

Feabhra 9 2019



GAA CLUB
CHAMPIONSHIPS

**AIB GAA HURLING ALL-IRELAND
SENIOR CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP**

Leath Cheannais

Páirc Parnell, Áth Cliath

NAOMH TOMÁS

(GAILLIMH)



RUAIRÍ ÓG, BUN ABHANN DALLA

(AONTROIM)

Stáid Semple, Durlas, Tiobraid Árann

BAILE GUNNAIR

(PORT LÁIRGE)



SEAMRÓGA BHAILE HÉIL

(CILL CHAINNIGH)



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AIB GAA HURLING ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINALS

Páirc Parnell, Áth Cliath 3.00pm

Naomh Tomás (Gaillimh)

v

Ruairí Óg, Bun Abhann Dalla (Aontroim)

AN RÉITEOIR: Paud O'Dwyer (Ceatharlach)

LINESMEN: Seán Cleere (Cill Chainnigh) (STANDBY REF),

Thomas Gleeson (Áth Cliath)

SIDELINE OFFICIAL: Conor Daly (Cill Dara)

UMPIRES: John Kelly, Paul Treacy, Tommy Fitzharris, Gerry O'Neill

In the event of a draw, extra-time will be played.

Stád Semple, Durlas, Tiobraid Árann 5.00pm

Baile Gunnair (Port Láirge)

v

Seamróga Bhaile Héil (Cill Chainnigh)

AN RÉITEOIR: Colm Lyons (Corcaigh)

LINESMEN: James Owens (Loch Garman) (STANDBY REF),

Nathan Wall (Corcaigh)

SIDELINE OFFICIAL: Philip Kelly (Tiobraid Árann)

UMPIRES: Philip Mackey, Kieran Murphy, Ciarán Hanley, Johnny Barry

In the event of a draw, extra-time will be played.

AMHRÁN NA bhFIANN

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Atá faoi gheall ag Éirinn,
Buíon dár slua
Thar toinn do ráinig chugainn

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Sean-tír ar sinsear feasta
Ní fhágfar faoin tiorán
ná faoin tráil.
Anocht a théam sa
bhearna baíl

Le gean ar Ghaeil chun
báis nó saoil
Le gunna screách faoi
lámhach na bpléar,
Seo libh canaig
Amhrán na bhFiann.

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CÉ A THIOCFAIDH TRÍD GO DTÍ AN LÁ MÓR?

Is minic a deirtear gur Cluiche Leathceannais na hÉireann an ceann is measa ar fad le cailliúint, mar tá foireann tagtha thar a bheith gar don lá mór ach ag deireadh an lae, sciobtar uathu an deis. B'fhéidir gur measa fós é do chlubanna, mar don gnáth imreoir club, is annamh a bheadh seans aige rith amach ar dhromchla cáilliúil Pháirc an Chrócaigh. Beidh sé sin i ndán do dhá fhoireann inniu, agus don dá fhoireann eile, beidh mí le sceitimíní ar óg agus aosta sa bpobal áitiúil, ceantair bheaga tuaithe i gcás trí cinn díobh.

Ar dtús, tagann Bun Abhann Dalla as

Aontroim le Naomh Tomás, curaidhe na Gaillimhe. D'imir an dá fhoireann seo i gCluiche Ceannais na hÉireann le blianta beaga anuas, Naomh Tomás buacach i 2013 agus Bun Abhann Dalla buailte i 2016. Tá an-chur amach ag fir Aontroma ar chluichí leathceannais- seo an 11adh ceann acu, agus díreach bua amháin, i 2016. Níl ann ach an 3adh ceann ag fir na Gaillimhe, ceann buaite acu agus ceann caillte. Tá rud amháin cinnte- ní bheidh Naomh Tomás in aon bhealach bogásach (complacent) anseo. An uair dheireanach a chas foireann Ghaillimheach ar Bhun Abhann Dalla, chaill Na Sairséalaigh i 2016. Fiú nuair a chas

Naomh Tomás ar Dhún Lathaigh i 2013, bhí athimirt ann sular tháinig siad tríd. Más fíor, níl ceachtar foireann chomh maith is a bhíodar cúpla bliain ó shin. Beidh Naomh Tomás ag súil le taispeántais móra ó leithéidí Fintan Burke, David Burke, Conor Cooney, agus a réalt scórála i gCluiche Ceannais na Gaillimhe, Darragh Burke. Má imríonn Neil McManus, Donal McNaughton, agus Ryan McCambridge i mbarr maitheasa, beidh seans maith ag Bun Abhann Dalla ach is cailliúint dóibh é Aaron Griffin, a gortaíodh i gCluiche Ceannais Uladh. Sílim go mbeidh an lá lena Gaillimhigh anseo.

Stáid Semphe, ba cheart go mbeadh sár-choimhlint idir Na Seamrógas as Baile Héil agus na Déisigh, Baile Mhic Gonair. Tá sé ráite ag roinnt daoine gur trua nach e seo an cluiche ceannais ach níl sé sin ag tabhairt cothrom na féinne do Chondaetha na Gaillimhe ná Aontroma,

a bhfuil Corn Tommy Moore buaite acu 15 uair ar fad. Tá sean-taithí ag Na Seamrógas ar chluichí leathceannais- seo an 9ú ceann acu, agus níl ach ceann amháin caillte acu- 2009 in aghaidh Phort Omna. Cé go bhfuil lear mór Craobhacha Contae Phort Láirge buaite ag Baile Mhic Gonair, níl ach Cluiche leathceannais amháin bainte amach acu- chaill siad in aghaidh Dhroichead a' Chláirín sa mbliain 2002. Tá neart taithí ag fir Fergal Hartley, mar sin féin, réalta mar Stephen O'Keeffe, Barry Coughlan, Philip Mahony, Wayne Hutchinson, Pauric Mahony, Peter Hogan agus Brian O'Sullivan. Is mór an cúnadh dóibh go bhfuil David O'Sullivan agus Shane Walsh ar ais ar an bpainéal anois. Tá réalta ag fir Henry Shefflin chomh maith: Joey Holden, Michael Fennelly, TJ Reid, Colin Fennelly agus Adrian Mullen. D'fhéadfadh an cluiche seo casadh ar cén lantósach, Brian O'Sullivan ná Colin Fennelly, is mó a dhéanann damáiste. Tá se deacair buaiteoir a roghnú ach..... Na Seamrógas!



Conor Cooney

Paddy Burke

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worst

DROMCHLA CÁILLIÚIL

famed surface

I NDÁN

prospect

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Joey Holden

Barry Coughlan

BOGÁSACH

complacent

CEACHTAR

either

SÁR-CHOIMHLINT

great tussle

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HEAD-TO-HEAD

ST THOMAS' RUAIRÍ ÓG CUSHENDALL

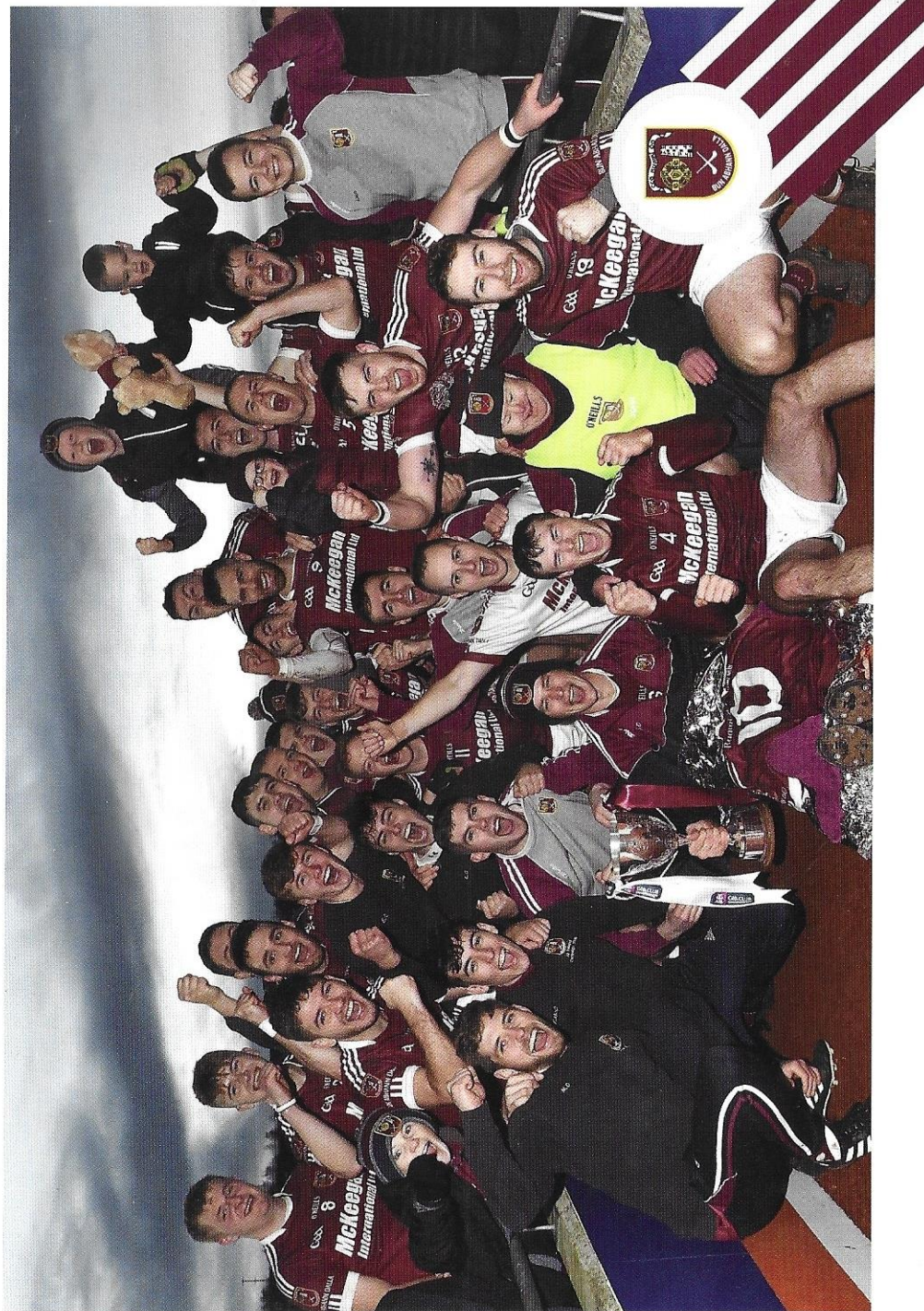
Despite just getting over the line against Sarsfields in the Galway semi-final, when Brendan Farrell's injury-time goal secured St Thomas' passage to the final, the critical moment in Thomas' season arrived late on in their previous game against Clarinbridge. After Evan Niland pushed the 'Bride ahead deep in injury-time, Kenneth Burke came off the bench to fire over a last-second equaliser from out near the sideline to force extra-time.

Despite those hard battles though, Thomas' were still showing signs of a well-oiled machine, having clocked 1-23 against Clarinbridge and 2-19 against Sarsfields. They didn't match that high-scoring rate in the final against Liam Mellows but Thomas' didn't need to as they cruised to a nine-point win.

This side is probably a more rounded team than the one which won the 2013 All-Ireland but they don't have the same depth of options off the bench of that side. Still, some of their younger players have developed into outstanding talents while the side is spearheaded by David Burke and Conor Cooney, two of Galway's best players.

Cushendall's All-Ireland semi-final history had always been defined by defeat until they finally smashed that losing trend three years ago against Sarsfields. The confidence and experience gained from that breakthrough will stand to Cushendall again now, especially with them facing Galway opposition again.

Cushendall are a big, strong, durable and physical outfit. Despite the sense that this side are reliant on Neil McManus for scores, especially placed balls, the Antrim side needed others to step up when McManus had off days from placed balls in the Antrim semi-final and final. Cushendall had seven different scorers from play in a hard-fought county final win against Loughgiel Shamrocks. Their semi-final against St John's was also decided after a tough encounter (which went to a replay) which left Cushendall fully battle-hardened for an Ulster final, when they beat Ballycran by eight points. That afternoon, McManus had a 100% conversion rate, from play and placed balls. Similar to the county final, Cushendall also kept a clean sheet that afternoon, which underlined how hard they can be to break down.



RUAIRÍ ÓG CUSHENDALL

Aontroim

Dathanna:
Marún is Bán



ST THOMAS'

Gaillimh

Dathanna:
Dearg is Gorm

FIR IONAIÐ

16. **Conchúbar Mac Alasdair**
Conor McAllister
17. **Seosamh Mac Gothraidh**
Joe McCurry
18. **Prionsias Mac Gothraidh**
Fred McCurry
19. **Stiofán Breathnach**
Stephen Walsh
20. **Conchúbar Mac Corsain**
Conor Carson
21. **Liam Ó Gileáin**
Liam Gillan
22. **Scot Breathnach**
Scott Walsh
23. **Marcas Mac Donnchaidh**
Mark Donaghy
24. **Dominic Ó Duilearga**
Dominic Delargy
25. **Néill Mac Cormaic**
Niall McCormick
26. **Cormac Mac Laifearthaigh**
Cormac McClafferty
27. **Eiméad Ó Laibheartaigh**
Emmett Laverty
28. **Éadbhard Mac Uilín**
Ed McQuillan
29. **Críostóir Mac Neachtain**
Christy McNaughton
30. **Conrad Mac Dónaill**
Conrad McDonnell

1

Eoin Ó Gileáin
Eoin Gillan

2

Daithí Ó Cearnaigh
David Kearney

3

Máirtín de Búrca
Martin Burke

4

Seán Ó Duilearga
Seán Delargy

2

Cian Ó Mathuna
Cian Mahoney

3

Cathal de Búrca
Cathal Burke

4

Daithí Mac Searraigh
David Sherry

5

Eoghan Mac Cathmhaoil
Eoghan Campbell

6

Arron Graffin
Arron Graffin

7

Pádraig de Búrca (C.)
Paddy Burke

5

Donall Ó Cuana
Donal Cooney

6

Seán Ó Cuana
Shane Cooney

7

Fontán de Búrca
Fintan Burke

8

Fearghal Mac Ambróis
Fergus McCambridge

9

Néill Mac Maghnais
Neil McManus

8

Séamus Ó Riagain
James Regan

9

Daithí de Búrca
David Burke

10

Donall Mac Neachtain
Donal McNaughton

11

Adhamhnán Mac Philip
Eunan McKillop

12

Riain Mac Ambróis
Ryan McCambridge

10

Darrach de Búrca
Darragh Burke

11

Éanna de Búrca
Éanna Burke

12

Bernard de Búrca
Bernard Burke

13

Pádraig Mac Giolla
Paddy McGill

14

Seán Mac Dhuibhsíthe
Seán McAfee

15

Alastair Ó Duilearga
Alex Delargy

13

Brendán Ó Fearail
Brendan Farrell

14

Conchúbar Ó Cuana (C.)
Conor Cooney

15

Cainneach de Búrca
Kenneth Burke

ROGHNÓIRÍ

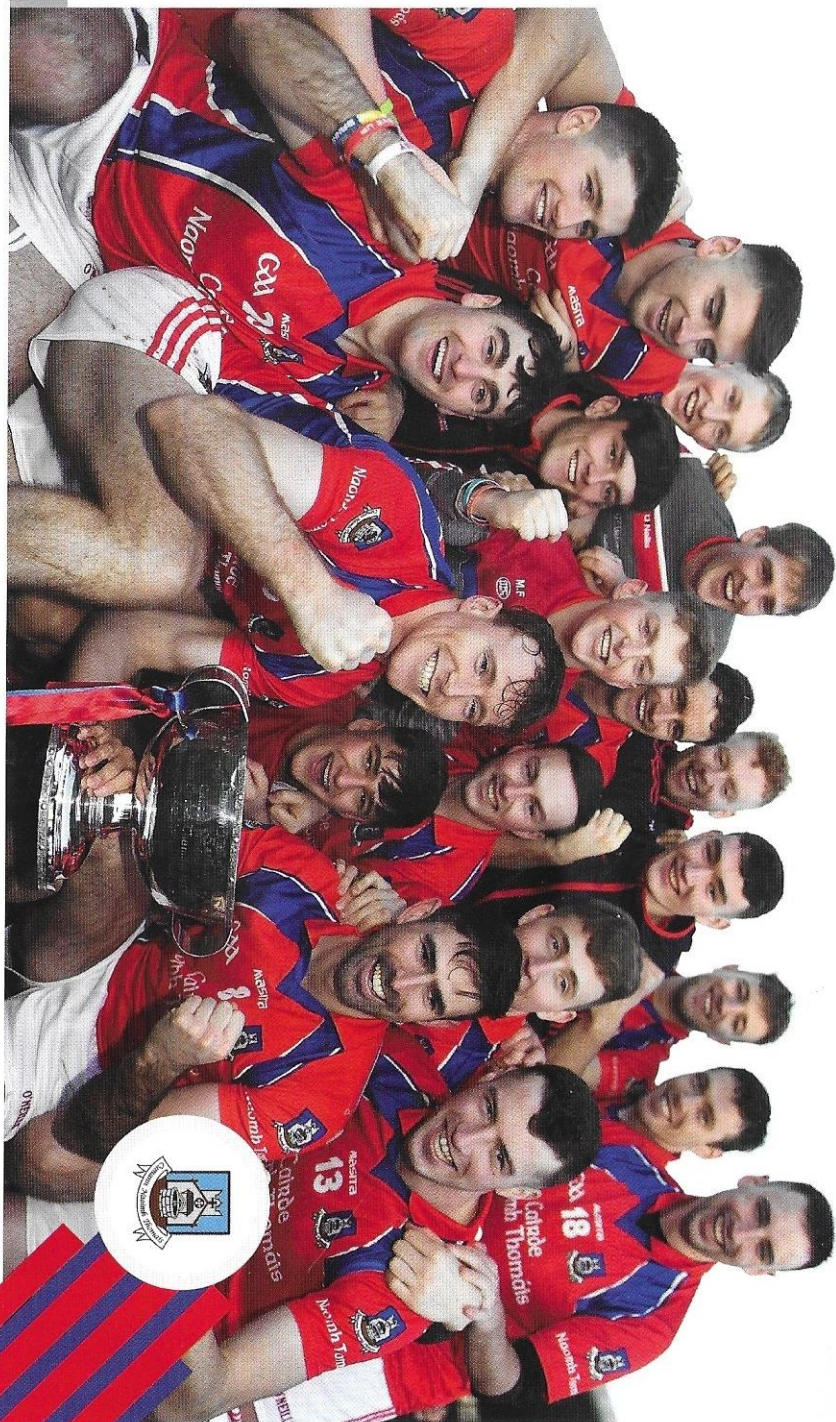
Eamon Gillan (Bainisteoir),
Ciarán Kearney, Hugh McManus,
Declan McKillop, Joe Passmore,
Nicky Condon

FIR IONAIÐ

16. **Conchúbar Ó hAartaigh**
Conor Haverty
17. **Damien Mag Fhloinn**
Damien McGlynn
18. **Cian Ó Ceallaigh**
Cian Kelly
19. **Marcus Mac Cathmhaoil**
Mark Caulfield
20. **Damien Ó Finneachta**
Damien Finnerty
21. **Seán Ó Scathail**
Seán Skehill
22. **Coilín Ó Fallúin**
Colin Fallon
23. **Seán Ó hAartaigh**
Jack Haverty
24. **Aidrean Mac Searraigh**
Adrian Sherry
25. **Seán Ó Fallúin**
Seán Fallon
26. **Gearóid Ó Maoileáin**
Gary Moylan
27. **Seosamh Mac Cathmhaoil**
Joe Caulfield
28. **Mícheál Ó Fallúin**
Michael Fallon
29. **Iasán Ó Niallúin**
Jason Niland
30. **Dara Mac Cormacáin**
Dara Cormican

ROGHNÓIRÍ

Kevin Lally (Bainisteoir),
TJ Ryan, Kenneth Larkin,
Claude Geoghegan



RUAIRÍ ÓG CUSHENDALL

ULSTER CAMPAIGN

Defeated Ballycran (Down) 1-15 to 0-10

Top Scorer: Neil McManus

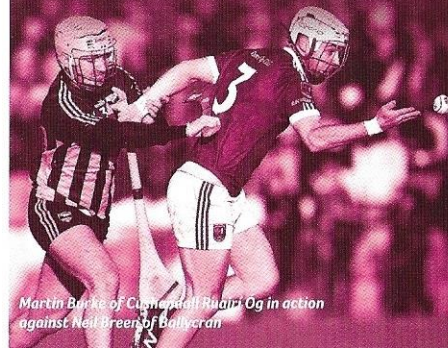
LAST ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

2016

Ruairí Óg Cushendall 3-12 Sarsfields 1-6

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL RECORD:

Won 1, Lost 9



Martin Burke of Cushendall Ruairí Óg in action against Neil Green of Ballycran

ST THOMAS'

GALWAY CAMPAIGN

Defeated Kilnadeema-Leitrim 1-17 to 0-14

Drew with Tommy Larkins 0-17 to 2-11

Defeated Craughwell 2-21 to 3-13

Defeated Liam Mellows 0-23 to 0-14

Defeated Castlegar 1-19 to 0-13

Defeated Clarinbridge 1-23 to 2-19

Defeated Sarsfields 2-19 to 0-20

Defeated Liam Mellows 2-13 to 0-10

Top Scorer: Darragh Burke

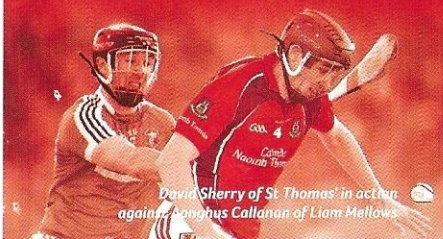
LAST ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

2017

Ballyea 1-19 St Thomas' 2-14

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL RECORD

Won 1, Lost 1



David Sherry of St Thomas' in action against Aonghus Callanan of Liam Mellows

Extra panel member not on the St Thomas' teamsheet: Kenneth Murray

AN RÉITEOIR

PAUD O'DWYER (CEATHARLACH)



Twelve months ago the Palatine clubman refereed the Cuala v Liam Mellows AIB Club semi-final at Semple Stadium and when Cuala took on Na Piarsaigh in the final replay at O'Moore Park the following month, the Barrowside official was again the man in the middle. In between those two fixtures were three matches in the Allianz League at Ennis, Thurles and Tullamore. Two Munster Championship outings followed before O'Dwyer refereed what many view as the match of the year; the Cork-Limerick All-Ireland semi-final. Last month he refereed the Dublin-Galway Walsh Cup tie at today's venue.

Five days before the Leinster club final in November, TJ Reid was sipping tea in the kitchen of his home in Ballyhale when he glanced up at the framed photograph of the 2015 All-Ireland winning club team. Scanning the faces, Reid quickly did the maths, noting how 16 of that squad are no longer around, eight of whom featured in that 2015 All-Ireland final.

Losing that volume of players would decimate most rural clubs but Ballyhale Shamrocks are no ordinary club. Three years without a county title is considered a famine but Ballyhale hadn't exactly gone away; they lost a county final and two semi-finals in those three seasons. Players were slipping away but, all the while, a new generation was coming.

The seasons keep turning, and Ballyhale keep growing and evolving; they were minor champions in 2016, and U21 champions in 2017. Many of those players are part of the current squad which won a ninth Leinster title in November. Already top of the roll of honour, Ballyhale are now chasing a seventh All-Ireland club title.

The highest expectations and standards imaginable are the Shamrocks' only bottom line. They are unique in how they keep evolving but one of the most robust trends of the club championship is how the big clubs keep coming back. Ballygunner may be appearing in a first All-Ireland semi-final in 17 years but they have dominated the Waterford championship over the last two and a half decades and have contested five more Munster club finals since their maiden provincial breakthrough in 2001. St Thomas' may have only

TJ Reid, Ballyhale Shamrocks captain in 2015 lifts the Tommy Moore Cup in Croke Park

KEEP
COMING
BACK

Eunan McKillop, Alex Delargy and brother Seán, Cushendall Ruairi Óg, celebrate after the Ulster Final victory over Ballycran



won their first county title in 2012 but this is their third All-Ireland semi-final appearance in seven years. Ruairi Óg Cushendall are appearing in their 11th All-Ireland semi-final today.

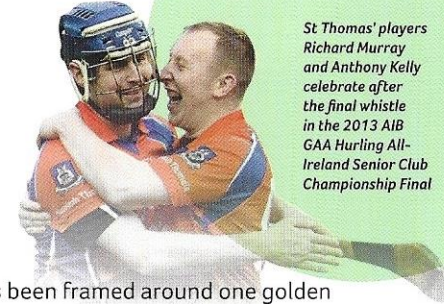
Their location in Waterford city will always ensure big numbers for Ballygunner. Cushendall is a village but it's hinterland and strategic location in north Antrim, combined with its massive hurling tradition, consistently provides the club with a bountiful supply of players.

Ballyhale went 15 years without a county title between 1991-2006 but the generation game continues to supply a rich crop of players to the Shamrocks. It's only a club like Ballyhale that could lose an icon like Henry Shefflin and then produce Adrian Mullen, one of the brightest young talents in Kilkenny. Adrian and Darren Mullen are first cousins of Michael and Colin Fennelly. Evan Shefflin and Brian Cody are nephews of Henry Shefflin.

The GAA has always been defined by families, where bloodlines flow from one generation to the next, passing on traditions and talent like heirlooms. Ballyhale though, have the richest gene pool in the country, borrowing from a genetic inheritance like no other club.

Most of the top clubs who keep coming back are stitched together by generational sinews but the current golden age for St Thomas'

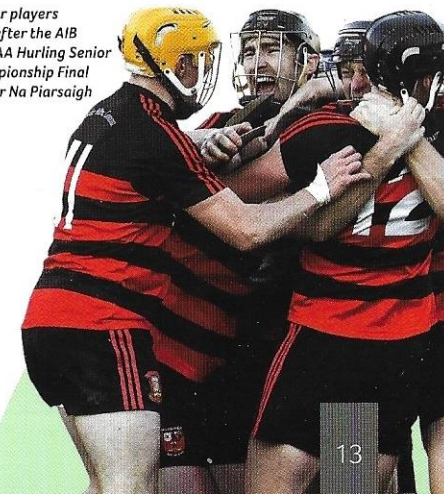
St Thomas' players Richard Murray and Anthony Kelly celebrate after the final whistle in the 2013 AIB GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Club Championship Final



has been framed around one golden generation. Pulling from around 200 houses in a small area in south Galway, the club has profited from a gifted batch of players, families of hurlers and lifelong friends, blessed by a freakish cycle of nature. The current team is dominated by two families, the Burkes and Cooneys, who make up ten of the starting team (two sets of brothers, along with two cousins).

St Thomas' never had a tradition of success but their journey to the 2013 All-Ireland club title effectively began 11 years earlier when an U12 team won a Galway B title. When St Thomas' won that 2013 All-Ireland, 25 of their 33-man squad was under 23. St Thomas' are trying to make the most of this golden generation now because, like many small clubs, it often takes a generation or more for the good times to roll again when the good times finally end. Yet St Thomas' have established a solid and successful tradition now. And once that base and culture is set down, and grown and maintained from tilling the underage soil, it makes it easier to keep coming back.

Ballygunner players celebrate after the AIB Munster GAA Hurling Senior Club Championship Final victory over Na Piarsaigh



BALLYGUNNER

MUNSTER CAMPAIGN

Defeated Midleton (Cork) 1-18 to 2-13
 Defeated Ballyea (Clare) 2-26 to 2-23
 Defeated Na Piarasaigh (Limerick) 2-14 to 2-8

Top Scorer: Pauric Mahony

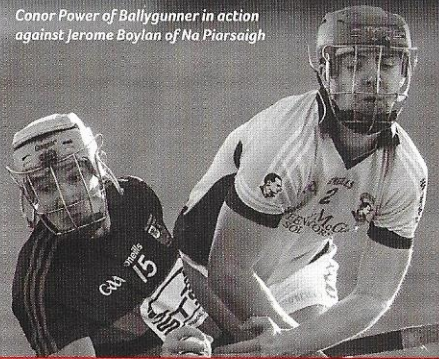
LAST ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

2002
 Clarinbridge 1-15 Ballygunner 2-8

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL RECORD

Won 0, Lost 1

Conor Power of Ballygunner in action against Jerome Boylan of Na Piarasaigh



Extra panel members not on the Ballygunner teamsheet: David Walsh, Dessie Hutchinson, Harry Ruddle Redmond, Darragh Hogan, Tom Mullally, Conor O'Sullivan, Billy O'Sullivan

BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS

LEINSTER CAMPAIGN

Defeated Naomh Éanna (Wexford) 6-21 to 4-11
 Defeated Ballyboden St Enda's (Dublin) 2-21 to 0-11

Top Scorer: Colin Fennelly

LAST ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL

2015
 Ballyhale Shamrocks 2-17 Gort 1-14

ALL-IRELAND SEMI-FINAL RECORD

Won 7, Lost 1



Eoin Cody of Ballyhale Shamrocks in action against Luke Corcoran, left, and David O'Connor of Ballyboden St Enda's

Extra panel members not on the Ballyhale Shamrocks teamsheet: Adam Brenner, Martin Davis, Mark Phelan, Jason Devereux, Eoin Knox, Enda Kenneally, Dylan Aylward, Ronan Hayes

AN RÉITEOIR

COLM LYONS (CORCAIGH)

The Nemo Rangers clubman has been a member of the inter-county panel since 2011 and has already been on duty at Semple Stadium as he was in charge of the Tipperary-Clare Allianz League tie at the venue a couple of weeks ago. On St Patrick's Day last year the Leaside whistler refereed the senior club final while his most recent penultimate round assignment in the AIB sponsored competition was in 2017 when Cuala and Slaughtneil met at the Athletic Grounds. The 40-year-old was also in action a couple of times in the 2018 senior championship at Innovate Wexford Park and Parnell Park.



BALLYGUNNER



Port Láirge

Dathanna:

Dearg is Dubh

FIR IONAIÐ

16. Pádraig Mac Dhabhóc
Paddy Cooke

17. Barra Ó Súilleabhán
Barry O'Sullivan

18. SS Mac Úistín
JJ Hutchinson

19. Conchúr Ó Síochán
Conor Sheahan

20. Stiofán de Paor
Stephen Power

21. Barra de Paor
Barry Power

22. Tadhg Ó Foghlú
Tadhg Foley

23. Marc Ó Maolalaidh
Mark Mullally

24. Seán Ó Cinnéide
Shane O'Kennedy

25. Seán Breathnach
Shane Walsh

26. Aonas Ó Floinn
Gus Flynn

27. Nioclás Ó Broin
Nick Byrne

28. Darragh Ó Caoimh
Darragh O'Keefe

29. Daithí Ó Dásan
David Dawson

30. Daithí Ó Súilleabhán
David O'Sullivan

ROGHNÓIRÍ

Fergal Hartley (Bainisteoir)
David Franks, Rory O'Sullivan,
Pádraigh Connolly

1

Stiofán Ó Caoimh (J.C.)

Stephen
O'Keefe

2

Éamann Ó hÉideán

Eddie
Hayden

3

Barra Ó Cochláin

Barry
Coughlin

4

Eoin Ó Cionnaith

Ian
Kenny

5

Pilib Ó Mathúna

Philip
Mahony

6

Wayne Mac Úistín

Wayne
Hutchinson

7

Liam Ó Caoimh

Billy
O'Keefe

8

Earaile Barún

Harley
Barnes

9

Seán Ó Súilleabhán (J.C.)

Shane
O'Sullivan

10

Pauric Ó Mathúna

Pauric
Mahony

11

Peadar Ó hÓgáin

Peter
Hogan

12

Mícheál Ó Mathúna

Mikey
Mahony

13

Tadhg Ó Súilleabhán

Tim
O'Sullivan

14

Briain Ó Súilleabhán

Brian
O'Sullivan

15

Conchúr de Paor

Conor
Power



BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS

Cill Chainnigh

Dathanna:

Glas is Bán

FIR IONAIÐ

16. Séamas Ó Conghaile
James Connolly

17. Caoimhín Ó Maoláin
Kevin Mullen

18. Conchúbhar Ó Faoláin
Conor Phelan

19. Gabhán de Buitléir
Gavin Butler

20. Roibeard Aighleart
Bob Aylward

21. Eoghan Aighleart
Eugene Aylward

22. Pádraig Ó Maoláin
Patrick Mullen

23. Marc Aighleart
Mark Aylward

24. Seosamh Ó Cuidithe
Joseph Cuddihy

25. Darrach Ó Corcráin
Darragh Corcoran

26. Eoin Ó Cionnfhalaigh
Eoin Kenneally

27. Pádraig Ó hEathirín
Patrick Hearne

28. Pádraig Ó Dúghaill
Patrick Doyle

29. Caoimhín Ó Fionnalaigh
Kevin Fennelly

30. Marcas Mac Gormáin
Mark Gorman

ROGHNÓIRÍ

Henry Shefflin (Bainisteoir),
Richie O'Neill, Patrick Phelan

1

Dean Masún

Dean
Mason

2

Dáire Ó Maoláin

Darren
Mullen

3

Seosamh Ó Ultáin

Joseph
Holden

4

Briain de Buitléir

Brian
Butler

5

Éimhín Shefflin

Evan
Shefflin

6

Mícheál Ó Fionnalaigh (C.)

Michael
Fennelly

7

Risteard Ó Maoildeirg

Richie
Reid

8

Rónán Ó Corcráin

Ronan
Corcoran

9

Conchúbhar Breathnach

Conor
Walsh

10

Briain Mac Óda

Brian
Cody

11

TS Ó Riada

TJ
Reid

12

Adrian Ó Maoláin

Adrian
Mullen

13

Eoin Ó Maoildeirg

Eoin
Reid

14

Coilin Ó Fionnalaigh

Colin
Fennelly

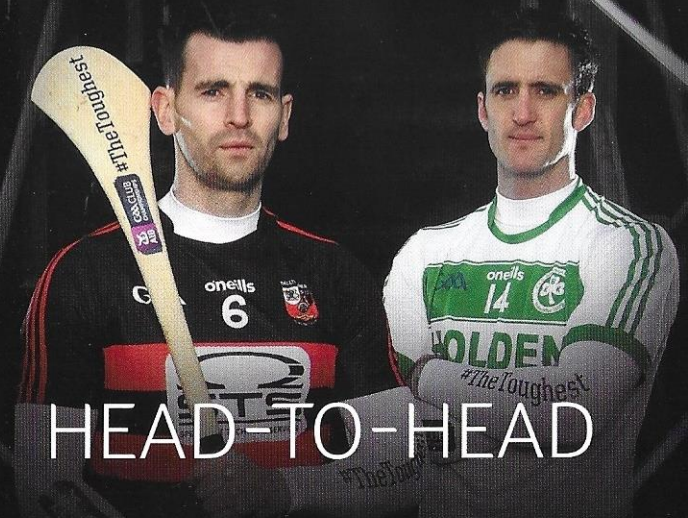
15

Eoin Mac Oda

Eoin
Cody



By Christy O'Connor



HEAD-TO-HEAD

BALLYGUNNER

At the end of his acceptance speech after the Munster final in November, Ballygunner captain Shane O'Sullivan said: "We're not finished yet." After their display that afternoon, Ballygunner were fully entitled to believe that a first All-Ireland title was a very realistic target.

Apart from having beaten a Na Piarsaigh side hotly fancied to win the All-Ireland, the most impressive aspect of the win was how Ballygunner arrested the trend of a game that looked to be going away from them in the first half. As the game progressed, Na Piarsaigh's inter-county forwards were swallowed up and the game was played on Ballygunner's terms.

Ballygunner have massive leadership from their current and former Waterford players, especially Pauric and Philip Mahony, Stephen O'Keeffe, Barry Coughlan and Shane O'Sullivan, but this team is loaded with experience in the club championship after having had such a dominant grip on Waterford this decade. Ballygunner are organised, slick and cohesive, qualities they showed against Na Piarsaigh, and which they'll be confident of producing again today.

BALLYHALE SHAMROCKS

Twenty-one minutes into November's Ballyhale-Ballyboden Leinster final, a Shane Durkin point levelled the match at 0-7 to 1-4. Ballyboden had been really efficient, converting seven of eight scoring chances but the writing still looked on the wall.

Ballyhale created a colossal 25 scoring chances in that opening 30 minutes. They still couldn't put Ballyboden away but the Shamrocks soon ignited into assassin mode. And went for the kill.

Racking teams with big scores has been their modus operandi all season. In their first two games in Kilkenny, the Shamrocks posted tallies of 3-22 and 1-24. Only hitting 1-16 in the semi-final scare against Erin's Own was a big wake-up call and Ballyhale have been shooting the lights out since.

They put up 2-20 in the county final against Bennettsbridge before notching 6-21 against Naomh Éanna. They eventually hit Ballyboden for 2-21. And matching that kind of firepower is going to be a big ask for Ballygunner.



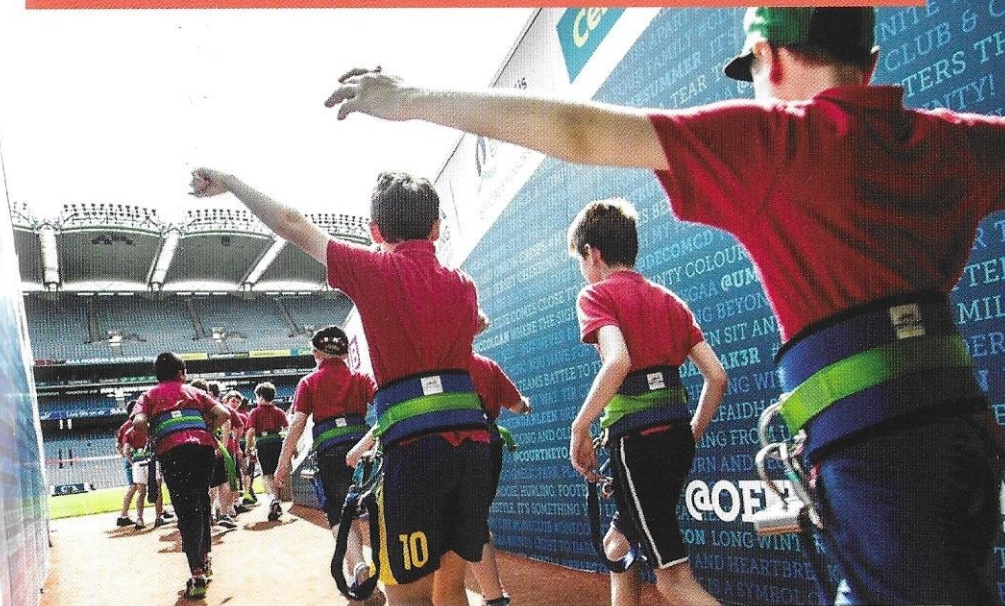
STS are Proud to be Ballygunner Hurling Club's Main Sponsors. Best of Luck to the Senior Team in the All-Ireland Semi-Final from Everyone at STS!



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STADIUM SAFETY REGULATIONS

Supporters are asked to respect the fact that they are entering and leaving the stadium through residential areas

- All persons entering this ground are admitted only subject to the following Ground Regulations and to the Rules and Regulations of the Gaelic Athletic Association. Entry to the ground shall be deemed to constitute unqualified acceptance of all these Rules and Regulations.
- Fireworks, smoke canisters, bottles, glass, cans, flags, banners, poles and other similar articles or canisters including anything which could or might be used as a weapon, are not permitted within the ground and any person in possession of such an article or container may be refused entry or ejected from the ground.
- Spectators are not permitted to bring alcohol into the ground/area.
- The climbing of walls, stands or other buildings in the ground is forbidden.
- Excessive noise such as that from the use of radio sets and behaviour likely to cause confusion or nuisance of any kind including foul or abusive language is not permitted in any part of the ground.
- Under no circumstances is it permitted to throw any object onto the pitch.
- Unauthorised persons are not permitted to enter onto the field of play and may be ejected from the ground.
- In general, The Ground Management reserves the right of admission.
- The Ground Management reserves the right to refuse admission or to eject any person who refuses to be searched by a member of An Garda Síochána.
- Any person who remains in a gangway may be ejected.
- The GAA event promoters reserves the right for its servants or agents to remove from the ground any person who does not comply with the ground regulations or whose presence on the ground could reasonably be construed as constituting a source of danger, nuisance or annoyance to other spectators.
- Smoking is forbidden in enclosed areas of stadium.
- Security Cameras are in operation throughout the stadium.



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