

KILMEENA G.A.A. CLUB

# NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2023

# THE DREAM CONTINUES



ALL IRELAND  
GLORY FOR  
OUR ROUNDERS  
HEROES!



# Chairman's Message



Hello and welcome to the 10th edition of our fantastic club newsletter.

2023 was another busy year for Kilmeena GAA Club. We were honoured to receive the Meitheal award in recognition of our success in the All-Ireland Junior Club Football Championship 2022. The award was presented at the Mayo Association Dublin luncheon in Dublin in February. I would like to say thank you to Pat O'Donnell who put together and submitted the nomination. Also, in

February we held our Valentine's Ball and rounded off the month when the men's All-Ireland winning team were honoured with a Civic Reception by Mayo County Council in the Community Centre. A week later the club was nominated for three awards in the Mayo County Council Cathaoirleach awards in Breaffy House Hotel.

We hosted a very successful West Mayo Scór na bPáistí in Kilmeena Community Centre. Thank you to Mickey Carney, our M.C. on the night.

Later in the year we celebrated with Fr. Jim on his Diamond Jubilee of Ordination with a mass in Myna Church followed by a party in the Community Centre.

Our club has been awarded the Healthy Club, Gold accreditation. It is important to acknowledge the work and commitment that Noreen Johnston has given to this task and to the committee members that help promote exercise and a healthy lifestyle in our club and community.

I am pleased to say that we were accepted into Phase 2 of the Green Clubs programme and have already taken several steps along the road towards accreditation. The installation of three-phase power for our LED floodlights has allowed us to apply for two high speed EV charging points. All going to plan these points should be operational next year. We planted over one thousand native trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the grounds creating a natural habitat for wildlife and enhancing the beauty and biodiversity of our facilities. The oak tree planted as part of the club's 125-year anniversary has had a flower bed, an information sign and photograph added at its base. New drinking water signs have also been erected.

It is a great achievement for the club to receive these recognitions and is testament to the volunteers and the hard work you all put in to make our club what it is.

We had an excellent talk on coaching with Pat Daly, 'GAA Games Development & Research' and Des Ryan 'Director of Coaching & Performance', Setanta College and former 'Head of Sports Medicine' at the Arsenal Academy. We started the process of developing a club coaching framework and philosophy with workshops run by Paul Kilgannon of the Carver Coaching Framework. We will revisit this in the new year to conclude and finalise this document which will work hand in hand with our existing 'Club Player Pathway'.

We continued to have success at underage level with the U10 boys winning the cup and shield in the Burrishoole Go Games blitz, the U11 boys winning the Gearóid Murphy Memorial Blitz in Achill, the U12 boys winning the Eoin McGroddy Memorial Blitz in Louisburgh, the U16 boys winning their West Mayo championship and the U16 girls winning the championship shield final.

We hosted our ever-popular West Mayo U10 Paddy Golden Blitz in June and Cúl Camp was held in July with the participation of 130 children.

Thank you to Pete Mortimer and Noleen Coughlan for their work as Bord na nÓg Chairperson and Secretary. Thank you to Darren Madden, Coaching Officer, for his work with underage teams and the work he has put into new Cubs nursery academy for under 5 to under 8 boys and girls.

Our rounders team won the Junior mixed All-Ireland title and Aidan Connaughton picked up an "All-Star" award for his exploits on the rounders field. Our adult ladies' football retained Junior A status, an important achievement for the ladies' club.

Thank you and well done to management, coaches and players at all grades for your hard work, commitment and dedication during the season.

Next year will see the club's 135th year since its foundation in 1889 and it is fitting that we should now play at the highest echelons of football. What was once a mere dream to the great men and women gone before us, is now a reality. How proud they would be!

I want to acknowledge the wonderful panel of young men that make up the senior men's team and the joy they brought to our club and parish again this year. Thank you to the management team of John Reilly, Peter Carney, John Doherty and Eoin Sweeney who put in more work than anyone sees or realises. Thank you to their backroom team of Mickey Carney, Pat Mulchrone, Jason Barry, Sylvester Ruane, Julie Moore, Kate Creaby, Michael Ryan and Brian Lennon.

However, we always need to continually look to improve and challenge ourselves to be the best we can be. Officers and coaches need to update their skills and avail of training and coaching courses provided.

Thank you to our Children's Officer, Majella O'Malley. I would ask that all coaches and those who have contact with our underage children work with Majella to ensure that your vetting and safeguarding are up to date before the new season starts.

Well done to Caragh Ryan who took on the club PRO role this year and to Sarah Hogan, outgoing ladies club PRO for promoting our club in a timely and positive manner. To our photographers Martin, Ollie and Cormac for tirelessly documenting life in the club, thank you so much.

Our club development officer, Willie Keaveney and grounds staff, Paul Feehan, Paul Fahy, Michael Walsh and Una Quinn deserve huge thanks for the continuous work in maintaining our grounds, clubhouse, dressing rooms and gym. It immediately sets the tone of the club when the facilities are kept to such a high standard, it is a wonderful tribute to you all.

Well done to all players who represented the club at various grades, development squads and academies for the county. Well done also to Mark Ryan who is a member of the U20 Mayo management team for 2024. It is a dream for a player or coach to get this opportunity and a proud moment for the club.

The running costs of the club are going up annually and we need to budget carefully and spend wisely. This is where



Careful financial management and planning is a necessity and the importance to have a proper club plan to manage all aspects of the club. We recently had our Club Strategic Planning workshop and will launch our new five-year club plan early in the New year.

Thank you to Councillors Brendan Mulroy, John O'Malley and Christy Hyland for continuing to support the club by way of their generous donations. Thank you to Ruairi Duffy, Michael Feehan, Noel Marley, Austin Gibbons and Willie and Mary Quinn for their continued and generous support towards the club. Thank you to the family of Nicholas Feehan who sponsored a seating bench at the club. The club are incredibly grateful and express our sincere gratitude to Michael Cannon and to Charlie Kenny, Stephanie, Peter and the Carney family for their very generous financial donations made to the club. These donations will be used specifically for grounds development and improvement works.

Thank you also to the business community who sponsor our teams in so many different ways. Without the support you all give us we would struggle to function at the level we do.

The club has again applied for the Sports Capital Grant and if successful intends to build an astro pitch and to drain the grass based pitch inside the front gate.

Thank you to Kevin Barrett (GAA) and Mairead Durkan (LGFA), County & Divisional Board delegates for attending meetings and keeping the club informed of proceedings during the year.

The effort that Michael O'Grady, Barry Murphy and our newsletter team have given to producing yet again another excellent publication deserves a huge thanks. So too does Donal McIntyre for his continual generous sponsorship of printing the newsletter.

To everyone who volunteered and helped in any way when asked to do a job, I say a resounding thank you very much! It is you, the club members, that make this a truly great club.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge my fellow officers at the top table, Secretary Mary Slattery, and Treasurers Kathleen Geraty and Maura Hastings. I could not work with better people. The dedication and effort they put in cannot be underestimated. I also say a sincere word of thanks to the Club Executive. Your experience and passion for our club is invaluable and something that I hope is never lost.

On behalf of the club, I extend deepest sympathy to the families, relatives and friends, of those in the community who passed away in the last 12 months. We remember particularly the families of John Moore, Johnny Nolan, Nicholas Feehan, Tommy Gill, Pdraig Kenning, Jackie O'Malley, our Treasurer Kathleen Geraty whose mother passed away and our outgoing registrar Damian Hughes whose father passed away. May their souls and all the souls of the departed rest in peace. I would also like on behalf of the club to wish anyone that is sick in our parish at this time a speedy recovery to good health.

Finally, I would like to wish all our members, parishioners and emigrants a happy and peaceful Christmas and best wishes for the New Year. We look forward to another exiting season for Cill Mhíodhna in 2024.

*Nollaig Shona agus Athbhliain faoi Mhaise Daoibh.*

**Sean Mac Domhnaill**  
Cathaoirleach

## ELECTED CLUB OFFICERS FOR 2024

**Club Patron:** Fr. Jim Walsh  
**President:** Michael Cannon  
**Vice President:** Michael Feehan  
**Chairman:** John McDonald  
**Vice Chairman:** To be filled  
**Secretary:** Mary Slattery  
**Assistant Secretary:** To be filled  
**Joint Treasurers:** Kathleen Geraty & Maura Hastings  
**Assistant Treasurer:** To be filled  
**PRO:** Caragh Ryan  
**Registrar/Data Protection Officer:** Lucy O'Malley  
**Coaching Officer:** Darren Madden  
**Safety Officer:** Michael O'Grady  
**County Board Delegate:** Kevin Barrett  
**West Board Delegate:** Kevin Barrett  
**Field Caretaker:** Paul Feehan  
**Irish Language & Cultural Officer:** Róisín Carney  
**Development and Planning Officer:** Willie Keaveney  
**Children's Officer:** Majella O'Malley  
**Fixtures Secretary:** Mary Slattery  
**Healthy Club Officer:** To be filled  
**Injury Fund Officer:** Mary Slattery  
**Players' Representative:** Paul Groden

## ELECTED BORD NA NÓG OFFICERS FOR 2024

**Chairman:** Peter Mortimer  
**Secretary:** Noleen Coughlan  
**LGFA PRO:** To be filled  
**LGFA County Board Delegates:** Mairead Durkan  
**Bord na nÓg County Board Delegates:** Darren Madden & Pete Mortimer



## NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION TEAM

Michael O'Grady, John McDonald, Noreen Johnston, Noleen Coughlan, Maura Hastings, Majella O'Malley, Ollie Mulchrone, Barry Murphy, Peter Mortimer, Caragh Ryan.

## NEWSLETTER SPONSOR

Donal McIntyre, New York. [www.wesbuilt.com](http://www.wesbuilt.com)



## Kilmeena Cubs Report by Darren Madden, Cubs Coordinator

Kilmeena GAA Club is proud to announce that 2023 saw the establishment of its Cubs Academy. The principal aim of the Academy is to introduce children aged five to eight to Gaelic football in a fun and safe environment and to aid the development of their athletic and social skills. It was important also that our grounds were a social space for our parents so they could get to know other parents at training.

The plan was hatched 12 months ago when a small committee got together to drive forward the concept of the Cubs Academy. Niall Dunne from Parke GAA was very helpful to us in our initial efforts to develop the concept – he provided templates and advice that assisted us to introduce the Cubs Academy. This was much appreciated and we are very thankful to Niall.

In developing the Cubs Academy, we made sure our little ones were centre stage on the main field at St. Brendan Park. From 6pm to 7pm on Thursday evenings was Cubs time. One hundred new balls that are appropriate to the kids' age were purchased. Every age group had a wheelie bin, sponsored by Bourke Waste. This was great for tidying up after our sessions. All of our children had branded Cubs bibs and each age group had a different colour. This was helpful if a child wandered into another group! You could spot our coaches as they had yellow cubs bibs also. We also decided that it was important that all our little players had an opportunity to purchase a specially designed jersey and I would like to thank Joyce Electrical for their support.

I would like to thank Siobhan Golden for bringing Blas to the field many Thursday evenings where we could enjoy hot drinks. It was lovely to have the offer of a nice cuppa tea or cappuccino during or after training and this added to the social aspect of





the academy. I am sure many new relationships were struck up at this spot, and often three generations of the same family enjoyed the evening sun. Blas has found a new home so watch out for the next social development at the Cubs Academy!

At the end of the year, we had a fun day and each child was presented with an O'Neills football. Over 70 footballs were distributed to all our Cubs. A big thank you to Westrock for sponsoring this event and it proved a great way to finish out our season.

Finally, and not least, I would like to thank all our coaches. They all really enjoyed the year. All coaches are Garda-vetted and have completed GAA Safeguarding courses. It is a great way to spend an evening with your child and getting to know other people from the area.

Please consider becoming a volunteer to help with the coaching - we need all the help we can get! The Cubs Academy takes place every Thursday from 6-7pm.





## Under 6 Cubs Academy Report by Stephen Cox, Hugh Kelly & Mags Ryder

As we conclude the inaugural year of the Cubs Academy, 2023 stands out as a highly successful launch, providing an immensely enjoyable experience for our youngest club members. Amidst the significant changes typical for 4, 5, and 6-year-olds, such as starting new schools and making new friends, our young players seamlessly embraced the innovative Cubs Academy format.

The Cubs Academy adopts a child-centric approach, focusing on learning the FUNdamental movement skills as the building blocks for developing more sports-specific abilities. Just as we wouldn't expect children to read without learning letters, we understand the importance of mastering the ABC's (Agility, Balance, Coordination) before engaging in physical activities. This structured development is designed with a central theme: FUN.

Throughout the season, 40 children, a mix of boys and girls, regularly attended Thursday evening training sessions at 6 pm on the main pitch. Catering to varying skill levels, characters and attention spans, we maintained an increased ratio of coaches-to-players to ensure the effective delivery of each

session. Our committed team of 12 coaches worked together, employing both group and one-on-one interactions based on a defined training plan.

For parents of prospective Cubs joining us next year, each session follows a enjoyable routine: a fun warm-up (e.g. musical footballs), game-based skill drills (e.g. catching, bouncing, hand-passing, kicking), and the ever-popular go-game style matches with smaller teams to allow each child to get involved in the game. The goal of our coaching team is for every child to relish the game and actively participate, irrespective of skill level.

Looking ahead, we eagerly anticipate welcoming back our Cubs and parents for another season filled with fun and activity. A heartfelt thanks go out to all Cubs Coaches who contributed to planning, preparing, setting up, training, running, laughing, and cleaning up throughout the year. We extend an invitation to new parents, regardless of coaching experience, to volunteer one hour a week to help maintain the essential coach-to-player ratio, ensuring the effective delivery of Cubs Academy next year.





# Celebrating a Stellar First Year with Kilmeena Under 8 GAA Cubs Franky Durcan

As the inaugural year of the Kilmeena Under 8 GAA Cubs draws to a close, it's a moment brimming with pride and admiration for the incredible journey our young Cubs have undertaken. This year has been a testament to the unwavering dedication, passion, and talent displayed by our young stars. The growth and progress witnessed in their skills have been nothing short of remarkable.

The proficiency exhibited by these young stars on the field has been awe-inspiring. Their agility, determination and sportsmanship have set an incredible standard. From the precise kicks to the strategic teamwork, each match has been a testament to their hard work and the guidance they've received from our devoted coaches.

None of this would have been possible without the unyielding support and encouragement from the parents. Their commitment to nurturing and fostering the children's passion for the sport has been the bedrock of this successful journey. Their unwavering support during practices, games, and all the behind-the-scenes efforts have truly made a world of difference.

A heartfelt thank you is due to our dedicated coaches. Their guidance, mentorship, and tireless efforts in honing the skills of these young cubs have been invaluable. Their commitment to developing players and nurturing a love for the game has been the cornerstone of this triumphant year.

As we reflect on this remarkable inaugural year, it's clear that the Kilmeena Under 8 GAA Cubs have achieved far beyond expectations. The future shines bright for these budding stars, and it's the collective effort and unwavering support from the parents, coaches, and, most importantly, the incredible spirit of the kids that have made this journey unforgettable.

Here's to many more years of growth, success, and the joy of sportsmanship with Kilmeena Under 8 GAA Cubs!

A special thank you to Westrock (formerly Berry Print Group) for sponsoring football for all the Cubs!!





## U10 and U11 Girls Report by Mags Ryder

The U10 girls' season started in April this year. We had a very positive commitment from the girls at all of the early sessions with more than 20 players in attendance each week. The girls showed great interest in playing, taking part and learning. The numbers remained constant and even increased as the season progressed.

Our main focus for this group was the development of their skills and to have as much fun as possible. During the course of the year, we participated in and organised a number of challenge matches with neighbouring clubs including home and away games versus Burrishoole, Westport, Louisburgh and Islandeady.

The numbers attending training and the interest levels were high enough that we were also able to field a team in the Paddy Golden blitz and parish league during the summer. With every match the girls played, it was clear to see the great improvements in skill and awareness that they were making and the little 'fight' developing in them as they were proud to wear the Kilmeena jersey.

Towards the end of the summer the U11 girls team joined our group which added great intensity to our training sessions as the younger girls mixed with their new, older teammates. The older girls who joined showed how with the extra year of training, they had that little extra bit of skill. This gave our younger girls great role models to look up to and learn from

and brought a new aspect to training as they were eager to play with the U11's on the pitch.

We hosted a blitz for our U11 girls with five neighbouring clubs in early September where the Kilmeena girls did us very proud. On a skills level we were equal to most clubs present on the day. A special thanks to the parents who provided refreshments for players and coaches on the day.

I would like to give a special thank you to Pete Lane, Dec Ryan, Richie Goggins and Trish Chambers for their consistent participation and attendance at training sessions and our home and away games throughout the year. When we needed assistance, these guys did not let us down and we are extremely grateful for this.

The successful delivery of any season for boys and girls is only made possible with the help of mentors and coaches who are willing to give up their time and put in the effort during and outside of sessions to organise matches, drills and keep the girls interested and involved. We were very fortunate this year for the levels of effort put in by each of the trainers.

It is very important that we encourage every girl to participate in football - this is their club and there is a place for every one of them in Kilmeena. These girls are the future for the ladies side of our club here in Kilmeena.



### **Kilmeena U10 Girls**

Back row, left to right: Cliona Ryder, Holly Hastings, Sadhbh Martin, Lucy Bourke, Elenor Munroe, Annie Mullarkey, Millie Chambers, Lily-Rose Keane, Katie McKenna, Molly Fox.

Front row, left to right: Ava Bourke, Jessica Kelly, Bethany Staunton, Emma Mongey, Amy Joyce, Cara Ivan, Kayla Armstrong, Lilly Sheridan.

Missing from photo: Connie Quinn, Iris Kaye, Madison Browne, Sadhbh McGauley, Ellen McDonagh, Grace Cunningham and Sophie Hopkins.





**Kilmeena U11 Girls**

Back row, left to right: Aoife Durkan, Elenor Munroe, Lauren Munroe, Eabha Feehan, Sadhbh McGauley, Sheena Cawley, Holly Fortune, Kate Cawley, Ellen McDonagh.

Front row, left to right: Grace Cunningham, Amy Joyce, Millie Chambers, Stacy-Lea Fiebig, Faith Duffy, Eabha Goggins, Bethany Staunton

**U12 and U13 Girls** Report by Mairead Durkan

A total of 22 girls registered for our U12s this year. The season kicked off on 27th February. Unfortunately, the grading league had to be delayed until April, due to adverse weather conditions, in March.

We were grouped with Islandeady, Burrishoole, Achill, Westport, Louisburgh, Kilmovee, Carnacon and Mayo Gaels. We performed well in our group stages and were quite competitive in all our games. Our success in the knockout stages put us into a County Final against Kilmaine. Our girls gave it their all, and despite some late scoring, we failed to secure the silverware on the day. We played 12 competitive and three challenge games and finished up the season with a few treats after our last training session.

The U11 girls joined forces with U10 girls for the remainder of the season and the U12 girls linked up with the older girls to enter the U13 competition. Our U13 season progressed from 24th July and a total of 22 girls were registered at this age group. We had a good attendance most evenings for

training. We were entered in a tough group with Louisburgh, Burrishoole, The Neale, Davitt's, Balla, Kilmurray and St. Bridget's. We finished in the top tier of the table and that result put us head-to-head with our nearest neighbours Burrishoole in a cup semi-final. There was great anticipation for this encounter and the first half lived up to the expectation. However in the second half we conceded some unanswered scores and the opposition pulled away to claim the day.

The U12 and U13 girls enjoyed their season. Overall, the coaches were very happy with the season and the way the girls' skills developed and how they raised their standards to meet the challenges of each game. This group of young ladies were enjoyable and energetic to work with, they have buckets of talent, and we look forward to the next chapter on their football journey.

We would like to thank all the parents for their support throughout the season and for getting them to training sessions and games.



**Kilmeena U12 Girls**

Back row, left to right: Alisha Malone, Kate Cawley, Lauren Munroe, Éabha Feehan, Emma Gannon, Rachiel Feehan, Chloe Monaghan, Freya Higgins, Niamh Byrne, Holly Fortune, Éabha Goggins, Shauna Durkan.

Front row, left to right: Layla Staunton, Aoife Durkan, Emily Fahy, Molly Mulchrone, Muireann Mulchrone, Caillín McPhillips, Aishling Lawless, Stacy Leafiebig and Faith Duffy.

Missing from photo: Sheena Cawley





### Kilmeena U13 Girls

Back row, left to right: Aishling Lawless, Florence O'Toole, Katie Moran, Aoibhín Lyons, Cara Mongey, Ellie Mai Keane, Muireann Mulchrone, Niamh McNally, Emma Gannon.

Middle row, left to right: Alisha Malone, Caillín McPhillips, Layla Staunton, Emily Fahy, Rachiel Feehan, Grainne Feehan, Shauna Durkan.

Front row, left to right: Freya Higgins, Chloe Monaghan and Molly Mulchrone.

Missing from photo: Tegan Muldoon, Siún Aherne, Charley Coyle.

## U16 Girls Report by John O'Grady

Training commenced in February incorporating girls aged 13-16 years as there were insufficient numbers for U/14 team. We focused on strength and conditioning and basic ball skills using the gym, kicking wall and sand area.

In our league campaign we were grouped with Louisburgh, Shrule/Glencorrib and Ballyhaunis, winning two out of three games and secured a league final place which although we lost produced some very promising performances.

In the championship we struggled a little for numbers early on due to holidays etc., but we made the final and we were successful in winning silverware in a hard fought game against Shrule/Glencorrib.

It was very encouraging to see how well the older and younger

girls gelled together and developed as a team as the season progressed.

We hope to see a lot of the girls playing with our senior team in the future.

It was my privilege to have such a good coaching team working alongside me who all brought their own individual qualities to the group: Maureen Joyce, Eimear Kelly, Michelle Walsh, Aidan Moran and David Ingham.

We would also like to thank Arramara Teoranta for their sponsorship for the Training Tops for all the girls.

Ag súil go mór leis an bhliain seo chugainn...



### Kilmeena U11 Girls

Back row, left to right; David Ingham, Maureen Joyce, Síofra Hughes, Ruby Lane, Áine Gallagher, Ciara Kelly, Amelia Fahy, Amy Carney, Emma Barret, Aoibhinn Lyons, Ellie Mai Keane, Julie O'Grady, Catherine Lawless, Michelle Walsh, Aidan Moran, John O'Grady

Front row, left to right; Meabh McNally, Eva Mulchrone, Mary Kate Lonergan, Laura Ingham, Leah Walsh, Katie Moran, Laura O'Grady, Róisín Brady, Grainne Feehan, Cara Mongey





## Minor Ladies Report by Pete Mortimer

2023 was another very challenging year for the Kilmeena Minor Ladies. As there were only eight ladies at minor age, we relied heavily on the support of the U16's to field our team all year.

For the league we were put in a difficult group due to grading from two years previously. Unfortunately we had to concede our first league game against Swinford for reasons beyond our control. We lost our remaining two games away to Charlestown and Castlebar. We played Moy Davitts in a Shield Semi-Final, it was our first game with 15 players and despite a massive effort lost by two points.

The Minor Championship was also very challenging with games against Ballyhaunis, Louisburgh and Castlebar. We

couldn't field 15 girls in any of our games and despite the ladies best efforts we failed to register a win.

Despite a difficult season, the management couldn't be more proud of this bunch. The girls never gave up, no matter how tough things got and showed some really good skill levels in the games that they played.

Thanks to all the ladies for their effort and commitment during the year. A special thanks to the U16 girls and management, without whom we wouldn't be able to field a team.

Management team: Pete Mortimer, Dave O'Malley and Maureen Joyce.



### Kilmeena Minor Ladies

Back row, left to right: Dave O'Malley, Ruby Lane, Ciara Kelly, Grace Gibbons, Lisa Hastings, Aoife Gannon, Emma Barrett, Hattie Cox, Katie Moran, Maureen Joyce.

Front row, left to right: Siofra Hughes, Roisin Brady, Eva Mulchrone, Laura O'Grady, Aine Gallagher, Leah Walsh, Abbie Quinn.



## Junior Ladies Report by Ollie Mulchrone

On Friday the 17th of February, thirty-one Junior ladies met up with their Management team of Pete Mortimer, Maureen Joyce, Ollie Mulchrone and David O Malley. Our goals and objectives for the year ahead were discussed and agreed. Pre-season training started on the 22nd February with a mix of gym, sand and pitch sessions leading up to our first game. On the 3rd of March we had the privilege of playing Burrishoole B in the inaugural game of football played under the newly installed floodlights in Kilmeena. Soon after, the Frank Kelly memorial league commenced on the 26th March and finished on the 30th June. We won 4 of our 6 games with wins over Balla, Kiltane, Kilmaine and Achill and had narrow defeats to Kiltimagh and Ballinrobe. We finished the memorial league joint second on points.

On Saturday the 15th April we were invited to play in a challenge match against West Meath Intermediate team Loughnavalley Gales. This game was played at the Connaught GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. It turned out to be a tightly contested match and thankfully we managed to register a win. We thoroughly enjoyed the experience and to cap it off we joined in with Loughnavalley ladies to record a few fun TikTok videos after the match.

The management team conducted a collective and individual midyear review of targeted goals and feedback was provided individually to all players. Division 4 of the League commenced on the 14th May. We were undefeated in the qualifying rounds with wins over Ballinrobe, Breaffy, and Claremorris B. Our ladies played a challenge match against a mixed Ballyboden team from Dublin on Friday evening 21st July in Westport. Considering the quality of the opposition, we performed well but were narrowly defeated by two points. We qualified for the League Semi Final and had a comfortable win at home

to Tourmakeady. The League final was played on Sunday the 10th September against Breaffy at the Connaught GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. Despite our best efforts, we were beaten by the narrowest of margins with a one point loss.

The first round of the Junior Championship had us scheduled to play Kiltimagh the following Sunday. The ladies were determined to lift themselves up from the disappointment of the previous week and recorded Kilmeena's first ever win in Junior A Championship. Subsequent defeats to Aughamore and Parke meant we were out of the race for the Junior A Cup. We played Breaffy at home in the plate Semi Final. Having controlled the game for long periods, Breaffy managed to turn around an eight point deficit to win the game by two points in the end. This defeat meant we would have to play a last game relegation playoff against Kiltimagh on Sunday the 15th October. This match was played in the Connaught GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. The Kilmeena ladies were



### **Kilmeena Junior Ladies**

Back row, left to right: Ollie Mulchrone, Ciara Joyce, Annie Morin, Ciara Kelly, Siobhan Golden, Katie Hogan, Shannon Bourke, Megan O'Malley, Laura Kelly, Mags Ryder, Ellen O'Toole, Sheila Bohan, Maureen Joyce, Eabha Carney, Grace Gibbons, Aine Gallagher, Katie Moran, Rosin Carney, Sarah Hogan, Mary Duffy, Caragh Ryan, Pete Mortimer.





determined to finish the year strong and won the game by twelve points, securing Junior A football next season.

Team bonding events like multiple breakfast mornings, a barbeque, a trip to Clare Island, Historical Treasure Hunt that led cyclists on routes into Fahy, Carrowholly and Kilmeena, regular fun team challenge events at training, Brainstorming events, Match VEO analysis and reviews and ninety-six sessions together including twenty football matches have ensured great friendships were formed both on and off the field. It's encouraging to see thirty-six ladies togged out for our last game of the season.



Thanks to our sponsors Beirne Express and Payslip for their ongoing support. Thanks to all who assisted officiating at games and who provided food and helped at breakfast mornings and after matches. Thanks also to our club photographers Cormac Feehan, Martin McIntyre, Mary Kelly, and Ollie Mulchrone for taking photographs during the year. Thanks also to our club officers and PRO Sarah Hogan and Caragh Ryan for actively promoting the ladies' club activities on social media. Special thanks to all the lotto ticket sellers and to the ladies who supported the bucket collection fund raiser event.

Finally, thanks to the management team of 2023. While no silverware was lifted this year, we competed well in all competitions, winning thirteen games and losing seven. We had great fun along the way, retained numbers and made friends for life.



Martin McIntyre

Front row, left to right: Dave O'Malley, Katie Moran, Ruby Lane, Niamh O'Connor, Abby McGreal, Rachel Gibbons, Lucy O'Malley, Sarah Mulchrone, Laura O'Grady, Julia Szejner (Captain), Lisa Hastings, Amy Carney, Emma Murray, Aoife Gannon, Emma Jane Gill, Leah Walsh, Rachel Keane.



## U10 Boys Report by Brian McManamon

At the outset of this season, all U10 coaches made a big effort to identify and encourage all eligible boys from the community to come along to train and play with the U10 Group. Once we had the group set up, our first training session commenced on the 18th of February and took place at the Astro turf pitch at Rice College.

Our aim for the season was simple, to develop the basic skills of the game using both sides of the body, refine fundamental motor skills and finally to build a sense of belonging and camaraderie within the group. The boys completed twelve weeks of preseason training under lights in Westport before resuming training in Kilmeena, after ground conditions began to improve.

We were fortunate to have large groups attending our training sessions and games each week. We managed to field three teams for many of the fixtures in the Homeland league. This was great in the sense that boys were guaranteed a game, opportunities to play in various positions throughout the season. The games were frequent and this kept us all focused and engaged. The boys continued to improve and grow in confidence and they were well prepared for the local league, when it commenced.

The local league presented another opportunity for the boys to shine and play with kids of a younger age within the club. It also provided further preparation for the Paddy Golden Blitz which was looming.

Our Boys did us proud in the Paddy Golden Blitz reaching the A final – this without a number of players who unfortunately were away at the time. In what can only be described as a tense and tight encounter the final proved a step too far for us and in the end Tourmakeady took home the silverware on this occasion.

Following the initial disappointment of the Paddy Golden blitz final, we didn't have to wait too long for our team to be in contention again. This time, they had wonderful success at the Burrishoole blitz winning both the A and the C trophies. It was lovely to see them rewarded for the effort they had exerted over the past few months.

Each year we try to treat the boys to a fun day out and this year was no different. Pure Skill in Galway was our destination this time. Pat Chambers chauffeured a packed bus load of loud and ecstatic young boys to Galway early one Saturday morning. The boys had a fantastic time sampling the various sports and games whilst spending time with their friends.

We finished off with a number of challenge matches and our season came to a conclusion at the end of September. It was an enjoyable year for all involved and we look forward to seeing this wonderfully talented group of players continue to progress in the future.

The team also received extremely generous sponsorship from two local businesses which allowed us to purchase a new set of jerseys and training tops. We would like to sincerely thank Mid-West Furniture and Richard Oliver for their contributions. Thank you to all families for your help, support and encouragement all year. A special word of thanks to the diligent coaches, who went above and beyond all year to make it a pleasant experience for every child in their care.

U10 coaches 2023: Liam Gilger, Sean Kelly, Declan Hastings, Adrian Cawley, Declan Duffy and Brian McManamon.



### **Kilmeena Boys U10s**

Back row, left to right: Coaches Declan Duffy, Declan Hastings, Brian McManamon, Adrian Cawley, Liam Gilger.

Middle row, left to right: Rory Smyth, Brendan Smyth, Cian McGlynn, Theo Bronkal, Patrick Scott, Rory O'Donnell, Zak Walsh, Lochlann Mulchrone, James Hastings, Tommy Cannon, Jamie Cawley, Dylan Duffy, Conor Olsen, Matthew Cawley, Ciarán Kelly, Keegan Heritage, Richard Gill, Oran McManamon

Front row, left to right: James Sheridan, Jack Molloy, James Cawley, Michael Staunton, Rowan Goggins, Aodhán Gildea, Lorcan Monaghan, Ruairí O'Malley, Matthew Gormley, Jack O'Malley, Jack Cawley, Oisín Corcoran

Missing from photo: Caolan McLoughlin, Thomas Griffin, Aaron Cawley, Noah Walsh, Oscar Dziubinski, Sean Kelly (coach).





## U11 Boys Report by Paul Ryan

Our year got off to a great start on a sunny Saturday in June when we won the Eoin McGroddy Memorial U11 Shield in Louisburgh. We commenced training as a group including three Under 10 boys in late August. We had an extremely compact timetable during September and October. We played seven challenge games with local rivals and our boys certainly played with determination and precision winning six out of the seven games.

There was a real commitment from every one of these young boys and any absence was certainly for genuine circumstances. One boy had missed school because of flu but insisted on attending a game on that same day - he informed the coaches that he simply couldn't miss the match - that's real commitment! Don't know how his mother reacted considering that she's a teacher!

During October the boys trained very hard because they had their sights on the Gearóid Murphy Memorial Blitz in Achill. It was an exceptional performance from the fifteen boys who travelled. Every one of them played like true warriors. Their teamwork was phenomenal covering every blade of grass on the pitch and their display of defending, attacking power and



persistence was beyond all expectations for this age group. It was definitely a day when the dream became a reality for the boys. The team was captained by Sam McDonnell who was also the well deserved Player of the Tournament.

All of us send our best wishes for a speedy recovery to our midfielder, Zander Gibbons who broke a bone in his knee in the final match of the Gearóid Murphy Memorial Blitz.

Coaches: Kieran Hastings, Vinnie Gibbons, Liam Heanue, Declan Ryan.



### Gearóid Murphy Memorial Blitz Winners 2023

Back row, left to right: Bobby Lane, Sam McDonnell, Zander Gibbons, James Heanue, Joe Durkan, Evan Ryder, Jaye Joyce, Max Keane.  
Front row, left to right: Charlie Walsh, Patrick Scott, Ruairi Ryan, Finn Sheridan, Tommy Cannon, Cody Coughlan, Oisín Martin.  
Missing from photo: Jamie Hopkins, Theo Bronkal.

## U12 Boys Report by Paul Ryan

We commenced training in mid February and we had a total of 48 sessions, including the matches.

The Spring League commenced on 19th April and it was a great learning curve for the boys as the weeks progressed. They slowly began to play as a team and adhere to a system throughout the six games.

The Summer League started on 28th June. We played eight teams which varied from Ardmoyle to Ballaghaderreen. We found this very beneficial and our boys really enjoyed this part of the season. As each game progressed various leaders emerged throughout the squad. We concentrated a lot on assessment of the boys in order to establish the most suitable position for each player's skill set.

We consistently instilled in the boys the level of commitment, determination and team loyalty that is necessary for success on the football field especially as they move forward to the different age levels. We hope that this positive and consistent attitude will serve them well throughout their lives.

Training attendance with this group was very good. Long may it continue!

Sincere appreciation to Jack Carney, Mayo Senior Team, for taking the boys for their last training session. I would like to thank my coaches for their consistent work throughout the year: Kieran Hastings, Vinnie Gibbons, Liam Heanue, Declan Ryan, Paul Groden.





### Kilmeena Boys U12s

Back row, left to right: Max Keane, Rian McManamon, Paul Joyce, Sam McDonnell, Michael Gannon, Eoghan Smyth, Fionn Lavelle, Zander Gibbons, Jacob Chambers, Joe Durkan, Ryan Walsh, James Heanue.

Front row, left to right: Ruairi Ryan, Bailey Browne, Michael F Gormley, Evan Ryder, Bobby Lane, Finn Sheridan, Jaye Joyce, Charlie Walsh, Cody Coughlan.

Missing from photo: Charlie McLoughlin, Alex Fahy, Oisín Martin, Jamie Hopkins.

## U13 Boys Report by Michael Gavin

We got this group of 26 young men together in early September, with our panel made up of fourteen U13 lads and twelve U12 lads.

We were placed in Division 3C, together with Islandeady, The Neale and Louisburgh. It was a competitive group, in which we won two games and advanced to a final. In the final, we played the winners of group 3D - Ardmoy. We were offered the opportunity to play the final in The Dome (Bekan) on 5th November and we accepted this offer. It was a great experience for the boys to play in ideal conditions on a Croke Park size pitch – but indoors. Although beaten by a physically stronger outfit, this experience will stand these young men

in good stead - as Churchill said 'Success is never ending and defeat never fatal'.

This panel has an excellent skill range and with some physical development in the coming years, management firmly believe they will be an inspiring team going forward.

In total, we completed 86 sessions between training and games and attendance was excellent throughout.

Management team: Paraic Walsh, Chris McGawley, Kevin Lawless, Michael Gavin.



### Kilmeena Boys U13s

Back row, left to right: Baily Brown, Dara Mulchrone, Liam Quinn, Fionn Lavelle, Finn Mulchrone, Alan Heanue, Eoin Smith, Jason Lawless, Lorcan Holland, Jacob Chambers, Ryan Cannon, Michael Gannon, Charlie Geoghegan.

Front row, left to right: Noah Coughlan, Michael Gormally, Paul Joyce, Ryan Walsh, Rian McManamon, Charlie McLoughlin, Lorcan Lane, Alex Fahy, Donncha McGawley, Jack Ivan, Billy Lane.

Missing from photo: Luke O'Donnell, Michael Keane.





## U14 Boys Report by Barry Murphy

The U14s returned to training early, on January 5th 2023 with twice-weekly strength and conditioning sessions in the gym and they took to these sessions like ducks to water. The early season training also included skills and kicking practice, using the sand pitch/kicking wall facilities.

After a spell of prolonged poor weather we eventually got to play a game - a challenge match against Louisburgh. This was played in Kilmeena under the new floodlights on the training pitch. Our Division 5 League campaign started with a loss to Carras followed by two great wins, one against Moy Davitts and other against Swinford. This set up for a League semi-final, away to Carras. The match, played at Garrymore GAA Club, was delayed for a week due to the tragic death of Carras player Kyle Pilbrow. Prior to the rescheduled match being played, Kilmeena presented a card - signed by our players and coaches - and our number 13 jersey (the same number worn by Kyle), to Kyle's family. We were well beaten on the evening and could have few complaints about the result.

Following a good performance in a home challenge game against Burrishoole, it was time to start thinking about the Championship. We were grouped with Moy Davitts, Shrule Glencorrib and Kiltimagh and, like our League campaign,

we lost our first game - against Moy Davitts - and won our subsequent two with some fine football played at times.

At the end of group stage games, Kilmeena were level with Kiltimagh on points at the top of the table. This meant that we had to play them again to determine who won the group and what team we would have to play in our semi-final. As it happened, Kiltimagh beat us on this occasion which left us facing Burrishoole away, on 17th July. Beaten by two goals on the night, a sense of anti-climax descended on the camp and left us all pondering what could have been.

Notwithstanding the end of season losses, the season was one of progress. We had moved up a division from last year and contested both a League and Championship semi-final. And, it's to the boys' credit that they performed well at this higher level. The development of the boys individually and as a team, as well as their attendance at training, was superb. Thank you to the parents who responded to calls to help out in various ways when asked to. We hope all of you and your boys enjoy the break!

Coaches: Michael Gavin, Paraic Walsh, Chris McGauley, Kevin Lawless, Barry Murphy.



### Kilmeena Boys U14s

Back row, left to right: Liam Quinn, Finn Mulchrone, Alan Heanue, Kevin Hastings, Tom Cox, Felix Zeray, Tadhg Daly, Robbie Murphy, Lorcan Holland, Jason Lawless, Luke O'Donnell, Billy Lane.

Front row, left to right: Charlie Geoghegan, Noah Coughlan, Jason Feehan, Ryan Cannon, Cian Moran, Jack Ivin, Donnachta McGauley, Lorcan Lane, Dara McDonnell, Darragh Mulchrone.

## U15 Boys Report by Mike Slattery

Our U15 boys competed in County Féile competition on home territory on the 8th of May, where we hosted Tourmakeady, Breaffy, and Moy Davitts in the 'B' Division. We had a good win against Moy Davitts and lost a cracker of a game to Tourmakeady. We were later well beaten by a strong Breaffy team, who went on to be overall winners from the group. We needed to expand the panel so we were grateful for the assistance of four of the U14 lads who joined for a very enjoyable day. We were complimented by our guest clubs for our facilities and the organisation of the event.

Our season properly kicked off at the start of September with training twice per week, which had a great turnout for

every session. We were placed in the 'C' division with three other teams. Our first game at home against Hollymount-Carramore was a tight and exciting game. We held a six point lead coming into the final quarter, but eventually lost to a heartbreaking last minute goal. This was a tough defeat to take, with lessons to be learned by both the players and coaches on game management. The team regrouped for a few more training sessions before we ventured north to play Knockmore. This game was one of those few occasions for any team, where nearly everything we touched turned to gold. The boys played a smart and skilful brand of football, and we ended up with a comprehensive victory. Unfortunately, this performance turned out to be the highlight of our season, as



due to a combination of weather postponements and other factors, we were unable to find a date for the final game of the group at home against Carras, and eventually we were left with no other option but to concede the fixture.

A disappointing way to end the year – but hopefully next year the fixtures for the uneven age groups will be scheduled

to start earlier in September to help prevent some of the weather related disruptions. Big thanks to the lads for an enjoyable few months of football, the coaches are confident that this group will push on next year and go from strength to strength!

Coaches: Sean Barrett, Mike Slattery, Jim Cannon, Barry Murphy.



#### Kilmeena Boys U15s

Back row, left to right: Sean Barrett, Logan Heraty, Mike Slattery, Tiernan Aherne, Eoghan Cannon, Alan Mortimer, Tom Cox, Kyle Mulchrone, Sean Keane, Brendon Witzl, Jamie Durcan, Jim Cannon, Barry Murphy.

Front row, left to right: Cormac Slattery, Kevin Hastings, Finn Mulchrone, Cian Moran, Adam Moran, Felix Zeray, Dara McDonnell, Robbie Murphy. Missing from Picture Tadhg Daly, Alan Gannon.

## U16 Boys Report by Mike Slattery

We got together with this group in mid-February, starting off mostly with some gym work and ballwork on the sand. Big thank you to John Reilly who took a few sessions in the gym with the lads and prepared a thorough S&C programme for them to follow. We also held a few Sunday morning sessions in Carrowholly, with some tight and competitive training games as part of these sessions.

Our first game of the league was on the Rice College pitch against Westport B where we eventually lost out by a point in a very tight battle. Victories followed against Moy Davitts, Tourmakeady, Castlebar B, and Louisburgh. We were defeated in our final game of the group phase by Ballaghaderreen, and our league campaign fell short with a home defeat to Tourmakeady in the semi-final.

Prior to the championship starting, we opted for a change of scenery at the end of May. While the weather was brilliant, we held a training session followed by a BBQ on the beach in Mulranny. This was a great morale and teambuilding session and we would definitely recommend it to other groups.

The County Championship was the next competition on our agenda, it was played throughout June and July. Unfortunately, the Championship turned out to be a poor competition for us with defeats in all three of our games against Tourmakeady, Burreishoole and Parke.

The last competition for this group was the U16 West Championship. Our initial game of the group was against Westport B where we had a nice victory away from home.

The final was scheduled away against Tourmakeady. Keeping in mind that previously in the county Championship they had beaten us by thirty-four points, we knew this was going to be a tall order to reverse. On the day itself, the boys played brilliantly as a team, securing a comprehensive victory and unleashing great celebrations for a group who up to this had a fairly bare and dusty trophy cabinet!

We would like to say a special thank you to Mayo Healthcare and Seapoint House who provided sponsorship this year which allowed us to purchase some new sports gear for the team.

We also couldn't let the season pass without thanking Sean Barrett and Darragh Keaveney for bringing their current real life football experience to this group and being great young role models for them!

Management: Conor O' Malley , Sean Barrett , Jim Cannon, Darragh Keaveney, Mickey Murray, Mike Slattery





**Kilmeena Boys U16s**

Back row, left to right: Conor O'Malley (coach), Sean Barrett (coach), Jim Cannon (Coach), Rory Kilcoyne, Oran Grimley, Patrick Feehan, Tiernan Ahern, Brendon Witzl, Louis Corcoran, Cormac O'Malley, Alan Mortimer, Kyle Mulchrone, Alan Gannon, Dean Staunton, Aaron Murray. Front row, left to right: Darragh Keaveney (coach), Logan Hearty, Eoin Cannon, Shane Lavelle, Cian Moran, Kevin Hastings, Adam Moran, Alex Kenning, Darragh O' Grady, Cormac Slattery, Sean Keane, Mickey Murray (coach).

**U17 Boys** Report by Padraic Moore

Our U17 lads were placed in "C" Division of a grading league competition alongside Ballintubber, Laherdane and Davitts.

In our first game at home against Ballintubber, we put in a decent performance and ran out winners by six points. The game was played under the recently installed floodlighting system at Kilmeena GAA training pitch. Our next game was away to Laherdane in Round 2. We ran out convincing winners with a dominant display on the day.

Our final group game was also away, this time against Davitts. The winners here progressed to the final. For the first forty minutes the game was evenly contested, with both sides playing open entertaining football. A goal and two points midway into the second half for the home side swung the contest and Davitts ran out comfortable winners, in the end.

Management: Padraic Moore, Conor O'Malley, Mickey Murray.



**Kilmeena Boys U17s**

Back row, left to right: Padraic Moore, Luke Durkan, Rory Kilcoyne, Oran Grimley, Louis Corcoran, Cormac O'Malley, Danny Cannon, Evan O'Grady, Dean Staunton, Patrick McGlynn, Aaron Burke, Shane Lavelle, Mickey Murray, Conor O'Malley. Front row, left to right: Aodhan Feehan, Patrick Feehan, Declan Moore, Darragh O'Grady, D.J. Keane, Aaron Murray, Micheál Regan, Alex Kenning.



## U18 Boys (Minors) Report by Padraic Moore

Our Minors were placed in Division 1 of the County Minor League for the 2023 season. The group of six also comprised Castlebar, Westport, Knockmore, Claremorris and Moy Davitts.

Our first game was away to neighbours Westport. In a typical local derby, we were slow to get going and after conceding two early goals, we were chasing the game thereafter. We played really well overall but came up short on a score line of 2-13 to 1-10.

In Round 2, we were home to Castlebar Mitchels. In a very entertaining encounter, in which both teams played open football, Mitchel's prevailed on a score line of 1-11 to 0-12.

Round 3 was away to Moy Davitts. A below par performance by the Kilmeena lads, but one where we created numerous chances to win the game, meant that we came out on the wrong side 1-7 to 1-5 scoreline.

Round 4 was at home vs Claremorris. We gave the best performance of the season here, in a rip roaring contest and we ran out winners by 2-09 to 1-11.

Our final group game was away vs Knockmore. We were a few players short and we struggled all over the pitch. In the end we were well beaten that evening on a final scoreline of 6-11 to 0-08. We gifted Knockmore at least three of the goals and our poor shooting did not do justice to the final score.

All in all it was a very competitive League campaign.

With a decent League campaign behind us we were now drawn in the County 'A' Championship. Our group also comprised Claremorris, Parke and Knockmore.

Round 1 was away to Parke and in a game that ebbed and flowed, both teams served up a highly entertaining contest which ended in a share of the spoils.

Round 2 was at home vs Knockmore. On a wet and windy evening we failed to capitalise on the strong wind in the second half to claw back Knockmore's 6 point lead. The game petered out with a 0-09 point to 0-03 disappointing defeat.

Round 3 against Claremorris was conceded due to injuries, summer holidays and various lads being unavailable thus we exited the Championship.

The Final competition for our Minors was the West Mayo A Championship which we were placed against Westport in the Semi Final. The game never lived up to its expectation and Westport ran out comfortable winners ending our Minor season.

On reflection the team competed very well. Whilst a lot of results did not go our way, the lads were exposed to the highest level of football in their grade and this will stand to them in the future.

Management: Padraic Moore, Neil O'Donnell and Pat Mulchrone.

Panel: Darragh Slattery, Conor Feehan, Rian Kilcoyne, Conor Kelly, Donal Hastings, Joe O'Malley, D.J. Keane, Aaron Bourke, Dylan Staunton, Jack O'Grady, Stephen O'Grady, Evan O'Grady, Aodhán Feehan, Keelan Corcoran, John Murphy, Luke Durkan, Declan Moore, Michaël Regan, Josh Browne, Louie Corcoran, Cormac O'Malley, Dean Staunton, Patrick McGlynn, Danny Cannon.



### Kilmeena Boys U18s (Minors)

Back row, left to right: Pat Mulchrone, Aaron Burke, Cormac O'Malley, Donal Hastings, Dylan Staunton, Conor Kelly, Louie Corcoran, Conor Feehan, Joe O'Malley, Rian Kilcoyle, Danny Cannon, Padraic Moore.

Front row, left to right: Neil O'Donnell, Darragh Slattery, Evan O'Grady, Stephen O'Grady, John Murphy, Keelan Corcoran, D.J. Keane, Josh Browne, Luke Durkan, Dean Staunton, Jack O'Grady, Declan Moore.

Missing from photo: Micheál Regan, Patrick McGlynn.





## Senior Men Report by John Doherty

### Introduction

This season will long be remembered for the Intermediate Championship campaign which resulted in Kilmeena lifting the Sweeney Cup for the first time in our history. The lifting of the cup is one part of the story but edge of the seat wins in the Semi Final and Final will ensure that in the years to come, this group of young men will be long remembered. Not only is it a story of resilience and courage but a story of sheer will, battling against all the odds, and still coming out on top. To journey from Junior Football to Senior Football is an achievement we should take time to digest and in years to come, celebrate as one of the great accomplishments for our Club.

However, away from the glory of Intermediate Championship, there were many other highlights during the year. The returns of Niall Ryan and Chris McGlynn from long term injuries were a fantastic boost to our Squad. The Championship debuts of Darragh Slattery, Rian Kilcoyne and Conor Kelly illustrates the fine work going on at development level in the Club and the lifting of the Cusack Cup was a fine achievement for our development squad. In total, during the season we played 37 competitive games and played in four finals.

### Early Season

In the Kelly Cup we had a win over Castlebar, a draw against Louisburgh and a loss to Ballintubber which was an excellent start to the season given the strength of the opposition we encountered. In the Michael Walsh Cup, we defeated Islandeady before losing out to Ballinrobe in the final on a score of 3-9 to 1-8. In the League we were placed in Div 2A and had a good campaign ending up in 4th place. We had wins over The Neale, Crossmolina, Bonniconlon and Kilmaine with losses to Balla, Ballyhaunis and Ballaghaderreen.

### Development Squad / B Squad

Following promotion our Development squad were in Division 4 and despite being in a strong league, we finished 4th with wins over Claremorris, Parke, and Hollymount-Carramore. In turn we had losses to Burrishoole, Davitts, and Ballintubber. We competed in the West Mayo Junior Championship. In our group, we had a strong run with victories over Achill, Burrishoole and Westport. In the semi final we won a tight game against Breaffy and in the final lost out to Parke on a score of 2-11 to 0-5.

The Cusack Cup campaign saw a first round victory over Burrishoole and then a semi-final win over Tourmakeady. In the Final we came up against Parke once again and this time emerged victors by 0-14 to 0-10 to claim this famous old trophy.

In the County Junior B Championship, we had group win over Mayo Gaels, lost out to Parke but qualified for a quarter final against Breaffy, where we lost out to a strong outfit on the day.

### Intermediate Championship – Early stages

Our championship campaign started off in mid August with a home tie against Ardnaree. Going into the game we were strong favourites but the Moysiders were in a mood to prove the bookies wrong. Ardnaree aided with a stiff breeze started the game well and we were struggling to get a toe hold in the game but gradually we got on top and led by 3 at half time. However, Ardnaree once again took the game to us at the start of the half, but a strong finish saw us easing to a 9 point victory.



We had strong performances from Joey Smyth, Darragh Keaveney and Jack Mulchrone. Final score: Kilmeena 1-13, Ardnaree 0-7. Our second group game saw us on a trip to the other end of the bay, where Louisburgh lay in wait. This was always going to be a tough assignment and so it proved. Despite a superb goal straight from the throw in from Caolach Halligan, we really failed to fire for the rest of the first half. A string of points for our opponents before half time saw us 3 points behind at half time. Despite our best efforts, we just couldn't close the gap in the second half and Louisburgh ran out deserved winners by two points. Jack Carney, Ciaran Kilcoyne and Colin Hastings put in great performances. Final score: Louisburgh 1-12, Kilmeena 1-10

Our final group games saw us making the short trip up the road to Islandeady to take on the men from Kiltimagh. Kiltimagh had lost both games and weren't given much hope by the pundits but they made a strong start to raise the first two white flags of the day. However, we settled quickly into the game and for the rest of the first half the scores flowed leaving us ahead by an 11 point margin. The second half saw more of the same with each player winning their individual battles all over the pitch and easing to a facile victory in the end. Amongst our best performers on the day were Keith Joyce, Sean Ryder and Liam Moore. Final score: Kilmeena 1-19, Kiltimagh 0-5

### The Road to Glory



Having emerged from the group phase in second place, we were drawn to play Parke in the Quarter Final. The game took place in Tourmakeady on a sopping wet day and a very heavy pitch. We started slowly and it took ten minutes to get on the scoreboard. However, after we did, a Johnny McGlynn goal eased us into a four point lead. From there on, like a boxer, we kept our opponents at distance, landing telling jabs. With

twenty minutes left, we were seven points ahead and within touching distance of progressing to the next round. However, Parke had other ideas. In the blink of an eye, the men in black and amber had scored 1-3 and we were on the ropes taking all the punches. We managed to steady the ship in the last five minutes and secured a two point victory to prevent another Tourmakeady ambush. We had strong performances from Jack Carney, Colin Hastings and Johnny McGlynn. Final score: Kilmeena 1-11, Parke 1-9.

Our semi final saw us return once again to Islandeady for a meeting with Bohola Moy Davitts. This was a much anticipated clash and it's fair to say that this is a game that will live long in





the memory. Moy Davitts started like a train and hit us for two goals early on. We were reeling and just trying to stay in the game. With a five point deficit at half time, we were just happy to be hanging in there and getting a chance to re-group. Early in the second half, Moy Davitts appeared to be consolidating their place in the Final by extending their lead to a seemingly unassailable seven point lead. But it was at this

stage that this crazy game entered into the realm of fantasy. We started to get on top in midfield, winning a succession of Moy Davitts ball and then the scores began to flow as we slowly reeled them in. Incredibly, with a few minutes left, we were within a couple of points of Moy Davitts and then two frees from Keavo levelled up the game. Into extra time we went. Moy Davitts landed the first punch before a surging Carney run produced an excellently finished goal. Our opponents pulled it back to level the game again but we kicked three of the last four points to run out winners in a game that will be talked about for a long time to come. The pick of those final scores, an outstanding Darragh Slattery point at the death. There were excellent performances throughout the team with Jack Carney and Darragh Keaveney to the fore and huge performances from Liam Moore and Ronan O'Donnell off the bench. Final score: Kilmeena 1-18, Moy Davitts 2-13.

In the final, we were pitted against Ballinrobe who we had edged out in a tough quarter final battle last year. This truly was a game that ebbed and flowed, with one team having a

period of dominance before the other took over. It was a case of who was going to be the last one standing at the end. Within minutes of the start, we were rocked by a sublime goal, and by the end of the first quarter, we were 4 points in arrears. However, right at the end of the half we rallied strongly and shot 5 scores without reply to be one point ahead at half time. After the re-start, Ballinrobe notched two scores to put them back in front but then a Caolach Halligan fetch and goal put us two points ahead. We were three points up and looked set to kick on but Ballinrobe came roaring back and with some outstanding scores, they had pulled us back and edged one point ahead again. But back we came again and in the last 10 minutes we raised three white flags, with two fine scores from Jack Carney and Liam Moore to seal the win and bring the Sweeney Cup to Kilmeena. There were excellent performances all over the pitch with Darragh Keaveney, Stephen Staunton, and John Keane to the fore.



#### Mayo Intermediate Champions 2023

Back row, left to right: Liam Moore, Kevin Ryder, Conor Kelly, Stephen Staunton, Joey Smyth, Caolach Halligan, Paul Groden, Jack Carney, John Keane, Chris McGlynn, Evan O'Donnell, Brian Lennon.





uncompromising Galway outfit were in control and ahead by three points at half time. Monivea eased that lead out to five with twenty minutes left and it looked like our season was going to fade away. But as we have seen before, these men don't know when to lie down. In the final quarter, we saw a display of sheer bloody mindedness where the men in black and white refused to give in. The Galway men were rocked as point by point we came to within one score of them. The Monivea keeper pulled off a fine save from Darragh Keaveney's late penalty kick and on the hallowed Tuam turf, our race was run in Connacht. Final score: Monivea Abbey 1-8, Kilmeena 0-10.

**Connacht Championship Campaign**

Our first home game in Connacht was against the Leitrim Champions, Annaduff. The men from the banks of the Shannon rocked up to McHale Park in no mood to play the role of plucky outsiders. Early on they had us under serious pressure and eased into a five point lead and the visitors were playing all the football. We managed a mini revival towards the end of the first half but still had ground to make up by the end of the second half. A scoring spree from Caolach Halligan early on saw us move into an unassailable position and with our midfield and half forward line dominant on their kickout, Jack Carney and Niall Feehan added further goals to help us to a wide winning margin at the end. Final score: Kilmeena 4-18, Annaduff 0-8.

One week later, we were on the road to Tuam to take on Galway Champions Monivea Abbey. This was always going to be a tough assignment and so it proved to be. Playing with a breeze, we failed to get our game going and an

This has been an excellent year on the pitch and now Senior football beckons. Once again, a new chapter will be written and with this group of players anything is possible, as they have proved on countless occasions on the journey thus far.



Front row, left to right: Ronan O'Donnell, Paddy Keane, Colin Hastings, Darragh Keaveney, Ciarán Kilcoyne, Jack Mulchrone, Sean Ryder, Johnny McGlynn, John Ryan, Keith Joyce, Niall Feehan.



## U21 Mens Report by Padraic Moore

The Club U21 Championship was back after a four year break, Kilmeena were in the "B" section in a group with Burrishoole, Ballintubber and Castlebar "B". With the Clubs successful intermediate campaign dates were hard come by to fit in all the fixtures. Our first round was home to neighbours Burrishoole, in a typical local feisty affair Kilmeena ran out comfortable winners.

Our 2nd round fixture against Ballintubber was conceded as it clashed with our intermediate teams Connaught semifinal, so the final group game away to Castlebar was a winner takes all

game then progressing to the quarter final. Kilmeena provided a blistering first half and played free flowing attacking football to lead 2-06 to 0-01 at the break. Castlebar came out a different team in the 2nd half an early goal and 2 points put the game back in the melting pot. As the 2nd half wore on Kilmeena faded out of the game but managed to hold on for a 2-11 to 2-08 victory and progress to the quarter finals away to May Gaels.

At the time of writing this report the quarter is fixed for Sunday 3rd December .



### Kilmeena U21s

Back row, left to right: Darragh Slattery, Cormac Feehan, Liam Moore, Colin Hastings, Rian Kilcoyne, Chris McGlynn, Evan O'Donnell, Conor Kelly, Conor Kilbane. Front row, left to right: Luke Durkan, Keelan Corcoran, Sean Gallagher, Ben Lennon, Micheál Regan, Ronan O'Donnell, Jack Mulchrone, Ciarán Kilcoyne, Conor Feehan.



### Masters Football Pat Mulchrone

Masters football is for men age 40+ that want to keep playing. It is a great way of meeting up and staying fit.

Mayo masters had a busy year in 2023 with 45 registered players all getting game time. There were four Kilmeena men in the panel. From left: Liam Heanue, Pat Mulchrone, John Reilly, Liam McDonnell.





## Inter-Club Blitz Mairead Durkan

Kilmeena LGFA hosted the inaugural Secondary School's First-Year inter-club Blitz in September. Neighbouring clubs of Westport and Burrishoole came together with us for a fun evening of football and pizza.

Each team played a series of mini games so plenty of opportunity to get chatty with new classmates!

While the first game was a quiet affair by the time the whistle was blown on the fifth game, chatter and laughter could be heard throughout the grounds. The evening was rounded off with some tasty pizza and ice cream in the clubhouse.

A huge thanks to Westport Ladies Gaelic Club for sponsoring the lovely pizzas and to Burrishoole Ladies for the refreshing ice creams afterwards.

It's so important to get younger girls involved in sport! There's an opportunity to make new friends and connections, learn valuable team work skills, increase confidence and improve overall health.

A huge thanks to all the volunteers that helped with refereeing, mentoring, organising and serving food from the three clubs involved



## Kilmeena Lights Up!

Our Junior ladies team had the privilege of playing the club's very first game under the new floodlights on March 3rd. Thanks to our neighbours Burrishoole GAA for the competitive game.





# Kilmeena Rounders Report by Julie Moore

In our newsletter entry for 2021/22 we talked about the huge progress we had made in terms of growing our club and representing Kilmeena GAA well in the world of GAA Rounders. Our priorities were to build on that success in 2022/23 and to say that we have exceeded our expectations would be an understatement!

Not only did we achieve the ultimate goal of winning the Junior Mixed All-Ireland title but we also were able to field both a Mens and Ladies team, we had six representatives on the Connaught squad for the inter provincials and we had our very own All Star!

## Connaught Winter League

Our competitive year began back in February with a home game against Michael Glaveys of Roscommon in the Winter League. The year actually started way back in November though as we maintained our weekly winter training on the Astro pitch in Rice College. Playing Rounders on frosty evenings in December and January isn't for the faint hearted! However, the hard work paid off as we progressed through the round robin stages of the Winter League to secure a place in the final against Galway City Rapparees.

Sadly Mother Nature took the win as with weeks of rain we just couldn't secure a pitch that wasn't waterlogged. The game was never played which is a shame but thankfully, it certainly wasn't the last chance we would get to play Rapparees this year!

## Junior Mixed Championship

The groupings were announced in April and along with Kilmeena in Group A we had Galway City Rapparees, Mayo Gaels and St Senans of Limerick. All of these teams had proved to be tough competition previously.

First up we had a successful home tie against our fellow Mayo competitors, Mayo Gaels. We banked that win and got to work preparing for our game with St Senans two weeks later. Kilmeena had suffered a heavy loss to Senans last year and were determined to make our skill development, improved squad depth and experience count as we traveled to a neutral venue in Athenry to take them on once again. With some fantastic strategic play, not to mention excellent fielding and batting we came away with a win and great scoreline of 22-10.

As we all know, sport brings its ups and downs and the down definitely came a month later when we had a double header at home in Kilmeena. Both our Junior Mixed and Intermediate Men's teams were scheduled to play Galway City Rapparees. Despite the fact that it was mid-June the weather Gods threw everything at us with rain, wind, thunder and lightning. The weather wasn't to blame though for two heavy losses as Rapparees finished the day with two wins under their belts.

After a previous loss to Michael Glaveys, that was the last game for our men's team this year. However, with two wins and a loss, our Junior Mixed team had an anxious wait to see if we could progress to the Quarter final and were delighted



## That Winning Feeling - our Junior Mixed All-Ireland team celebrating after their win in August 2023

Back row, left to right: William Fahy, Pat Coughlan, Tommy Hoban, Martin Hoban, Ian McLoughlin, Stephen Cox, Michael Sheridan, Edel Ryder, Aidan Connaughton.

Front row, left to right: Julie Moore, Noleen Coughlan, Irene Kaye, Frank McNicholas, Irene Walsh, Catriona Olsen, Caitriona Cox.





when we found out that, on the smallest of 'run difference' margins, we were through!

A quarter final win against Royal Rounders of Dunderry and a semi final win against Inniskeen of Monaghan meant that we were through to the final and another encounter with Galway City Raparees.

The date was the 19th August and the venue was the GAA Centre of Excellence in Abbotstown. The scene was set and buoyed up by huge support from everyone in Kilmeena GAA we headed East. The game was everything you would want from a final, level pegging all the way, tense and highly charged. Our team played out of their skins, never panicked and kept the heads. We came away deserving winners with yet another All Ireland title to bring back to Kilmeena. Our welcome home was one you would expect from our club as our community came out to welcome us home. It's a night we will never forget!

The whole team were stars in our eyes but special mention has to go to Aidan Connaughton who caught the eye of the officials with a spectacular home run in the final. He had the great honour of being awarded a GAA All Star at a ceremony in October. We are beyond proud.

**Ladies Team**

Following a very successful 'Try Rounders' initiative in September we were able to boost our female membership enough to field a Ladies team in a blitz in Monaghan. We travelled expecting an enjoyable day of Rounders where our newcomers could develop their skills. We got that for sure but also came away as Junior Ladies winners!

It was a year like no other! No time to rest though as we kick off this year's Winter league in November and get preparing for an Intermediate championship in 2024.

As always we are keen to welcome new members so whether you want to compete or just enjoy Rounders on a social level please don't hesitate to get in touch.



Noleen Coughlan accepting the Ulster Blitz Shield.



Our newly formed Ladies team celebrating victory at the Ulster Junior Blitz in September 2023.



Aidan Connaughton with his Junior Player of the Year All Star along with team mates Tommy Hoban, Claude Radelet, Michael Sheridan and William Fahy.



Home run hero - Aidan Connaughton during the Junior Mixed All-Ireland Final.



# Bord na nÓg Presentation 2023

## Local League presentations



Gibbons Cup Winners - Damien, Jonah and Moses Gibbons presenting to team captain Ryan Cannon.



Gibbons Cup Runners Up team captained by Bailey Browne.



Quinn Cup Winners - Abbie Quinn presenting to team captain Alex Fahy.



Quinn Cup Runners Up team captained by Jaye Joyce with manager Vincent Gibbons.



Ryan Cup Winners - Paul Ryan presenting to team captain James Hastings with managers Pat Coughlan and Declan Duffy.



Ryan Cup Runners Up team captained by Theo Bronkal with manager Liam Gilger.



Kelly Cup Winners - Sean O'Grady presenting to team captain Shauna Durkan.



Mulloy Cup - Kitty Mulloy presenting to team captain Cara Mongey





Kelly Cup Runners Up team



Mulloy Cup Runners Up team

## Players of the Year



U12 & 13 Girls teams



U16 Girls - Laura O'Grady. Front Row: Mary, Laura & Michael O'Grady; Back row, from left: Maureen Joyce, John O'Grady, David Ingham, Eimear Kelly, Aiden Moran, Michelle Walshe



U13 Boys- Darragh Mulchrone. Sean, Darragh & Majella Mulchrone with Michael Gavin



U14 Boys - Dara McDonnell. From left: Paddy, Dara & Lorraine McDonnell, Barry Murphy



U15 Boys - Adam Moran. From left: Sean Barrett, Aiden & Adam Moran, Barry Murphy



U16 Boys - Cormac O'Malley. From left: Conor O'Malley, Jim Cannon, Cormac & Carol O'Malley, Mickey Murray, Mike Slattery.



U17 Boys - Luke Durkan. From left: Mairead & Luke Durkan, Padraic Moore.



# Bord na nÓg Presentation 2023

## Teams Presentations



U10 Boys winners of the Burrishoole Go Games Blitz with managers Sean Kelly, Declan Hastings, Declan Duffy, Liam Gilger, Adrian Cawley, Brian McManamon.



U12 Girls Runners Up in County League Final with managers Paul Fahy, Mairead Durkan, Bernie Jennings & Denise Monaghan.



U11 Boys winners of Gearoid Murphy Achill Blitz and Eoin McGroddy Louisburgh Blitz with managers Kieran Hastings, Declan Ryan, Paul Ryan and Vincent Gibbons.





U12 Boys with the Eoin McGroddy Shield with managers Paul Ryan, Kieran Hastings and Declan Ryan.



U16 Boys West Mayo U16C Championship winners with managers Mickey Murray, Jim Cannon, Mike Slattery, Sean Barrett, Conor O'Malley and Darragh Keaveney.



U16 Girls Championship Shield Winners with managers David Ingham, John O'Grady, Michelle Walshe, Aiden Moran, Eimear Kelly and Maureen Joyce.



# Kilmeena GAA Club Valentine's Ball 2023

Photos by Conor McKeown



Liam Moore, Men's Minor Player of the Year accepting the Alan Browne Memorial Shield from Anto Browne



Jack Mulchrone, Young Player of the Year accepting the Barrett Family Memorial Shield from Colm Barrett



Paul Groden, Men's Senior Player of the Year accepting his award from John Reilly



Presentation from Padraic Moore to Jack Carney in recognition of his Mayo Senior County debut



Darragh Keaveney, Men's Players' Player of the Year accepting his award from Cormac McDonagh



Michael O'Haire, Community Person of the Year, accepting his award from John McDonald, Chairman, Kilmeena GAA Club



Colin Hastings, Men's Most Improved Player accepting his award from John Reilly



Cllr. John O'Malley, John Reilly, Cllr. Peter Flynn, Cllr. Christy Hyland and John McDonald



Barry Murphy, Club Person of the Year, accepting his award from Rory Smyth, Mid West Furniture





Áine Regan, Ladies Minor Player of the Year, accepting her award from Ciara Jennings representing Kilmeena LGFA sponsor Payslip and manager Peter Mortimer



Laura Kelly, Ladies' Senior Player of the Year and Ladies' Players' Player of the Year, with Peter Mortimer, Ciara Jennings (Payslip) and Davy Feehan



Kilmeena Minors: West Mayo Minor A champions



Kilmeena LGFA Mayo LGFA Junior B winners



# Paddy Golden Memorial Blitz 2023

On Saturday morning, 10th June, a steady flow of cars was making the meandering journey on country lanes to the Home of the All Ireland Junior Champions 2022. Kilmeena was their destination for what has become an annual event in the GAA calendar for many clubs, particularly in West Mayo. The Paddy Golden Memorial Blitz has become known as a fantastic event for showcasing all that is good about being part of the GAA community. It's an opportunity to meet your neighbours, friends and rivals. It's an opportunity to come together as a parish.

It's also an ideal opportunity for clubs to prepare for participation in future competitions at the various age grades, including observing and evaluating your teams' level of skill development.

Three shields were up for grabs in the boy's blitz across A, B and C divisions including two for the girls competition.

The Kilmeena boys managed to field three teams, one in each division and one team in the girls section. The games got underway promptly at 10:00 am under an overcast sky. Spirits were high, and you could feel the energy from the young players on the grounds. Our boys were very competitive in all of their games, and spectators were treated to some great performances throughout. Our oldest team competing in the A division played some marvellous games beating Breaffy, Achill, Westport and Parke en route to the final. Kilmeena had only one game left to reach the Promised Land, which was against their old rivals Tourmakeady whom they were only too familiar with. These two teams had gone toe to toe on many occasions over the years. It was a wonderful spectacle to watch these young footballers from both sides just going for it, displaying all the skills of the game. No blanket defences here! No negative tactics, just pure, honest football at its best, and it was exciting to say the least. Unfortunately, it was not to be for our boys. Ultimately, Tourmakeady proved too strong

on the day and won the A shield. Our boys were disappointed, but we know they have a bright future ahead of them. All the boys did super, and the club is extremely proud of them.

Ballintubber won the B shield, with Achill, the eventual winner in the C section.

In the girls' competition, following some fantastic performances throughout the rounds by all the teams involved, Carnacon girls were crowned champions, defeating Westport in the A final. At the same time, the Balla girls were successful against Louisburgh in the B section.

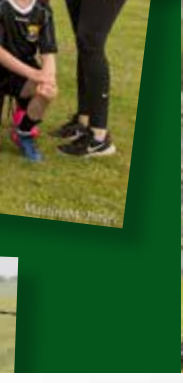
The day was a huge success on all levels, with many clubs commenting on how well the event was organised. It is a huge undertaking to run an event of this scale in the club, and it involves many putting their shoulder to the wheel. We are lucky in Kilmeena GAA that so many volunteers are willing to give up their precious time so freely for the betterment of our club.

A special word of thanks to the Golden family for their continued sponsorship of this event.

Thank you also to everyone who helped in any way to make the day such a success, especially the following: club Chairperson John McDonald, Bord na nÓg Chairperson and Pitch Coordinator Pete Mortimer, Club Secretary, Mary Slattery, Bord na nÓg Secretary Noleen O'Grady. Not forgetting the car parking attendants and tearoom staff in the clubhouse, tuck shop staff, registrants Maura Hastings and Kathleen Geraty, M.C. Michael Carney, photographer Martin McIntyre, first aiders Edel Ryder and Will Fahy, scorekeepers, referees, umpires, coaches, people involved in the setting of the pitches and all the volunteers who made sandwiches and baked goods.









# The Local League 2023

Following some changes made to the local league last year, another tweak was done this year. In order to make the games more competitive and fairer for the younger players, the boys were split into U10s who competed for the Ryan Cup and the older boys competed for the Declan Gibbons and Willie Quinn memorial cups. There was a total of eight teams competing this year, four U10s and four of the older group.

Games were played in a round robin format over two sunny Summer evenings in May and June with the finals played on the second evening. Some really competitive games were played over the two evenings and thoroughly enjoyed by the parents who supported. All teams were managed and games refereed by the boys coaches.

The Declan Gibbons Memorial cup was won by the Pink Team who were managed by Liam Heanue.

The Willie Quinn Memorial cup was won by the Blue team who were managed by Darren Madden.

The Ryan Cup was won by the red team who were managed by Declan Duffy and Pat Coughlan.

The girls local league was played on a scorching June bank holiday weekend. Four teams played in a round robin format, followed by two finals. It was fantastic to have so many girls out playing football, helping our LGFA Club continue to grow and develop.

Thanks to the senior ladies Katie, Lisa, Eabha and Aoife who came down to help mentor the teams and to Laura and Ciara who refereed the games.

The Padraic Mulloy Memorial Cup was won by Team D.

The Kelly Memorial Perpetual Cup was won by Team C.

Particular thanks goes to our sponsors who came down to present the silverware to the winning captains. We are so appreciative of your support and generosity.



Left to right: Alik Rats, Evan Gilger, Matthew Gormonley, Tom Ryan, James Hastings, James Lawless, Tommy Cannon, Jack Cawley, Dylan Duffy, Aaron Cawley.



Left to right: Fionn Lavelle, Max Keane, Paul Joyce, Bobby Lane, Cody Coughlan, Ryan Cannon, Jacob Chambers, Finn Mulchrone, Imelda Gibbons.



Left to right: Aoife Durkan, Iris Kaye, Lucy Bourke, Ellen McDonagh, Colleen McPhillips, Cara Mongey, Kate Mulloy (Kitty's granddaughter), Kitty Mulloy, Rachiel Feehan, Niamh Byrne.



Left to right: Milly Chambers, Sophie Hopkins, Holly Hastings, Sadhbh McGauley, Chloe Monaghan, Annie Mularkey, Shauna Durkan, Sean Kelly, Lauren Munroe, Aliesha Malone, Emily Fahy.



Left to right: Charlie Geoghegan, Michael Francis Gormonley, Michael Gannon, Mary Quinn, Noah Coughlan, Alex Fahy, Evan Ryder, Ryan Walsh, Oisín Martin.



Left to right: Shauna Durkan, Lauren Munroe, Aliesha Malone, Chloe Monaghan, Emily Fahy.

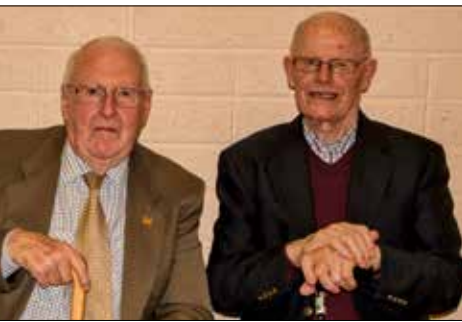






# Fr. Jim's Diamond Jubilee of Ordination

Congratulations to Fr. Jim, who recently celebrated 60 years in the priesthood, having been ordained in 1963. We wish Fr. Jim many more happy years in the service of God.







## Kilmeena GAA Healthy Club Project – Going for Gold Noreen Johnston



Croke Park hosted the national GAA Healthy Club conference on 18th November, rounding off another hugely successful year for the GAA Healthy Club Project. Mayo now has 21 Healthy Clubs, Kilmeena being one of them. This phase of the Healthy Club project saw the introduction of a new accreditation system, foundation, silver and gold. Kilmeena are delighted to have achieved Gold accreditation. A GAA Healthy Club recognition event will take place in the Connaught GAA Centre of Excellence later this year.

A massive thank you to everyone who participated in all the initiatives undertaken over the past eighteen months to get us to this point.

This year we saw the following initiatives being undertaken within Kilmeena GAA Club, all coming under the umbrella of the Healthy Club project.

In January 2023 we once again participated in the Ireland

Lights Up walks which nicely went hand in hand with the Irish Life Steps Challenge. This good-natured competition led to many 'laugh out loud' moments. Thanks to a dedicated gang for getting us over the finish line. The results paid off with Kilmeena winning 2nd prize of a €1,500 O'Neills voucher. Well done to everyone who participated. As a follow up Croke Park asked participating clubs to complete a feedback survey and Kilmeena were the winners of a €250 One4All voucher. We were later invited to partake in a study being carried out by SETU Waterford assessing the benefits of these initiatives.

Following on from last year's Breast Cancer Awareness event in the Clubhouse, this year we hosted an event for the men highlighting men's health.

Eanna Casey hosted an informative talk in our Clubhouse about bullying. Great credit goes to our younger club members, who turned out in big numbers. Their insightful contributions taught the not so tech savvy grown ups a thing or two about what it's like being a teenager in this social media world. Thank you to all who participated.

Thank you to all organisations who have contributed to our success, Croí, Mayo Mental Health Association, Westport Family Resource Centre and Mayo GAA Health & Wellbeing Committee to name but a few.

The support of this project within our club and the increasing participation in the ongoing initiatives such as the ladies fitness classes, 25 cards and social rounders is testament to the contribution of our club to the holistic health and wellbeing of all our members.

We look forward to being a part of the next phase of the Healthy Club Project and are planning many more initiatives in 2024.



## Mayo County Council Cathaoirleach Awards Noreen Johnston



Mayo County Councils Cathaoirleach Awards honour and celebrate the individuals and groups that work quietly behind the scenes to make our communities stronger, more vibrant and caring, often inspiring and motivating others to become actively involved in their communities.

On March 3rd 2023 Kilmeena GAA Club was part of the awards ceremony held in Breaffy House Hotel having been nominated for three awards:

Mayo Publication Award: Kilmeena GAA Annual Newsletter  
Community Partnership Project: Kilmeena GAA Healthy Club Project  
Community Social Inclusion Project: Kilmeena GAA Social Rounders

It was a wonderful recognition to have received these nominations and while it was not to be our night we were delighted to have our efforts and initiatives showcased among so many hard working

community organisations. Congratulations to all the winners on the night!



## Safeguarding and Garda Vetting

Majella O'Malley, Club Children's Officer

Our club is committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who wish to participate in our Gaelic Games and related activities. We take all practicable steps to protect them from harm or abuse.

All coaches and other personnel dealing with children and young people under 18 years of age, are required by law to hold a valid Safeguarding and Garda Vetting certificate.

My role as Children's Officer is to ensure compliance with mandatory Safeguarding and Garda Vetting regulations. This year we held two separate 'Safeguarding 1' course sessions in the clubhouse and we plan to organise further training in 'Safeguarding 1' courses next Spring; which will facilitate any new coaches joining and also existing coaches who need to renew their Safeguarding and Garda Vetting Certificate.

Safeguarding courses are now linked to the TOBAR platform (formally GAA Learning) and are also linked with the GAA Foireann portal. Garda Vetting is applied for and recorded on the Foireann system and individuals receive an email once the certificate falls due for renewal.

## The Green Club Project Noreen Johnston

The Green Club Programme was established to support GAA clubs undertaking sustainability actions within their grounds and through their activities. The Programme is structured around the themes of Energy, Water, Waste, Biodiversity and Travel & Transport and is designed to promote sustainability awareness and action in GAA club communities.

2023 sees Kilmeena GAA Club becoming one of the most recent participants in this project.

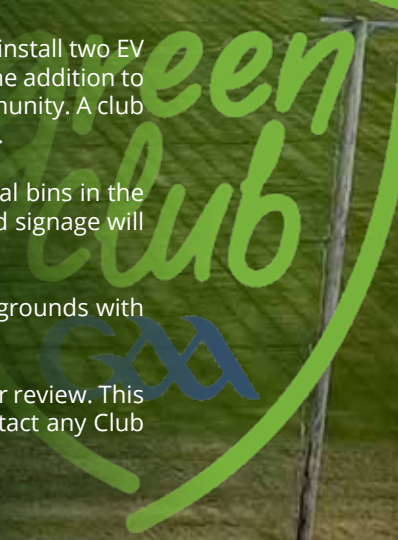
Since our participation, we have achieved great progress towards making our club and grounds more sustainable. Watch out around the club and the grounds for changes under each theme. The addition of new signage highlighting all the outdoor taps where bottles can be re-filled reducing the amount of single use plastic bottles being used in the club. Many thanks to Mayo County Council for their assistance with this initiative.

The installation of the new LED flood lighting has provided the club with an opportunity to install two EV chargers on the grounds. This is a 'work in progress' and when complete, it will be a welcome addition to the Club and of great benefit to the increasing number of electric vehicle users in our community. A club wide energy audit has been carried out and the results are being reviewed at the moment.

Mayo County Council kindly carried out an audit of our waste and we have installed special bins in the club house with waste, recycling and food waste bins now available. More special bins and signage will be added over the coming months.

There has been massive efforts made in regard to enhancing the biodiversity within our grounds with the planting of trees and reducing the cutting of the grass verges and hedgerows.

All our efforts are recorded on the GAA Green clubs portal and are relayed to Croke Park for review. This is an ongoing project. If you would like to contribute to this project in any way please contact any Club Officer who can advise you further.







## Kilmeena Cúl Camp 2023

Maria Cannon (Burrishoole and Mayo ladies player) and Jack Coyne (Ballyhaunis and Mayo mens player) visited us for this year's Kilmeena Cúl Camp. Jack brought the National League Trophy with him and he and Maria answered questions, signed autographs and had their photos taken with the children. Lots of happy campers went home after a wonderful week!





## PRO Report Caragh Ryan, Kilmeena GAA PRO



As we come to the end of 2023, it is with great pleasure and gratitude that I reflect on the incredible year we have had as a club. The dedication, passion, and support shown by each and every member of our Kilmeena GAA family has been nothing short of remarkable. We have overcome challenges, celebrated victories, and stood together through thick and thin.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all our players, coaches, volunteers, sponsors, and the entire Kilmeena community for your unwavering support. Our club is not just a sports organisation; it is a tight-knit community that supports and uplifts each other on and off the field. Together, we have continued to build a strong club that fosters unity, friendship, and a love for Gaelic games.

In the past year, we have witnessed a significant increase in engagement and followers across all our social media platforms, allowing us to reach a broader audience and connect with members and supporters both near and far. Our social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, have become vital tools for communication and promotion of our events and achievements. These platforms have allowed us to highlight the accomplishments of our teams, relay important information, and engage with our community in a more interactive way.

We also used the 'What's the Score' app to provide live score updates for all our championship games this year. Unfortunately not all club games can be streamed via Mayo GAA TV, so this was proven to be a very popular option for people who couldn't attend certain matches. We are grateful for the increased visibility these platforms have provided for our club and are very excited about the opportunities they present for the future.

Thank you all for your continued support and for being a part of Kilmeena GAA's growing online community. Here's to an amazing 2024 filled with even more memorable moments and achievements for our club. Nollaig shona daoibh go léir!

## From A Kilmeena Supporter Abroad... Gerry Carolan

Greetings All.

My heartfelt congratulations to Kilmeena GAA Club and the Committee on the fantastic achievement of reaching the top of Mayo football. As a proud Kilmeena exile and avid follower of our teams, I wish to congratulate you all on the success from Underage to your Senior sides.

The all-inclusive nature of a rural club like Kilmeena, is a joy to be affiliated with. To sit and watch the County Final game unfold on my laptop is a memory I'll never forget. With all the shouting coming from my conservatory, I suspect it's a moment that my neighbours will not forget either!!

As a long time member of the John F Kennedy Club here in Yorkshire, we also wish you congratulations and success in the future.

How times have changed for the better. I have vivid memories of immigration, depleting our parish team in the 80's and of young underage lads like myself, Geoff O'Grady, Hugo Feehan and the Cannon brothers, to name but a few, along with some club stalwarts, that were requested by our then Chairman Mr Austin Gibbons, to tog out so as to insure we stayed in junior status. It was an honour and a privilege to be asked and to be taken into the fold by the likes of Paddy O'Grady (RIP) and Tom Gill (RIP) and indeed others also gone to their eternal rest.

To see the difference 30+ years has made and the strong youth system that has now produced the best I have ever witnessed in the black and white and most of these are sons of then young men of the 80's that played and kept the club going through those tough years. As a committee you must be immensely proud - take it from me we are very proud of your achievements.

Young men and women of Kilmeena stand tall. Our club is now at the top table of Mayo football and here we shall stay. To all involved, your commitment and perseverance has paid off. The old saying goes; 'without foundations you can't build'.

My goodness, have you all got this one right, from Underage to Senior, the youth in this side will go from strength to strength and the production line is still producing from the underage system.

On a final note congratulation to the Management Team and to my fellow Carrowholly man John Reilly. Detail and dedication has paid off. Kilmeena ABU!

Yours in sport

**Gerry Carolan** (a very proud Kilmeena exile) & the Carolan Family  
*Merseyside & Carrowholly*





## Mayo Association Dublin - Meitheal Awards Luncheon



Kilmeena GAA Club were honoured in January to have been selected to receive the Meitheal award in recognition of its success in the All-Ireland Junior Club Football Championship in 2022.

The awards, which are organised annually by the Mayo Association Dublin, were presented at the Mayo Association Dublin luncheon in The InterContinental Hotel, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 on Friday 3rd February 2023.

Congratulations to Louis Corcoran and Cormac O'Malley (U16 Boys), Meabh McNally, Eva Mulchrone, and Laura Ingham (U15 Girls), Eabha Carney (U18 Girls) and Luke Durkan (U18 Boys) who took part in the 2023 Mayo Development Squads and Academies.



### Kilmeena GAA Club Executive Committee & Officers 2024

Back row, left to right: Michael O'Grady (Safety Officer), Pete Mortimer (Chairman, Bord na nÓg), Willie Keaveney (Development and Planning Officer), Padraic Moore, John McDonald (Chairman), Michael Cannon (President), Michael Ryan, Kevin Barrett (County Board Delegate), Darren Madden (Coaching Officer).

Front row, left to right: Noreen Johnson, Mairead Durkan (LGFA County Board Delegate), Maura Hastings (Joint Treasurer) Mary Slattery (Secretary), Kathleen Geraty (Joint Treasurer), Caragh Ryan (PRO), Lucy O'Malley (Club Registrar), Majella O'Malley (Children's Officer), Noleen Coughlan (Secretary, Bord na nÓg).





## John Moore



Kilmeena GAA and parish were deeply saddened by the sudden and untimely passing of John Moore (Zulu), Buckfield.

John was predeceased by his father John Thomas, sister Eileen and infant brother Willie Joe. John was an active member of our parish and a former club player and coach.

Like so many others of the time, John emigrated to London in 1984. He played football with Dr. Crokes in Hertfordshire and was part of the team in '84 when they won the County Senior and 'Sevens' Championship. In 1988, John had the honour of being captain and trainer leading the team to the Senior Hertfordshire Championship.

John returned home to Kilmeena in the early 90's and played on the '93 team winning a Junior County title defeating Ballycastle in a replay.

In 1995 John was part of the management who helped guide the intermediate team to a Championship final where they lost out to Louisburgh.

Over the years John was also involved with and helped coach various underage teams within the club.

John was a family man and great neighbour. He was known far and wide through his passion for farming and involvement in GAA. He was a fun-loving character with a large smile and will be greatly missed in our community.

All at Kilmeena GAA club would like to extend their deepest sympathies to John's wife Nora, daughter Patricia, mother Sheila, sisters Bridie and Mary Teresa and to all his extended family and friends.

Ar dheis dé go raibh a h-anam dilís.

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## Johnny Nolan



Johnny was first and foremost a community man who had his own unique way which endeared him to young and old alike.

He gave so much of his time and energy to promote the club lotto every week for many many year. Johnny was a pioneer all his life but was still the first man in the pub to collect the lotto tickets, he epitomised all that is good about community and volunteering.

Johnny was a lifelong supporter of the green and red of Mayo and enjoyed nothing more than a day out in Croke Park.

We offer our deepest sympathy to Johnny's family, friends and neighbours at this sad time.

Ní bheith do leithéid an arís.

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## Thomas (Tommie) Gill

Kilmeena GAA were saddened to learn of the passing of Thomas (Tommie) Gill, Mayour, Kilmeena and late of Harrow, London. Tommie played for Kilmeena at underage level. He was a talented footballer and was a big loss to the club when he emigrated to England at a young age. Condolences to his family and friends at home and in England.

Ar dheis dé go raibh a h-anam dilís.

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## Nicholas Feehan

It was with sadness that we learned of the passing of Nicholas Feehan, formally of Buckfield, Kilmeena and late of Boyle, Co, Roscommon. Nicholas played football with Kilmeena in the 1960's and early 1970's and was noted as a stylish and tough footballer whose name featured regularly on the scoresheet. His family have recently donated a bench in his memory which is proudly placed at Kilmeena GAA grounds. Condolences to his family and friends.

Ar dheis dé go raibh a h-anam dilís.

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## Jackie O'Malley

Kilmeena GAA were saddened to learn of the passing of Jackie O'Malley, Conrea, Kilmeena and late of London, in July of this year. Jackie played with distinction for Kilmeena in the 1950's and always had great loyalty to his home place, returning as recent as the summer of 2022 to visit family and friends. Condolences to his family and friends at home and in England.

Ar dheis dé go raibh a h-anam dilís.