



*Cumann Pheadair Naofa C.L.G.*

**St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**



## **2023 Football Committee Report – Stephen Robinson**

Cathaoirleach (Chairman) : Stephen Robinson

Rúnaí (Secretary) : Johnny Rooney

Coiste (Additional Members : Brendan Curtis, Colm Rice, Larry Byrne, Mike Barnett, Noreen Kelly, Paul McKibben, Paul Rafferty, Shane Carr

A Chara,

A few numbers to start !

- In 2023, there were over 70 coaches involved in training our underage teams, both boys and girls, from the nursery group up to minor
- There were over 500 kids who took part in training or matches
- There were significantly more than 1,000 training sessions/matches held across all these age groups
- Greater than 100 hours of training will be completed in St. Dallan's by year end, outside of the normal P6/P7 after-school training.
- More than 200 kids & 23 adult coaches took part in our summer camp week (+ the U15s)
- >30 NI Access renewed / > 40 child protection refreshed or completed. Thanks to Anne McCormack for all the hard work on this

It takes a lot of work from all coaches to get their teams through the year so a big thank you to all coaches who gave up their time during 2023. And especially thank you for working together with regards to space in St. Marks or facilitating players playing for multiple teams – through your co-operation the club will only grow stronger. You are a credit to the club.

Thanks to Mike Barnett for organising pitches – an unenviable task.

Competition wise – congratulations to all teams for giving their all for the club. We have had some winners this year, some near misses and some fantastic performances so congratulations to all teams. Individual team summaries can be found following this report.

The main aim from the football committee was to kick start some initiatives to try provide a structure for the years to come. Some highlights :

### **School Link**

The primary goal of the year was to create better links between St. Dallan's and the club with the goal of getting the majority of children who are in St. Dallan's playing for Warrenpoint. Currently the percentage is too low although we can see good numbers at the younger ages. This is not something that will change overnight but requires management over a number of years and we will only see



# *Cumann Pheadair Naofa C.L.G.*



## **St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**

the true dividend after 3 or 4 years of continuous interaction. In the first year it was really about getting things started :

- School Coaching
  - As mentioned above we completed 84 hours of in-school training which was performed every Friday between 9am & 3pm with another 22 hours due to be completed in November. In the first half of the year this covered P3, P4 & P6. Recently since school returned it has focused on P4, P5 & P7. The aim would be to try incorporate P2 into the cycle in the coming periods to try create that link from a younger age to get them into the club as members.
  - As with everything this could only have happened with the volunteering of coaches to go into the school. We were very lucky that our senior players agreed to join some underage coaches in this. This is vital as the under age players very much look up to our seniors and aspire to be like them. My own kids much preferred having John train them than me !
  - Coaches that went in were : Colm Carty, Christy Carr, Colm Rice, Donagh McAleenan, Gary McMahon, John Boyle, Paul Stokes, Ruairi McCormack, Ryan Mallon, Stephen Robinson, Trina McNicholas.
  - A particular thank you to John & Trina for helping persuade others to come in and help while covering a lot of sessions themselves
- School Jerseys
  - The jerseys in the school were, it's fair to say, past their best so we wanted to further enhance the links between the school and club by funding jerseys for the school. These jerseys would be in the Warrenpoint colours with the Warrenpoint crest included in the design. We think the school teams will look great in this in the coming years and help us promote Gaelic games within the school



- These jerseys were funded from the proceeds of the summer camp referenced below. Thanks to Johnny Rooney & Paul McKibben for working through the design.



*Cumann Pheadair Naofa C.L.G.*

## **St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**



- School Calendar
  - A final item we tried to initiate was having the Warrenpoint GAA training and match schedule shared on Google classroom and Seesaw for P1-P7s. While the calendar was sent in each week we had limited success. It was uploaded by some teachers but not by others. While not the success we wanted, the effort was still there and thanks to Brigid Carr for submitting the calendar each week. Something to work on for the coming term !

So overall it was a great start to reigniting the football links between the school and the club. It takes a lot of work and organising and thanks are due to a lot of people but mainly thanks to Noreen Kelly, Mrs Farrell and the Board of Governors for their openness to these links.

### **Summer Camp**

The inaugural Summer Camp was run from Monday August 7<sup>th</sup> until Friday 11<sup>th</sup> 2023 and we can honestly say it was a resounding success all round

- 208 kids signed up for the week ranging from P2 up to year 8 which was a fantastic turnout for the first year.
- 23 adult coaches volunteered to help out during the week and it was great to see the mix of coaches from senior players to parents and from those with years of coaching behind them to those where it was their first time in a role such as this. Too many to thank individually but they were the foundation for the success of the week.
- Our under 15 footballers helped throughout the week and they were an absolute credit to the club. They were brilliant with the kids and were willing to do whatever was asked of them.
- In addition to the above we had guest coaches attend – Ronan McMahon, John Boyle, Donagh McAleenan, Katie Howlett and the Down manager Conor Laverty
- Our Year 8s got a session with Conor Laverty and it was a great experience for them to see him in action ... "I'll not pick someone who doesn't run in when I blow the whistle ..."
- Fantastic to see all the kids wear the Down colours on the Wednesday and the club training top on the Thursday that they received for partaking in the summer camp.

It really was brilliant to see the mix of coaches all working together to bring the summer camp to life where all kids really enjoyed it and feedback from kids and parents alike was amazing and truly spoke to the effort that went in from the entire football community within the club. Hopefully, this is just the first year of many for the summer camp idea.

We would like to acknowledge the role of Ryan Boyle in the camp. He is absolutely fantastic with the kids and is a credit to the club. Everything was done with minimal fuss, he was open to everything and very approachable for the coaches who had very little experience.

The feedback we got was fantastic and as mentioned above it was also great to see the different strands of the football club pulling together to make it work. We hope that it can be built upon, and



*Cumann Pheadair Naofa C.L.G.*

**St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**



an even better camp can be delivered next year that would potentially encompass some of the older age groups. The success of the summer camp including the year 8s demonstrates there is a large appetite for football within Warrenpoint and being honest there is very little else on for the older age groups during the summer. It would need to be structured differently to the younger one's camp but definitely something we should consider for future years.

A big thank you to all who made the week so successful.



### Coach the Coaches

A key foundation of a successful club is the quality of the coaching. We're very lucky in that we have some fantastic coaches within the club while also bringing new coaches into the fold each year. As mentioned above we have over 70 coaches taking our underage teams, all giving up their own time so once again a big thank you to all coaches, regardless of experience as it's a big commitment to take a team and nothing would ever happen without selfless volunteers. Saying that, it is incumbent on the committee to try provide an atmosphere where coaches can learn and improve their coaching skills. As such coaching clinics were setup :



*Cumann Pheadair Naofa C.L.G.*

## **St. Peter's GAA Club, Warrenpoint**



- At the start of the year, 3 coach the coaches sessions were organised. Based off feedback from prior sessions they were split by age group with guest coaches for each. Thanks to Ryan Boyle for organising the coaches for these sessions and of course to the guest coaches themselves. I think everyone who attended a coaching session found them informative and took something away to bring back to their own age groups
  - Liam Hardy took the U7-U10 group
  - Ronan McMahon took U11 – U13
  - Gary, John & Ryan Boyle took the U14+ group
- Conor Lavery came down for the summer camp and gave his time to take a training session for the U13s. Thanks to Paul Rafferty for organising & to Conor for giving his time so generously
- As mentioned above we had some guest coaches take sessions during our summer camp week. Again another opportunity for the club coaches and players alike to experience some different voices demonstrating session setups etc.

### **Equipment**

None of the above works without basic equipment. The purchase of additional movable metal goalposts for St. Marks, while basic, was greatly appreciated. No more putting different parts of plastic goals together each session ! Additionally, 150 new balls were purchased across the different age groups helping to try achieve the target of 1 ball per child. Again, basic but nothing works without balls and goals. Thanks to the committee for being open to spending the money up front this year to purchase such a large supply of balls

Lastly 9 new medical kits were purchased for the 2023 session. It's something we have to ingrain in our coaching setup. If training or matches are happening – a medical bad should be present.

-----

A lot of work has happened this year to try set the club on the right path at under age level and put in place structures for the future. I hope these can be improved built upon further in the coming years to truly set the club up for the future where all our young Superblues can perform to the best of their ability. Thank you to all that helped us achieve this throughout the year and thank you to the football committee themselves. A lot of folk on the committee also coach teams so it's a large undertaking. Personally a special thanks to Johnny Rooney for the support during the year. A lot of phone calls but everything was always with the best interest of the kids at heart. Thanks Johnny.

Here's to 2024 .....

**Onwards & Upwards !**