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**V**

**Dún na nGall**

Pairc Smaragaid Ruislip

Domhnach 14ú Marta 2004 Tosnu 2.30in

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# Failte Londain

**F**earaim fíochain failte romhaibh go flear go dtí Pairc Smaragaid Ruislip inniu. Failte speisialta forrean, offigi ags muintir na Dun na nGall.

It is a pleasure to welcome you all to Ruislip today for this Allianz National Football League Division 2A game against table toppers Donegal. A very special welcome to all our visitors from Donegal. Hopefully they will enjoy their weekend in London.

I would particularly like to thank the Tir Chonail Gaels and their Sports & Social club for their tremendous assistance in organising this whole weekend and indeed for sponsoring the meal for the teams after the match.

I would also like to thank our football team sponsors JCB. With their guests they are most welcome here today.

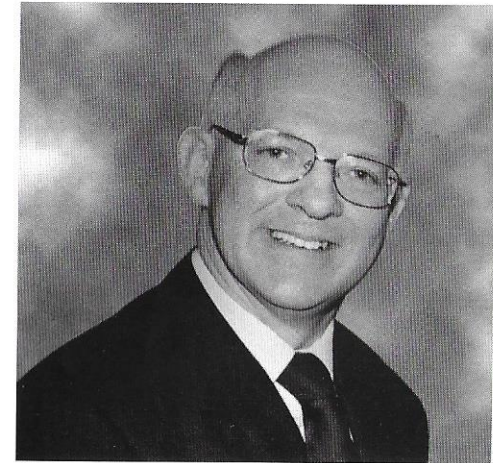
London's performances in the league this campaign have been most encouraging. In all four games they have competed until the final whistle and are most unlucky not to have a few wins under their belts.

There is a feeling that real progress is being made in London football. Chris Lloyd set out to organise the structure of the county team and has to be complimented for his great efforts.

Now John McParland, assisted by Maurice Sommers, is moulding a team that will compete at the highest level. All need to be complimented and supported for their commitment.

After the meal this afternoon the draw for the 2004 Allied Irish Bank London Senior Football Championship will take place in the Clubhouse and all are welcome to attend.

This evening, at the Galtymore Club in Cricklewood, a grand Reunion dace will take place. Members of both teams will be in attendance and tickets are available throughout the ground today.



We hope everyone will make the effort to attend and make the event a success.

A few sad events have taken place over the last two weeks.

The death of Cormac McAnallen at such a young age shocked the whole of the GAA world.

Closer to home, we were all saddened by the death of Collette Niblock, who was buried recently in Derry.

To her son Jimmy, his brothers and her husband Robert, we extend our deepest sympathy.

On Thursday Patricia Karpjuk, mother in law of John McParland, was laid to rest. To Elizabeth, John, Mathew, Thomas, Benjamin and Katie we offer our sincere sympathy.

***May they rest in peace***

Hoping you all have a most enjoyable weekend here in London.

***Beannactai na Féile Padraig  
Labhrás Ó Laoghaire  
Cathaoirleach***

# London's adopted sons from Donegal

Donegal come back to Ruislip for the first time since 1998 and no doubt they will prove once more to be the most welcomed and entertaining of visitors...not just on the pitch, but also around the various watering holes in north and west London, where many of their supporters will be passing the weekend.

Last time Donegal came to town, London were being managed by former Donegal county player Tommy McDermott and despite the fact that London were well beaten that day (1-6 to 2-15), those who turned up to watch the game undoubtedly enjoyed themselves.

For today's game the London fans at least will be thinking about a lot more than enjoyment...they will be looking for a positive result given the very obvious improvements that have been made by the team in recent weeks.

So far in this league campaign the team have yet to surrender in the typically London kind of way.

There is a core of belief and determination running through the squad at the moment and that is transmitting itself onto the pitch and into the team's performances.

Central to the change of approach has of course been the already well documented appointment of John McParland as manager.

His exceptional man management and communication skills have really struck a cord with the players he has at his disposal and the fruits of this are been shown in the week in, week out performances of many of his players.

Certainly at present, there appears to be a much better understanding by each player of what is expected of them and what their specific duties are for the team.

Added to that, none of the players are in any doubt as to who is in charge and that level of respect can only be healthy for the team.

However, there is a great deal more to this particular revival than just one man coming in and talking straight to the players he has.

Training has been intense and with the help of a number of leading lights in Ireland, a much more physical approach has been taken.

The improvement in the players is very obvious and the ability of the team to stick with their opponents for the full seventy odd minutes of their National League games has been paramount in preventing some of the runaway scorelines we have endured over the past four or five years.

All too often the real damage to London's reputation and confidence was done in the closing quarter of a game, when London were unable to stick with their fitter opposition, something that is not happening any more.

On top of this excellent preparation that the London players are going through, there is also a very visible improvement in the quality of the playing staff.

To the fore of this improvement have been a number of Donegal natives who have come in and helped to bolster the team considerably.

Certainly Fanad clubman Paddy McConigley has been a real star turn in the

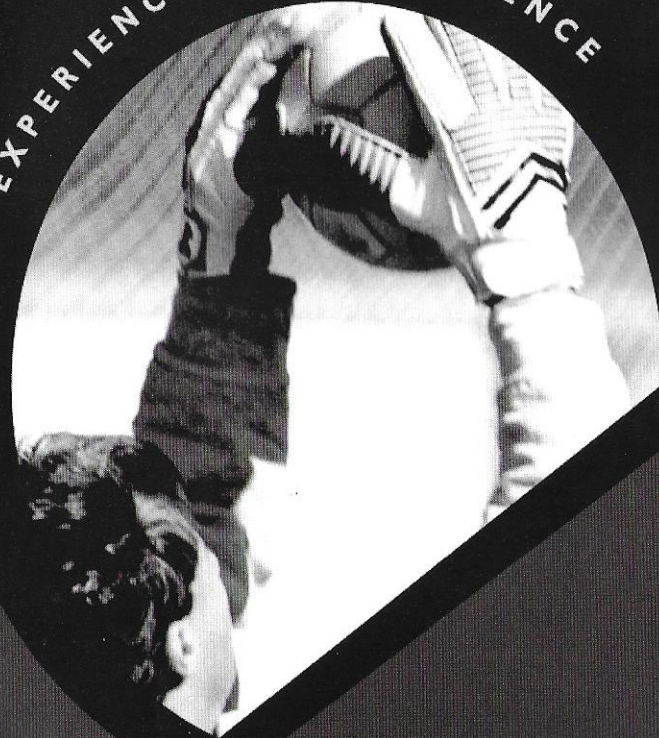
London defence and his display against Monaghan last time out in Clones was praiseworthy indeed.

A strong and resolute defender, he also has the eye for the occasional excursion behind enemy lines as he showed when scoring an excellent point in the last league game.

Naomh Columba man Hugh Cunningham has had a quite wretched time with injuries since arriving in London.

Despite making a huge impression with the county following his debut against Offaly in the league last April, Cunningham's progress has been blighted by ill health and misfortune.

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# London's adopted sons

...• *Continued*

A groin injury kept him out for a good deal of the club season last year and just as he was getting back to full fitness he suffered a bout of appendicitis and was pretty much ruled out for the rest of the year.

A tight marking defender, Hugh has once more emerged back onto the London team in this year's league and will be hoping to have recovered from his latest injury setback that he suffered last week in order to line out against his native county.

Gary Kane is another player who arrived from St Naul's last year and spent the best part of his first year in London trying to find his way out of the physio's room.

However, since this National League started Kane has shown himself to be a very useful asset to the team and at present is looking very comfortable in his midfield slot.

Another St Naul's man, Brian McMonagle, came to London mid-way through last year and became a sort of "Mr Play Anywhere" for the Tir Chonaill Gaels.

As a result of this he never really grabbed the limelight or headlines, but his performances in the half back line for London so far this year have been very impressive indeed.

JP O'Donnell, from Dungloe, is another of those players to have come to London and ended up spending more time than he would have wanted to in doctor's surgeries and physio rooms.

The brilliantly talented forward made a huge impression in London within weeks of joining the Gaels, with his unique blend of enthusiasm and character endearing him to pretty much everyone who met him.

He played in the Championship for London last year but shortly after fell foul to a lung infection that pretty well ruined the whole of his year.

He is slowly getting back on his feet and has re-joined the panel and hopefully London and Tir Chonaill Gaels will soon be enjoying the talents of this infectious young man.

For those readers who have been paying attention all the way through, it is probably best to remind you that this piece is not a script from Casualty or Holby City, but when we move onto the next Donegal man in the London panel you may well be forgiven for thinking that it is.

John Paul Breslin from Na Rossa, who is another relatively recent recruit to Tir Chonaill Gaels and London, has just recovered from some very serious back injuries suffered following a fall from a balcony when on holidays last summer.

His remarkable recovery was finally completed last weekend in Clones when he came on for the final twenty minutes of the game against Monaghan to make his National League debut for his adopted county.

Once again, as of yet, London have not seen anything near the full potential of JP Breslin.

That Donegal influence within the London team will be massive for today's game, with the one sure guarantee being that those O'Donnell boys playing for the Exiles will be doubly determined to remind people just who they are.

Donegal's own track record this year has been mostly consistent with their one point victory over Roscommon last week in the league being deemed a crucial two points for the team.

Like all the top counties, Brian McEniff's team do not want to be preparing for the Championship by playing Division 2 football.

They need to be up against top teams week in week out, so as to be able to best judge where their own progress is at.

Certainly the 1-22 to 0-7 defeat they suffered to Tyrone in the McKenna Cup recently in their own backyard of Ballybofey, would have been cause for quite a bit of concern.

Especially considering that if Donegal are to progress in this year's Championship they are more than likely going to have to overcome Tyrone somewhere along the line. It is probably fair enough to say that Division 2 football is not the best arena in the world to be preparing for such encounters.

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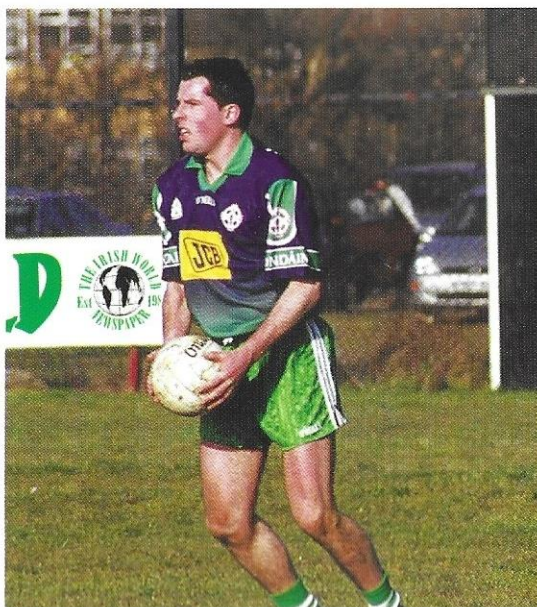
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# John Niblock

Today we are pleased to welcome back Johnny Niblock to the London panel after missing the Monaghan game owing to the sudden death of his mother Collette back in Derry (may she rest in peace).

Johnny has been a regular on the London and Parnell teams since his arrival here a year ago and he has produced sterling performances from the half-back line for both.

Today we are also pleased to welcome Johnny's father Robert and his younger brother, also Robert, who are our very special guests here in Ruislip.



## ALLIED IRISH BANK (GB) SENIOR FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

The draw for the Senior Football Championship takes place after the NFL match between London and Donegal this afternoon.

All 12 clubs will be placed into a pot and each team will be drawn.



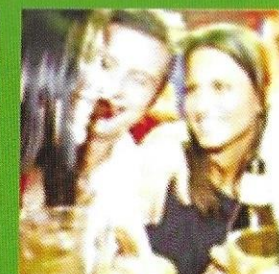
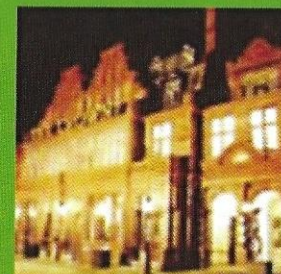
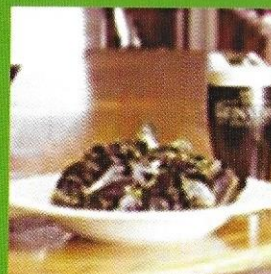
An Ríocht Kerry Gaels  
Garryowen  
Jersey Irish  
Neasden Gaels  
Parnells  
St Brendans  
St Kiernans  
St Theresa  
Shalloe Pearse  
Shannon/Maguire's  
Tara  
Tir Chonaill Gaels

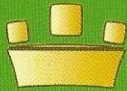
1st club drawn	Club A	Group A
2nd club drawn	Club A	Group B
3rd	Club B	Group A
4th	Club B	Group B
4th	Club C	Group A
6th	Club C	Group B
7th	Club D	Group A
8th	Club D	Group B
9th	Club E	Group A
10th	Club E	Group B
11th	Club F	Group A
12th	Club F	Group B

The 5 other clubs in the Jersey Irish Group will be put in the pot and the first club drawn will play Jersey in Jersey

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# Cumann Luthchleas Gael

## Coiste Contae Londáin



### Londáin 1-06

Dathanna: Blue & Green

#### Fir Ionaid

- 16** Gavin McEvoy
- 17** Senan Hehir
- 18** J P Breslin
- 19** Padraig O'Donoghue
- 20** Gordon Weldon
- 21** Oliver Fitzgerald
- 22** Patrick Lynott
- 23** Conor Mohan
- 24** Paddy Connelly
- 25** J P O'Donnell
- 26** Brian McMonagle



**Manager**  
John McParland  
**Trainer**  
Maurice Sommers

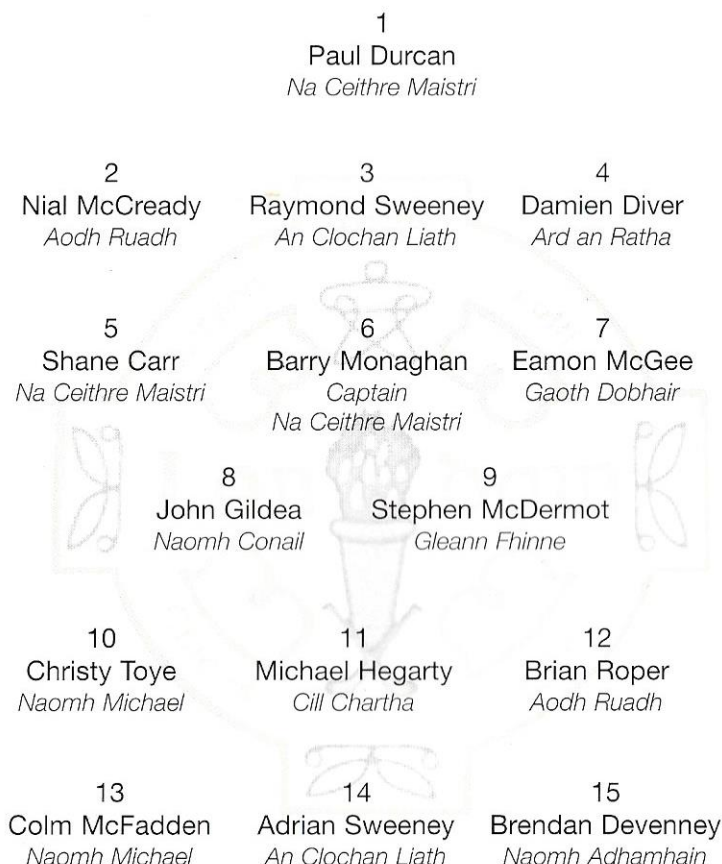
Réiteoir:  
**H. Bierne**  
(Ros Comáin)

### Dún na nGall 1-1

Dathanna: Gold & Green

#### Fir Ionaid

- 16** Sean Sweeney
- 17** Eamon Doherty
- 18** Barry Dunnion
- 19** Karl Lacy
- 20** Paul McGonigle
- 21** Dessie McNamara
- 22** Brian McLaughlin
- 23** John Haran
- 24** Eamon Reddin
- 25** Johnny McCaffert
- 26** Noel McGinley
- 27** Stephen Cassidy



**Manager**  
Brian McEniff  
**Trainer**  
Patsy McGonigle

**Mentors**  
P J McGowan, Michael Oliver McIntyre  
**Coach**  
Joe McBrearty

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**DONEGAL TEAM**



# Donegal, the exiles and that man McEniff

There is something quite unique about Donegal people and the way that they support one another wherever they are in the world.

Take a look in London and the strength of the Tir Chonaill Gaels club in London has been born, not just out of a lot of hard work on the training field, but also out of a great deal of togetherness off it, be it in business matters or in personal matters.

Travel further afield to America and in places like New York, clubs such as the Donegal club are a home away from home, not just for ex-pats from the land of O'Donnell but also for anyone who comes into their club.

Even further away in the far reaches of the southern hemisphere men like Hughie Greene, Barney McCahill and Jim Gallagher have worked tirelessly to keep the Irish traditions alive and also to help people out whenever they can.

Probably because of this factor, when Donegal finally and in truth quite unexpectedly reached their holy grail of winning the All-Ireland in 1992, they were easily the best received champions in quite some time.

The whole Ulster hoodoo had been broken the year before with Down picking up the Province's first Sam in thirty years, but the thing about Donegal was that with the exception of the odd Derry man, they had few if any enemies. Everyone seemed to have a soft spot for them.

Certainly in London at the time, Donegal football was high on the agenda, with Tir Chonaill Gaels exploding onto the scene with their great teams of the early 1990's.

At the time, the Donegal influence on the playing side was considerable to say

the least, with the team at times having as many as a dozen home grown players in the starting fifteen.

Indeed, it was often said that if you weren't from Donegal then there was little point in joining the Gaels unless you had a fair degree of inter-county experience...a little harsh maybe, but at the same time it was also a fair indication of the number of Donegal men involved with the club.

Throughout the years there have been several very gifted Donegal men playing their football in London.

Quite naturally many of them gravitated towards the Tir Chonaill Gaels but there were also a few who slipped through the net and ended up further afield.

For the Gaels in the past fifteen or so years there have been a few players who were later to become household names throughout Ireland.

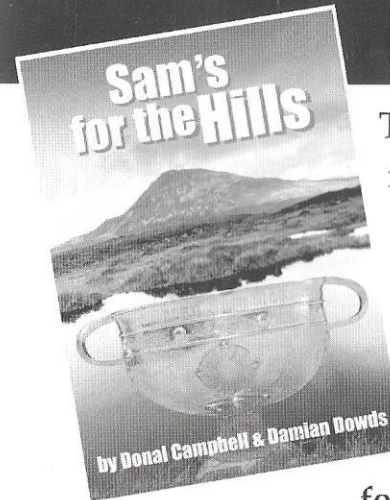
Barry Cunningham, John Duffy and current Donegal keeper Tony Blake all won Championships with the Gaels in the 1990's.

Likewise, former Donegal minor Pascal Cullen was another regular with the Greenford club as was All-Ireland U-21 medal winner Maurice Carr.

Away from the Tir Chonaill side of town, another All-Ireland U-21 winner with Donegal and Ulster senior medallist, Tommy McDermott has played for and managed the London county team as well as being the rock upon which the St Brendan's club was built.

The Reid brothers, Donal and Ollie, both had spells in London, with Ollie winning championships in 1990 with the Gaels and 1995 with the Tara club. Donal also contributing to the Tara success of 1995.

# Sam's for the Hills



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# Donegal, the exiles and that man McEniff

...• *Continued*

Other former Donegal county men who have also played for London in recent years include John Connors from Dungloe and former minor star David McGinley from St Eunans.

Some of those players who didn't quite make the grade with their home county but nonetheless excelled here in London included Terence Gallagher (formerly Falcarragh, now St Eunans), Gerry Boyle (Killybegs), Frankie Gallagher (Ballyshannon), Timmy McBride (Naomh Mhuire) and Eoin Bonner (Gweedore).

However, despite the abundance of talent that is so obviously available in the county, the ability to gel the whole thing together has proved beyond so many gifted managers.

The one man that seems to have the Midas touch when it comes to all thing GAA in the county is, of course, Brian McEniff.

It goes without saying that he has been personally responsible for the development of not just so many of the household names that we know of in general GAA circles, but also some of the lesser lights who have stopped to illuminate London for a short while.

McEniff's record with Donegal is incredible.

Stretching right back to the early 1970's when he led them as player/manager to their first Ulster title, through to 1983 and their second crown and on to that great day in September 1992 when Anthony Molloy and his men defied the odds and

turned over Dublin in their own back-yard to lift Donegal's one and only Sam Maguire.

Having stepped away from the job for a number of years to allow the likes of Mickey Moran and Declan Bonner their chance in the hot-seat, popular demand and the plight of the county persuaded the Bundoran club man to throw his hat into the managerial ring once more.

To say that he had a massive influence would be a gross understatement and the appearance of Donegal in an All-Ireland semi-final in August of last year was perfect testimony to the fact that there is no substitute for good man management and respect from the players.

Coaches can design all forms of training drills and games, but if the players do not respect the man in charge then the team is on the road to nowhere.

In Donegal there has never been any doubt about the fact that the players are 100% behind Brian McEniff.

Despite a recent health scare, Brian is back at the helm again and looking forward to the upcoming Championship.

Having been elected Chairman of the County Board last year, McEniff decided to stand down after just one year, so as to focus on the role that, if truth be told, he was kind of pushed into last year.

It was very much a case of your county needs you and the former foster father of Sam went running.

But, then again, it's very doubtful whether Brian McEniff would want it any other way.



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# Cormac McAnallen - A tribute

Seldom, in recent times, have GAA followers been greeted by such shocking and indeed mind numbing news as that of the sudden and unexpected death of newly appointed Tyrone football captain, Cormac McAnallen.

At just twenty-four years of age, McAnallen had already won All-Ireland medals at minor, U-21 and senior for his county and captained the team at all levels.

On top of that he had also won a Sigerson medal with Queens, played for UCD, represented Ulster and Ireland and also claimed an All-Star award for himself. A remarkable football career indeed.

When the news broke of McAnallen's death, people spoke of time standing still, of a day passing by with little meaning or direction...people were simply numbed by the news.

To lose a sporting icon in their prime is tragic in any arena. All too often we hear of boxers, cyclists, motor racers and jockeys being killed in their own pursuit of excellence.

Indeed, in GAA we have had the tragic case of Paul McGirr dying whilst playing on the same Tyrone minor team as Cormac McAnallen.

All these losses are tragic and affect many people, but somehow the passing of McAnallen, due to a viral infection in his heart, is much harder to fathom.

In the absence of Peter Canavan, he was the undisputed leader of the team.

At the time of his death, McAnallen had just lifted his first senior trophy as captain of the Tyrone team, when they defeated Donegal in the final of the Dr McKenna Cup in front of 12,000 people.

He made his debut for Tyrone at just nineteen years of age in 1999 and since then, barring periods of injury, he had been

a fixture on the Tyrone senior team.

As a trainer he was peerless, conscientious of everything he did on the training field, he had the desire to be the best at everything that he attempted...not in the arrogant manner of so many other "stars", but in a very self motivated way in which he inspired others on to personal excellence as well.

Tyrone manager Mickey Harte regarded his young captain very highly and was visibly shaken when addressing the press in the days after Cormac's death.

For Mickey it was the second time he had had to deal with such a set of circumstances, having been the Tyrone manager at the time of the Paul McGirr tragedy.

Alas, his duties on such occasions are not the sort that one would wish to perfect.

The outpouring of emotion and sympathy towards Cormac, his family and for Tyrone football in general has once again proven what a fantastically spiritual and supportive organisation that the GAA and its members can be in times of need.

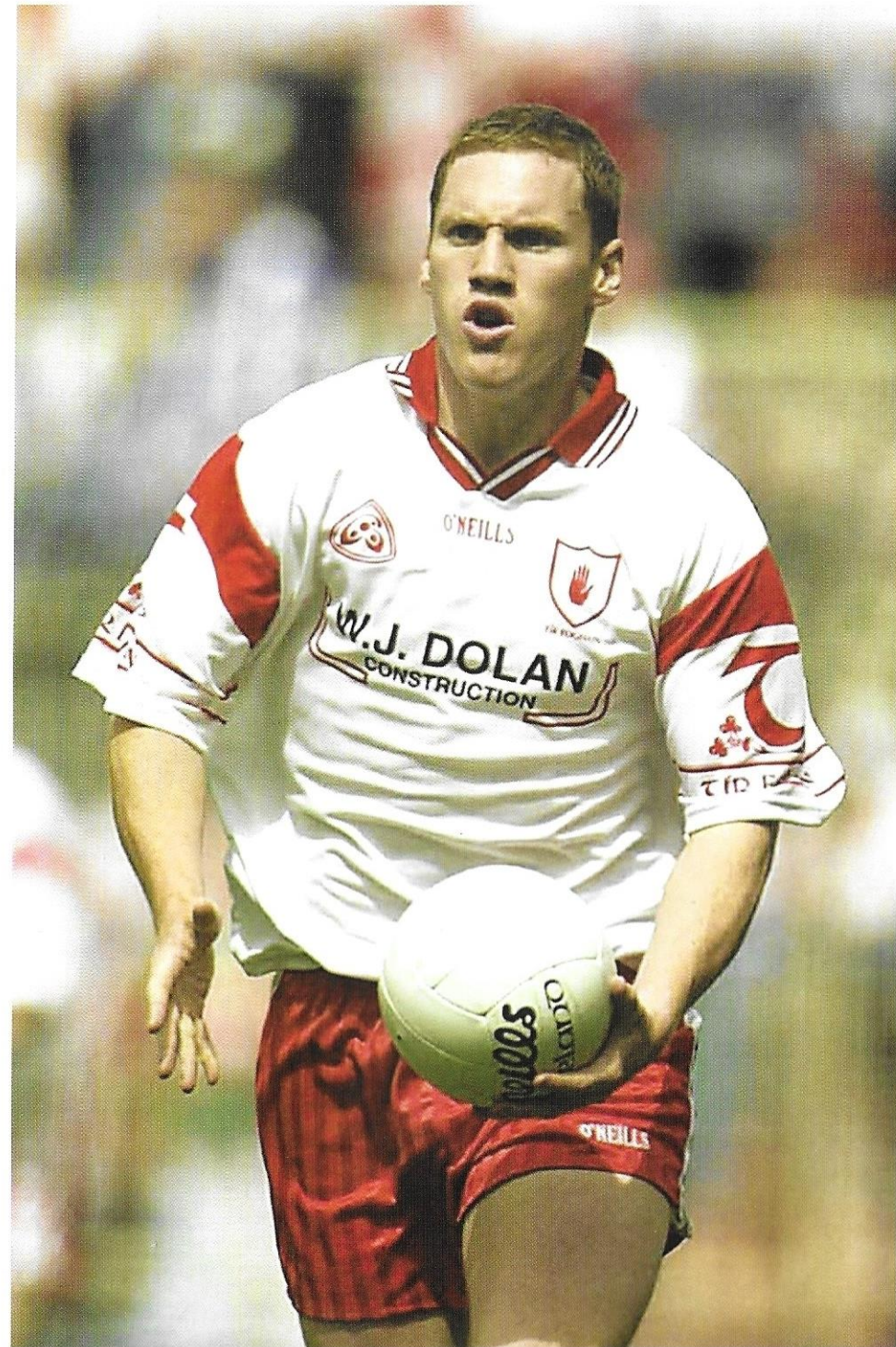
Unfortunately for Tyrone, they have been the recipients of such outpourings all too often in the past decade, between the Omagh bomb, in which several prominent members of the GAA in the county were lost, through to the losses suffered by Kevin Hughes and his family and also the McGirrs.

Now alas, the McAnallens of Eglish are seeing at first hand the true spirit that dwells within the Gael.

On behalf of the London GAA, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to

Cormac's parents Brendan and Bridget, his brothers Fergus and Donal and his fiancée Ashlene.

*May he rest in peace.*



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