



HURLING YEARBOOK 2020



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SOCIAL DISTANCING

Many of the photos and images in this Yearbook were taken prior to the introduction of Social Distancing Requirements or were taken over the course of 2020 in training and match scenarios outside of the lockdown periods where contact was permitted or such Social Distancing Requirements did not apply. At all times all teams and personnel have conducted their activities in compliance with health and Covid 19 Guidelines.

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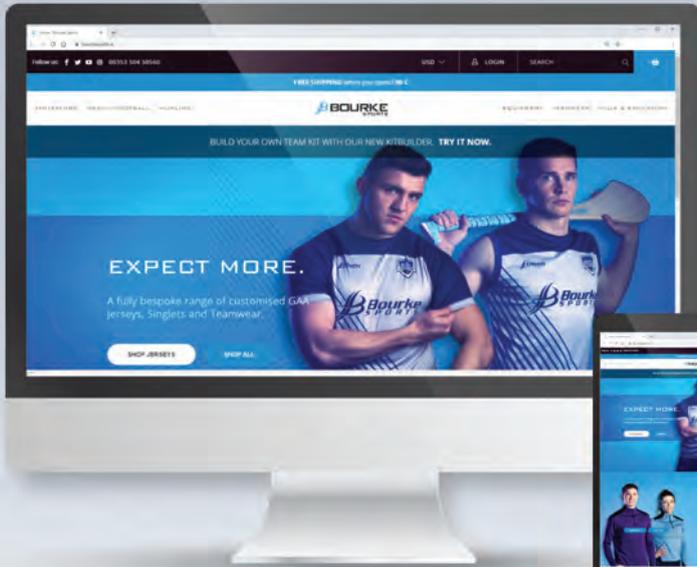
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KILMACUD CROKES HURLING CHAIRPERSONS MESSAGE

Peter Walsh

Chairperson
Kilmacud Crokes Hurling



A chomh-bhaill, a lucht tacaíochta agus a chairde uile - Teaghlach Iománaíochta Chill Mochuda na Crócaigh,

It is certain that we will never forget the year of 2020. So many challenges, so many constraints, so many changes but through all of the difficulties and differences, Hurling continued in Kilmacud Crokes.

The nursery thrived, under age training continued, first online and then in the now famous pods. The games returned, the smiles returned, the cheers, jeers and some tears were part of our lives once again. And through events like Coast for Crokes and the October Scavenger Hunt the Club rose and came together. We didn't have our All Ireland Sevens, or our Punchestown Race Day.

But the teams trained, championships were played and our game was once again an outlet and beacon in what has been at times a dark confining year.

In place of our All Ireland Sevens Programme we have put together this Yearbook that contains some great articles and contributions from the brightest, bravest and best of the Hurling and GAA Community. I'd like to thank each and every one of them for setting aside time and making the effort to provide an article or piece. Both thoughtful and thought provoking. Some quality end of year reads.

I'd like to thank the Yearbook Editorial team led by the Editor and Driver in Chief, Jim Lyng. A man of many talents and with many demands on his time but along with his team of Eadaoin Herlihy, Paul Collins, Dáire Brennan and Steven Dagg they have put together a super publication. Many Thanks to our Commercial work group of Mark Lohan, Fiona Hayes, Frank Donnelly, Brian

Geraghty and Elaine Downey and all those who sourced and secured advertising support.

We have had very generous support from our advertisers who were ready and willing to answer the call. A great response that makes a real difference to our plans and capacity for 2021. Thank You.

I'd like to acknowledge the professional service and support from Glenn and the team in Kilmartin's typesetting and to thank John O'Loughlin of Persona for the generous sponsorship of the printing.

I am delighted to see the wonderful images recording the years activities being showcased in the Yearbook. The matches, the trips, the training and the pandemic possibilities all shining through. These montages show what can be done and what was done, against all odds, by our wonderful hurling community.

I hope that you all get a chance to enjoy this yearbook and that we keep it as a memory of the bright and satisfying days that should be the bits of 2020 that we retain and remember.

I rith na bliana atá thart agus i measc na ndeacrachtaí agus na n-ímní bhí cairdeas, pobal agus iománaíocht againn. Go maire muid na cuimhní agus na híomhánna dearfacha seo. "Is ar scáth a chéile a mhairimid" Na Crócaigh Abú!!

Many Thanks to everyone involved, and a Safe and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Peter Walsh
Chairperson - Kilmacud Crokes Hurling



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KILMACUD CROKES CLUB CHAIRPERSONS FÁILTE

Kevin Foley

Chairperson
Kilmacud Crokes GAA Club



One of the hallmarks of successful organisations is their ability to adapt and change to meet new challenges. This year of 2020 has certainly given us all an opportunity to bring out the adaptability gene in ourselves.

Our hurling section has, over many years, been delivering a first-class programme of coaching and skills development as well as fielding more teams than many counties. Those years have produced success in the form of championships and leagues but most importantly in fostering a love of our great game in Stillorgan and surrounding areas.

This year has put a whole new set of obstacles in front of all sections of our Club. The capacity on the part of our Hurling Section to meet those obstacles and to adapt and change to produce success is exemplified by the production of this yearbook. No - we can't play games this month; no - we can't host an All-Ireland Hurling Sevens this year, but yes – through this yearbook - we can invent new and great ways advance the game of Hurling in our community.

I want to thank our Hurling Committee under the leadership of Peter Walsh. Peter and his committee put so much work into this Club year in and year out; and once again, with this

yearbook, they have taken up the challenge to find new ways to succeed in a very strange environment.

This yearbook will be a great souvenir of our Club in a crazy year – well done to all involved and thank you on behalf of all of the membership of the Club for providing this bright spark in an occasionally challenging period.

Thanks too to the great sponsors and supporters who have placed advertisements in the yearbook and who, in doing so, have given concrete expression to the support they have for the game of Hurling. You know that the game is in good hands in Stillorgan!

We look forward to getting onto the field of play very soon and doing what we do best – providing the opportunity for our members to fulfil their sporting potential playing the great game. As a Club we are about to carry out a long awaited re-development of Pairc de Burca which will transform that great arena into a modern flood-lit platform for our great games. The future looks bright.

Kevin Foley
Chairperson - Kilmacud Crokes GAA Club





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A chairde,

I would like to congratulate Kilmacud Crokes on what has clearly been a very active and enjoyable year for them on the Hurling field.

2020 has been an incredibly difficult and challenging year for all units of the association so it is nice for the club to finish on a 'virtual high-point' with the remote publication of this yearbook on the eve of a unique All Ireland Hurling Final.

In any ordinary year I would be hoping to join you in Glenalbyn for the All Ireland Sevens so it is very nice to be able to be involved with your excellent publication. My congratulations to all who contributed articles and content to the book.

I would like to pay credit to all who promoted our games in the club and community across the year. And I would like to thank the sponsors and advertisers for their support of the club. This is really appreciated this year.

And finally I would like to wish all players, officials, parents and supporters involved in Kilmacud Crokes Hurling the safest and happiest of Christmases.

I wish you all every success.

Go n-éiri go geall libh.

Is mise, le meas,

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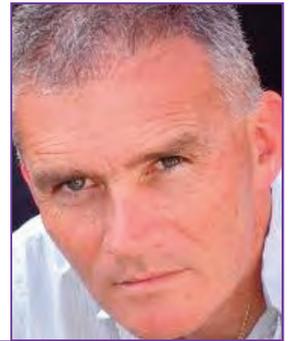
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2020 - A REVOLUTION YEAR IN HURLING?

Vincent Hogan

Chief Sports Feature Writer, Irish Independent



Jack Charlton was never quite sure what to make of hurling, observing flatly once “I’m always suspicious of games where you’re the only ones that play it.”

A World Cup winner in the planet’s most popular sport, Big Jack was probably entitled to his insinuation of us being a deeply insular tribe. After all, even our gaelic football brethren see only delusional snobbery in how we frame this game we love. The idea of hurling people being curators of some kind of precious art is, let’s face it, hardly something we discourage. There’s a snobbishness written into our DNA that tends to get worn as a badge of pride.

until the world of sport itself was silenced initially, then slowly, painstakingly re-aligned by the new ‘normal’ of living in the midst of a global pandemic.

In August, it was very much a moot point if the Intercounty Championship would happen in 2020.

Fans of the game have relished the fact that Championship has proceeded and we will, indeed, crown winter champions in a unique calendar re-adjustment, with a novel All-Ireland final pencilled in for December 13.

Back in August a suspicion that all of the good intention hung on the flimsiest of hinges was, frankly, unavoidable.

Covid 19 has been a shock to the senses in its reminder of how powerless we can feel when things broadly taken for granted suddenly slip out of our reach.



2003: DJ Carey giving Jack Charlton instructions on how to hold a hurley. Picture Credit: Ray McManus/Sportsfile.

But you know that line ‘Just because you’re paranoid, doesn’t mean they’re not out to get you?’ Well I’d adjust that double-negative to ‘Just because we’re a bit self-satisfied about the game we love doesn’t mean we’re not entitled to be.’

Ordinarily, the Hurling Sevens would be well over by now, the destination of the Liam MacCarthy Cup resolved for another year. August 16 was the date set for this year’s All-Ireland final



2020: Galway manager Shane O'Neill during the Leinster GAA Hurling Senior Championship Semi-Final match between Galway and Wexford at Croke Park in Dublin. Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile.





2020: Cork manager Kieran Kingston and Dublin Manager Mattie Kenny after the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship Qualifier Round 1 match between Dublin and Cork at Semple Stadium in Thurles, Tipperary. Photo by: Ray McManus/Sportsfile.

Guilty secret?

To begin with, I actually welcomed lockdown. After 40 years of spending almost every summer Sunday in a GAA press-box, the opportunity to make alternative plans felt a refreshing luxury.

Sportswriters, understandably, evince little sympathy whenever grumbling about the family sacrifices made in service to chronicling the great moments in sport. In time, you come to understand the kind of ground you're on then suggesting the profession mightn't exactly be, well, a scratch-card win.

An old NFL quarter-back, Norm Van Brocklin - asked once about the nature of surgery he'd just undergone – famously replied “It was a brain transplant. I got a sportswriter’s brain, so I could be sure I had one that hadn’t been used!”

So, trust me, we get it. What we do isn't exactly splitting the atom.

But in the modern era of county team managements being more secretive than nuclear engineers and in an age of players being discouraged from anything but the most vacuous, mind-numbingly superficial, spirit-draining interaction with media, it honestly wasn't the worst thing to find myself at home on Sundays through May, June and much of July.

But slowly, I have to admit, the novelty began wearing thin. With the slow recommencement of GAA activity, just standing on the line for junior hurling matches got me brooding about just how special a summer Championship 2020 looked certain to give us.

One of my favourite sports books is Denis Walsh's 'Hurling – The Revolution Years', a wonderfully evocative trawl back through the 90s when the game, it seemed, was rolling through the most democratic era in its history.

Offaly and Clare both were crowned All-Ireland champions twice and Wexford once in that decade, while Limerick and Galway made two September finals each and Waterford had begun building towards a decade that would deliver three senior Munster titles in the Noughties.

In other words, the traditional oligarchs, Kilkenny, Tipperary and Cork had no stranglehold on the game.

It felt a wonderfully brazen, almost anarchic time then, the weight of history finally lifted from habitually oppressed shoulders. And yet, I would respectfully suggest that the 2020 championship we had building, pre-Covid, carried an even broader range of possibility.



2019: Enda Rowland of Laois celebrates after scoring a free during the GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Championship preliminary round quarter-final match between Laois and Dublin at O'Moore Park in Portlaoise, Laois. Photo by Sam Barnes/Sportsfile.



Because today we have a hurling landscape that no longer depends on the old bluebloods being weak for others to have a prayer in the pursuit of Liam Mac Carthy.

Put it this way, Tipp and Kilkenny may have contested last year's final and Cork might have won two of the last three Munster titles, but back in August it was clear that the bookies considered the current landscape harder to call than, perhaps, ever before.

Tipp and Limerick were pretty much inseparable as joint All-Ireland favourites at around 3/1; but Kilkenny, Galway and Cork are tangled together just one step down, their odds pretty much strapped down in the 5/1, 13/2 range. After that? Wexford, Clare and Waterford were all being quoted in or around the 12/1 mark. Hardly no-hopers.

You've to dip down to the ninth team, Dublin at about 33/1, before you're really rambling in the direction of long-shots. The view in August was that Limerick will be, should be the team to beat.

Having won both the League and Munster Championship, they got blind-sided in last year's All-Ireland semi-final by a Kilkenny team utterly faithful to the Brian Cody template of calm heads knitted to furious intensity. Limerick were caught in the stalls, yet only a dubious call cost them the likelihood of a draw and the opportunity of a second chance.

And so they watched a Tipp team, they'd had twelve points to spare over in the Munster final, come storming through to win hurling's biggest prize. Just imagine the emotions of John Kiely, Paul Kinnerk and their charges while witnessing Tipp turn on the style?

Then just think of what must have been Liam Sheedy's determination to finally, decisively draw an end to the notion that the Premier County can't do back-to-backs (they haven't successfully defended a senior All-Ireland since '65). Think too of Cody in Kilkenny, Davy Fitz in Wexford and the new managers in Galway (Shane O'Neill), Cork (Kieran Kingston), Waterford (Liam Cahill) and Clare (Brian Lohan).

Think of Mattie Kenny, the Dubs and how urgently they'll feel they owe themselves a redemption song. Think of Eddie Brennan and Niall Corcoran, getting a real song out of Laois. Has hurling ever looked more perfectly pitched to deliver a succession of masterpieces?

The game's upper classes are all thriving now, but they know too that just about every game they play carries a very real threat of defeat. Nobody can sit comfortably or with a sliver of complacency.

Even Big Jack would have seen the beauty in that.



2019: Mark Fanning of Wexford during the Leinster GAA Hurling Senior Championship Round 5 match between Wexford and Kilkenny at Innovate Wexford Park in Wexford. Photo by Piaras Ó Mídheach/Sportsfile.



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AWAKENING THE SLEEPING GIANT THAT IS HURLING

Liam Sheedy & Shane Brophy

Liam Sheedy was in conversation with Shane Brophy, sports editor at the *Nenagh Guardian*



Hurling is Ireland's national game. There is no other field sport life it in the world. However, unlike countries such as Australia where it's indigenous sport Aussie Rules is the number one game, that can't be said for hurling here.

Hurling is strong in some counties more than others, where some children don't get the opportunity to play the game at all, not even competing against the very best for the Liam MacCarthy Cup.

That is why the strong must help the weak and even during this second term as Tipperary senior hurling manager, Liam Sheedy can't help but think how much better the game could be if more players were exposed to hurling.

"There are ten teams competing for the Liam MacCarthy Cup and there are tiers right down to the Lory Meagher Cup but ultimately, you are not really seeing teams stepping up from a lower division," he said.



2014: Portumna's Niall Hayes, left, Damien Hayes, centre, and Ronan Hayes, right, celebrate with the cup after the game. AIB GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Club Championship Final, Mount Leinster Rangers, Carlow v Portumna. Photo by Ray McManus/Sportsfile.

"There's no real progress, if anything it's the opposite as Offaly have slipped into the Christy Ring, as well as a number of other teams that would have operated at a higher level previously."

"We have not seen any county really excelling, bar Dublin who have done very well but a significant investment went in there to make that happen and they have made progress because they are using their volumes very well and are much better on the player retention side.

"I always felt there is the potential to get a sixteen team Liam MacCarthy Cup with the Antrim's, Westmeath's, Carlow, and some others not that far away. You look at the number of clubs Carlow are picking from and then see the penetration Antrim could have in Belfast. In the main they are still coming from the glens but there are some very strong clubs in the city.

"Kildare is one that is ripe for development because it has the population. Naas for a long number of years have done really well and were able to hold their own with clubs in Kilkenny but the challenge is how do you make it more sustainable for them. You need more than just Naas coming to the table. "I would see Kildare, outside of Antrim, as being the big real potentials because they have a lot of people living there from hurling strongholds and they have the numbers."

Player Retention

A recent GAA report highlighted the fact that sixty percent of players who are start hurling at the age of twelve are not playing by the time they are 21. Not only are they a loss on the field, they are also missed off it, according to Liam. "You have to ask yourself are we really doing enough to give as many kids as possible to play the game of hurling," he added. "They never get to hold a hurley in their hand because technically it is much harder to play and the coaching of it is much more difficult than Gaelic football. "We are losing 60 percent of our talent and where I see that really being problem is they are the people who would be very involved in the club so you could retain them in the club as selectors, administrators.

"You have to look at clubs like Corofin where it is much more important for them to understand the culture of the club and





what it means to be a part of it and retention is what they focus on and look at where they find themselves now. “You have to have your structures right all the way through. Look at the likes of Portumna who are four time All Ireland champions in the last fifteen years, now they are gone back to senior ‘B’ in Galway, obviously while they were doing really well the crop coming through behind wasn’t focused on and there has to be a constant stream of players coming and it nearly has to be run by a business.

Managing Success

Success at underage level can be as much of a curse for a club as it is to their future development if players don’t know how to cope with it and continue to have that hunger as they get older.

For Liam Sheedy, measuring a club’s success is about how many of those under 21’s they still have playing at adult level, rather than what a club has won in a particular year.



Corofin supporters. Photo by Stephen McCarthy/Sportsfile.

“For the game’s development coaches, and for clubs, and counties, it should really be about retention,” he stressed. “The most important figure at the end of the year shouldn’t be the trophies they have. Some of the best young lads we had in Portroe maybe won a bit too much when they were young and because they got such success it didn’t give them the appetite to stay going on.

“However, the world I grew up in isn’t same the world kids are growing up in now with the element of choice they have, it doesn’t hinge around the GAA field like it did with us. As an association we have got to work harder at that to make the cut-through.” He added: “Look at any of the lads that I am training with the Tipperary team, the fact that they stuck with it, the skills that you get from being involved with teams is fantastic, that commitment, you understand teamwork, you understand playing to your strengths and what areas you can improve on, understanding what you need to be strong minded when you get out on the pitch. All those skills are valuable and adaptable into the corporate world that will make you a sought-after person in work.

“You see the documents the likes of Cuala have prepared (Backing Cuala) to see where their membership has increased and see what they have done developing from a place where they wouldn’t have been a hurling stronghold. This was created by people and getting the right structures in place. “When I look at Cuala from an urban perspective and Slaughtneil from a rural perspective I wonder why aren’t these two clubs held up as shining lights for others to follow as they punch above their weight, not just in hurling but in football, camogie, the whole lot.

“It’s just a sin than when I look back and see what hurling has given me for the last forty-plus years and wonder how many more kids were deprived of that opportunity because we lost them along the way. “We haven’t really found the solution for retaining that participation and that still remains the biggest opportunity.”



2018: Cormac O’Doherty of Slaughtneil scoring a penalty for his side during the AIB GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior Club Championship Semi-Final match between Na Piersaigh and Slaughtneil at Parnell Park in Dublin. Photo by Eóin Noonan/Sportsfile.



2014: Eoin Lynch, Portumna. AIB GAA Hurling All-Ireland Senior club Championship Final, Mount Leinster Rangers, Carlow v Portumna, Galway, Croke Park, Dublin. Picture Credit: Stephen McCarthy/Sportsfile.

“The GAA can make you a better player and a better person and very much set you up for success. There are so many things that kids can go down the wrong avenue nowadays but from my perspective I would much prefer to be in the hurling field three or four times a week than hanging around street corners and being in gangs and going down the wrong road. “If people have the GAA in their DNA long into the future they can turn out really well, and if anything were to go wrong the support structure around the club is phenomenal. “We are pumping millions of euro into games development but to me it should be focused on retention up to 21 because if you get them through the college phase and come out and are still with the club and a team you are winning. I don’t think we have cracked it. Rattling out numbers about Cul Camps and kids being down in the field for a week isn’t participation as I describe it. If you are participating in a sport you are playing in it 45 weeks out of 52 and that is where we need to go after.”

Developing an ethos

Because of that, it leads to events such as the Kilmacud Hurling 7’s which have developed a tradition of their own since they first began in 1973 from where clubs such as Liam’s own Portroe have played their part in competing every year.

“As a player I had many is a wonderful day in Kilmacud. We were lucky to win one in 1999 and contested in numerous semi-finals and finals but it was always a special day in the calendar for us in Portroe. It’s great to see the competition getting the nod again. “We were probably boxing above our weight but there are a lot of clubs and counties that aren’t boxing to a level and they need help and the structures and if we give them the structures the most important stat for any coaching is retention. “I’d love to see a document where the GAA knows every child that is playing under 12 this year and we can track them because the biggest thing we can do for the communities is if you can make the GAA club the fulcrum, that community will do really well and creates a good ethos around the place, and takes away some of the challenges young people have right now that I never had to face into.

“The reality is the substances they are being exposed to now in communities and campuses is different now and the GAA should pay its part and should promote that if you come down into our club, this is where we operate at and you get a really good grounding and a circle of friends.”



Darren Gleeson (Portroe) being interviewed by Coilin Duffy following Portroe’s victory in the Kilmacud Corkes Hurling 7’s. (17th August 2019). Photo by: Jim Lyng.



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CRUCIAL INSIGHTS: HOW COACHES CREATE HEALTHY CLUBS

Mark Roe

Mark Roe is a post doctoral researcher at UCD School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science and lead analyst for the GAA National Injury Surveillance Database.



Recently I received a call from a 22-year-old GAA player. Kevin, had for the second time in four years, ruptured his anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). Eight weeks had passed since his surgery, and facing the long path back to sport, he was beginning to ask some important questions.

The first time Kevin ruptured his ACL was in 2015. Back then, he was tackled when changing direction during a match. This time, he was turning in a low-intensity training drill. The nearest player was 10 meters away but they could both hear the pop.

When I spoke with Kevin, he got straight to the point. He wanted to know what were his chances of returning to sport.

The facts

Each season 1.5-2% of field sport athletes sustain an ACL injury. This rate is incredibly similar in different sports such as GAA, hurling, soccer, and Australian football. Almost 20% of all those who rupture their ACL will go on to re-injure the same

knee ligament. That means less than 0.4% of all field sport athletes end up sustaining two ACL ruptures. Kevin was very unlucky.

The lack of information on treatment outcomes limits our ability to make informed decisions. Without it, how can athletes compare options, let alone select the best one? This is a big factor contributing to the fear of reinjury following severe injuries. The few studies addressing this topic sit behind paywalls, do not appear in general searches, or contain data difficult to understand. Often healthcare professionals and surgeons reject these findings believing that their outcomes will be better. Worse still, medical professionals are not required to report how their patient responds to treatment even though the procedure comes with a hefty price tag often exceeding €6000.

Studies tracking athletes after their first ACL reconstruction, show us that within 12 months, 84% of athletes will return to a sport, 66% will return to their preinjury level of sport, and 65% will return to competitive sports. At 36 months post ACLR, 43% will still be playing competitive sports.

Outcomes the second time around

Successful stories of elite athletes – like Ronaldo and Bernard Brogan – who win championships after coming back from injury appear with a quick Google search. But these are exceptional athletes with constant access to the most skilled and informed health care providers. As someone who spends most of my time tracking health and performance outcomes in athletes, I knew Kevin who played for his local GAA club was unlikely to have the same outcomes as an athlete that has reached the top of their sport. In fact, elite athletes are twice as likely to return to competitive sport than sub-elite athletes. Focusing only on the athletes we see back on the pitch after ACL reconstruction is an example of survivorship bias. This is an error we make by failing to consider those that haven't survived long enough to reach the point where we start analysing outcomes. So before we consider anything else, what percentage of all athletes, not just those we see on TV



2020: Johnny Duane of Galway leaves the pitch with an injury during the Connacht GAA Football Senior Championship Final match between Galway and Mayo at Pearse Stadium in Galway. Photo by Ramsey Cardy/Sportsfile.



after surgery, that have had revision ACL reconstruction, return to sport?

The pooling of rehab outcomes in thousands of athletes, more than an experienced clinician would see in several careers, reveals that following revision ACL reconstruction: 75% of athletes return to a sport, 51% return to competitive sports, and 43% return to preinjury levels.

But what prevents others from returning? Ultimately, 69% of the time it's due to knee-related problems but for 22% it is a fear of reinjury.

Expectations

Risk of a subsequent ACL injury will be 10-20 times greater than in uninjured athletes, and the risk of osteoarthritis will be four times greater than in the uninjured knee. Serious decisions need to be made based on known likely outcomes such as what supports need to be in place to nudge the chances of success in the athlete's favour and what will happen if desired outcomes aren't realised.

Kevin was given conflicting reports from two different surgeons. The first said "you're 22 and have torn your ACL twice in the same knee. Maybe you should consider playing a different sport". The second, "you're a young man. There is a good chance you'll make it back".

Kevin knew that no one can be absolutely certain but conflicting reports make the road to recovery even more obscure. For Kevin, he just wanted to know if a return to sport was do-able. He knew from stories of successful athletes like the AFL's Daniel Menzel that it was, but neither surgeon helped him to deal with the uncertainties, nor was the likelihood of different outcomes discussed.

Expectations about time-frames and outcomes heavily influence the decisions we make. When foreseeable, but unplanned situations arise during the rehab process, athletes can become increasingly frustrated, and often their attention shifts to other priorities.

The importance of the club

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's that sports clubs are an essential support in our life. When long-term injuries such as ACL ruptures occur, it's important to remember this. Even for high-performing athletes, their club coaches remain constant sources of guidance throughout key times of their life. The uncertainty of the situation is best managed when athletes know they can talk openly with their coaches and teammates.

Athletes need to know where they stand and that although they might not play for some time, their participation is still vitally important to the team and club.

Coaches should listen openly, and not feel the need to have all the insights or answers. The injury comes down to the surgery site healing and the athlete developing the capacity to play the sport at intense levels. Both require patience.

It helps when coaches ask athletes about their understanding of the injury, their fear and concerns, their hopes for the future, and their priorities right now. Just listen and ask 'what can we do to help'. Remember rehab takes an average of 9 months before returning to sport. The athlete needs support throughout the entire process, not just at the start.

Studies looking at strategies to reduce injury risk show that to prevent one ACL injury, 90 need to regularly complete specific exercises 2-3 times each week. Warmups are great opportunities to incorporate these exercises in team sessions. Exercises such as balance tasks, squats, lunges, landing and agility drills are key. These form the building blocks for all sport skills. Once athletes master the technique at low intensities, and in predictable situations, coaches can begin to progress the challenge.

Beyond ACL ruptures, these exercises are also crucial to reducing our more common injuries such as ankle sprains or hamstring and groin strains. In GAA clubs, lower limb injuries account for 80% of all injuries. Beyond the time-loss from sport, data from GAA injury claims show that over €8 million is spent on managing these injuries every year. Yet if just 28 players complete the exercises above, at least 1 of these injuries could be prevented. This will increase the likelihood that as many players as possible enjoy the benefits of participating in Gaelic Games throughout their life.



2020: Kilmacud Crokes physio Niall McNelis and Shane Veale ahead of the Dublin County Senior Hurling Championship Group 2 Round 2 match between Craobh Chiarain and Kilmacud Crokes at Craobh Chiarans Pitch in Clonshaugh, Dublin. Photo by Eóin Noona/Sportsfile.

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**WISHING CONTINUED SUCCESS TO
KILMACUD CROKES**



REMEMBERING BLOODY SUNDAY

Sean Moran

GAA correspondent with the Irish Times



One hurler who is no stranger to today's proceedings is David Sweeney, former Dublin captain and serial competitor at Kilmacud in seasons past. This year, however, he will be central to arguably the GAA's most important historical project, certainly since the foundation of the museum in Croke Park.

Sweeney, a gifted artist, was commissioned to produce a painting to commemorate Bloody Sunday and the image, titled *Transilience*, has been used as the visual theme for the GAA Museum's exhibition, *Remembering Bloody Sunday*, running later this September.

He had a long hurling career with Ballyboden and Dublin, signing off with the county at the end of Anthony Daly's first year in 2009. Enthused by the appointment, Sweeney came out of retirement and regrets that he wasn't younger at the time. An IT professional in Croke Park in the eLearning department, he was commissioned to produce the work at the end of last year and says that it took three months to complete. On one level it's a match-day scene of spectators heading up Jones's Road towards the stadium but the image is torn down the middle to reveal a panel in monochrome perfectly merging with the main image.



Transilience, a specially commissioned painting by David Sweeney





GREAT CHALLENGE MATCH (FOOTBALL)

Tipperary v. Dublin

AT CROKE PARK

ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1920

MATCH AT 2.45 P.M.

That's of a military tender, carrying Black and Tan troops past the houses on Russell Street and down towards Croke Park with all the menace that conveys to the contemporary audience, aware of what happened next in 1920.

The intention was to juxtapose portrayal of a contemporary match-day atmosphere with the sinister prelude to one of the most significant atrocities of the War of Independence. For the historical context he looked at the surrounding area.

"I spoke to a lady who lived in one of the houses beside Russell Street Bridge at the Jones's Road intersection and she confirmed that the houses were indeed there at the time."

Even the preparatory study Sweeney painted from the other end of Jones's Road as a preliminary exercise is striking. It's as if he tore away the surface of a normal match-day experience to reveal what was underneath, 100 years ago.

I remember being fascinated at an evening of Bloody Sunday lectures 15 years ago on the 85th anniversary by the event taking place in Croke Park.

It was hard to imagine that any of those present didn't at some stage envisage the scenes that took place directly beneath them on November 21st 1920. More fancifully you could wonder what anyone in that terrified crowd would have made of their surroundings had they been transported decades into the future to see what the GAA would become.

Bloody Sunday is one of those iconic events that most people understand in broad outline: an outrage against civilians perpetrated as a reprisal for the IRA's most spectacular success of the War of Independence.

The image of innocent spectators being shot and killed and of a footballer, Michael Hogan, being gunned down and into immortality, is strong and resonant even until today.

General interest in the event has been driven in recent days by journalist and historian Michael Foley's book 'The Bloodied Field,' a definitive account of the whole day, beginning with the IRA assassinations in the morning, the Croke Park atrocity and that evening reprisals in Dublin Castle.

For a long time, Bloody Sunday played a very specific role in the GAA's mythologising of itself as a major contributor to the struggle for independence.

At the 2005 lectures Dr Brian Hanley explored the links between the GAA and the IRB. You could be forgiven for casually assuming that the association and the republican movement were inextricably intertwined by 1920 such were the numbers of GAA members active in the Rising and War of Independence.

Yet at an institutional level there was far from a complete overlap. According to Todd Andrews, a member, the Dublin Brigade of the IRA was half made up of soccer men. The GAA had refused permission for the Volunteers to drill at Croke Park prior to the Easter Rising of 1916 although political rallies and conventions were subsequently accommodated.

The late Marcus de Búrca, the GAA's official historian, said 15 years ago that he was "amazed" that the GAA had allowed the Dublin-Tipperary challenge match to go ahead that day. Given the policy of reprisals, a large gathering (between 5,000 and 8,000) in Croke Park must have been an attractive option.