the desire and passion they have to develop and progress.

Thanks to the Parents and I have no doubt your young man will give you many great days as a Goalkeeper if they keep up this commitment. Special word of thanks also to Decie's coaches, Stephen Kennedy, Marcus Hone and John Conneelly. Thank you all sincerely. Seamus Carthy

## Ladies Gaelic Football

Well done to everyone on a great year where we witnessed huge commitment, sacrifice and dedication by our management & mentors in all Teams. The outstanding preparation and dedication by our girls is commendable and it is lovely to see players improving all the time. A number of the girls have made a significant impact. Thanks to Decie Hoare who took our goal keepers for a training session in goal keeping skills for which we are very thankful.

Thanks to the girls, their parents & parents who assisted with umpire duties etc. Thanks to the LGFA & our own club committee, Deci Walsh for videos of matches, guest speakers, pitch co-ordinators especially in Lisnamult and the Hyde, referees & officials and our Covid Officers.

Congrats also to Yvonne Donohue who has taken on the position on the County LGFA Executive as Assistant Treasurer. Yvonne has also taken up position on the Fixtures Board with the LGFA.

While it may have been a negative year in general due to the impact of Covid-19, it was an extremely positive year for the Roscommon Gaels Ladies in general. Well done everyone on a great year.

The Ladies Football Board within the Club would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Safe and Healthy New Year. We hope to be all back out on the pitches very soon.

## Coiste Iomána Skills Challenge

The Coiste Iomána Skills Challenge initiative was devised on the back of the Covid-19 lockdown period in mid-March this year. Coiste Iomána as the Juvenile Hurling Board in Roscommon, felt the onus to facilitate the shortcomings that were to follow for our young hurlers in the county under the lockdown measures. With the GAA rightly announcing all club trainings and games to be cancelled as a result of the Covid-19, we felt we had to step in and provide an alternative for the void that was left. Kieran Farrell, Chairperson rowed in behind this initiative along with the rest of the Coiste Iomána board members, David Waldron (Vice Chairperson), Helen Dowling (Secretary) Mike Donnelly (Assistant Secretary) and Sharon Kavanagh (PRO). Proinsias Killion our County GPO and Willie Hegarty, County Games Manager were very supportive. Indeed, Willie Hegarty very generously supported the finance required for the prizes on offer of sliotars and jerseys from the County Board.

The overall winners received a signed jersey by some of our country's most famous hurlers including TJ Reid from Kilkenny, Lee Chin from Wexford, Cian Lynch from Limerick and the one and only Joe Canning from Galway. With such exclusive prizes on offer, there was always going to be a level of enthusiasm from the young hurlers of Roscommon.

The lockdown period of mid-March onwards, was to be a very difficult period for both young and old, with very little outlay in the way of entertainment aside from the internet or the tv. So the theme of the Coiste Iomána Hurling Skills Challenge was based around family, fun, health and wellbeing, with parents and family members of all age groups enjoying the daily challenges provided. The objectives were to (a) Provide an alternative fun outlay for kids and parents during



the lockdown period (b) encourage outdoor activity in a safe and enjoyable environment (c) provide a means for our young hurlers to hone their skills while trainings and games were cancelled (d) promote physical health and mental wellbeing among our communities.

Each day over a 28-day period from Monday March the 30<sup>th</sup> to Sunday April the 26<sup>th</sup>, a new hurling skills challenge was provided to the hurling clubs throughout the county including Athleague-Tremane, Boyle, Four Roads, Oran, Padraig Pearses, Roscommon Gaels and St. Dominics all getting involved. It was fantastic to see the newly formed Boyle Hurling Club sending in some great hurling skills clips of their young hurlers. It was a massive success, with some really skillful videos entering the competition.

Great credit has to go to the PRO's for each club religiously sending out the daily skills challenges via social media to their respective club members. The club coaches really bought into it also and the momentum gathered as the entries kept pouring in. A friendly and competitive streak came out in our youth which was the desired outcome. It was felt the standard was so good and competitive, that the fairest way to choose the winners was by a random selection for each category. One of the highlights of the competition was an entry by the then 12-year-old Siofra Hession. Not alone was Siofra the only girl to enter the Coiste Iomána competition, she also showed up the boys with her skills and even went national with one of her video entries going viral. It was picked up by the online media outlet HoganStand.com and got several thousand views. Our local TD Denis Naughton was quick to re-tweet Siofra's video, along with sports journalist Daragh Ó Conchúir. It was even picked up and commented on at Jersey Shore!!

Pictured below are all the winners from **Roscommon Gaels**. Well done all.







## Camogie

On behalf of the Camogie section, I would like to wish all in Roscommon Gaels GAA, Ladies Football and Camogie Club a very Merry and Memorable Christmas 2020.

It has been a challenging year for all in our community for sure. I thank our camogie officers, coaches and Covid-19 supervisors for their precious time this year, and our players from U8 up to adult for their dedication to camogie in 2020.

I look forward to doing it all over again with you in 2021. I would be delighted to hear from any one of you who might like to join our merry band next year !!

*Patricia Torpey*

**Chairperson  
Roscommon Gaels Camogie**

