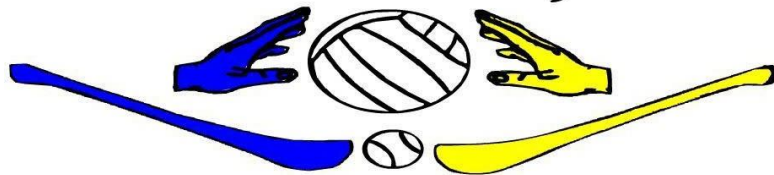


Gaelic Athletic Association
Blackhall Gaels



Football, Hurling and Camogie

Underage Report 2010

UNDERAGE SECTION 2010

In the past year, many underage teams proudly wore the club colours in camogie, football, and hurling competitions and tournaments. Many club players wore the county colours on Meath teams or as part of development squads or schools of excellence. We are blessed in Blackhall to have so many interested and motivated parents and mentors involved with the club. Many thanks to all the mentors who have given of their time so generously during the year.

Success was also achieved on the pitch this year with the u15 team managed by Noel Farrell and trained by Roger Tobin achieving success in league division 6 beating Innygaels. Our u14 managed by Declan Keaveney, Sean Kelly, Frank Kiernan and Ambrose O'Brien won a dramatic division 4 league final in Navan beating Oldcastle. BHG minors also beat St Cuthberts to win the Derek Brady Cup in Bohermeen.

A very enjoyable day was had by the u10,11,12 & 13s in September competing for the Paddy McHugh and Jarlath Carty Cups in hurling and football.

Of course, 5 BHG u14 hurlers competed in Feile this year with Kiltale, an experience they thoroughly enjoyed and we hope will give them fond memories for years to come.

Our u10s participated in a number of football blitz in neighbouring clubs and these days were well attended even though it was during the months of July & August. Thanks to all for helping out with mentoring the teams and providing food & drinks at the blitz day we hosted at the end of August. They also participated in the Summerhill Tournament and the Ashbourne Spring and Autumn league.

Another event that we successfully held this year was the Campa Gaeilge where 30 children between the ages of 6 & 12 participated in a week long camp as gaeilge playing hurling and football in Batterstown. Many children who do not regularly play hurling and football participated in this camp and the feedback at the end of each day and week was very positive so much so that we have provisionally rebooked the camp for next year. At a cost of €70 per child it was excellent value when compared to other sporting camps.

The indoor hurling took place earlier in the year and was thoroughly enjoyed by all participants and mentors. However, despite participating in a number of u10 blitzes no further outdoor hurling for u14s and below took place due to the small numbers.

We have been approached by the Community Games to register Batterstown as members of the Community Games network. After an initial meeting with the Community Games representative, we agreed to revert to interested parties in Batterstown – namely the GAA club and the national school. It is something that as a club we can agree to develop further with lots of activities suited to all levels of abilities.

2010 U-21 FOOTBALL



U21 team which played Kilmainham in Skyrne

The clubs U21 championship campaign was unfortunately short this year. We were graded in the A championship having qualified for the final in this section in 2009. It is a ludicrous situation that the quality of this years team is based on how last years team fared out irrespective of how many players from the previous year are over the age limit. No heed is passed on how the respective teams did in the minor campaign 3 years before. Such is the logic of the grading system and I suppose we are stuck with it.

After a struggle we got a squad of 17 players together for this 13-a-side competition and went into action against Kilmainham in Skyrne on Saturday 23rd October, last. The lads who had never played as a team before, came out tops on a scoreline of 2-17 to 1-13 after a tense third quarter. The prize for winning was to play Oldcastle in the quarter final. This however ended in disappointment. The match was finely balanced with Oldcastle leading by 1 point with 10 minutes left. However in the remaining time Oldcastle scored 3 more points to our one, to leave the final scoreline Blackhall Gaels 1-8 : 2-9 Oldcastle.

On the bright side this team will be all under 21 again next year and in the dressing room after the match they all declared their intention to make that count. Hopefully that committment won't be forgotten.

Nursery Report 2010

Over the past year an assortment of pre-schoolers and infants have descended on the pitch in Batterstown on Saturday mornings at 11am.

A small but tremendously brave and courageous group of volunteers led by Mary McIvor and Tom O'Connor, put together a programme of games for under 6 boys and girls with the emphasis on learning basic skills in a fun way. In the latter half of the year a new bunch of recruits, ably marshalled by Emily Jennings and including Angela Berry have helped out as the numbers swelled to, on some weeks, over 20 children.

The aim of each session is to have the children going home wanting to come back the following week and ensure they go home 'tuirseach ach sásta' having had some good exercise during the hour they were with us. They are split into small groups of 4-6 and go through 3-4 'stations' each week, with a different skill being taught/practiced at each one. The instructors follow the 'tell/show/practice' approach and the emphasis is on encouraging and praising the children as they get to grips with an assortment of bean bags and balls. Following a warm-up that typically involves the children naming cones after their favourite cartoon characters we typically do exercises that focus on catching, kicking, running, bouncing and general agility, often finishing with a major obstacle race where making sure your team gets the loudest cheers is almost as important as coming in ahead of them. It is fascinating to see from a coaching point of view how children change over the year and how their interest level and abilities increase over time, until they are ready to join the semi-professional ranks of Rob Jennings' over 6s.

Mini-League 2010

“You’ll win nothing with kids” That is surely a phrase that’ll haunt Mr. Hansen throughout his career as a BBC pundit and probably long after. It is certainly one that any of the coaches at the BHG nursery, or indeed anyone who has coached kids, can relate to. The patience involved in shepherding small children with varying attention spans through another training drill at the end of which they are no closer to mastering the difficult art of “toe first, then hand” in picking up a round ball, or another basic skill, can’t be overstated. There are often times you may feel the urge to scream. But you don’t. You persevere for reasons you may not quite understand, not least because someone did it for you and you feel a sense of pride or civic duty or something less tangible that you need to return the compliment to the next generation because that is, after all, what makes the GAA great. The road that leads to a full Croke Park in September starts in local GAA fields, like Batterstown pitch at 11 on a Saturday morning, throughout the country.

Mary and Tom typically take the kids aged 4 to 6; Rob, Barry, Shane and Gary usually look after the 7 and 8 year olds. I think I can speak for us all when we were thrilled recently, on a bright November morning, to have a 15-a-side practice match to end training, with at least a dozen of the smaller kids going through their drills with Mary and Tom. Upwards of 40 kids

was an unusually good turnout for a small parish but it has been at least 30 every week since we started back in early October and hopefully, weather permitting!, will stay at those levels in the New Year. But it can only continue to work if as many parents as possible bring their kids down and let them play for the hour or so, during which they start learning all sorts of life skills much broader than GAA skills.

Despite frustrations, along the way there are little moments of magic that make it all worthwhile as you see uncoordinated tots slowly but surely transform into eight-year olds that can kick a point with relative ease and utter joy. You'll win nothing with kids? Rubbish. You win everything with kids. Don't believe me? Come along and see for yourself some Saturday morning. In addition to a field full of happy kids that will hopefully be members of Blackhall Gaels for years to come, you might even see a future Meath player...or maybe more than one.

**Underage Selectors Football
Nursery&Mini Leagues**

Robert Jennings	086-8141361
Tom O'Connor	087-2324998
Gary O'Connor	086-8202093
Mary Mcivor	087-2954325
Shane O'Toole	086-8205479

U -10

Paddy Kelly	085-1742960
Rodger Tobin	087-6468409
Frank Kiernan	086-2622950
Padraig Pearl	087-9157302
Declan Keaveney	086-2343627

U -12

Gerry Nally	086-2499407
Dermot Kiely	086-2619979
Brian Conway	086-2619979

U -14

Frank Kiernan	086-2622950
Declan Keaveney	086-2343627
Ambrose O'Brien	087-2414632
Sean Kelly	086-6661250
Jimmy McGovern	086-8198493

U -16

Noel Farrell	086-0557470
Roger Tobin	087-6468409
J.P.Kelly	01-8252860
Tommy Kelly	087-2158258

Minor

Owen Creevy 087-9502680

Liam Keane 087-2347096

John Keane 087-9570516

Peadar Creagh 087-2423512

Sean Kelly 086-6661250

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