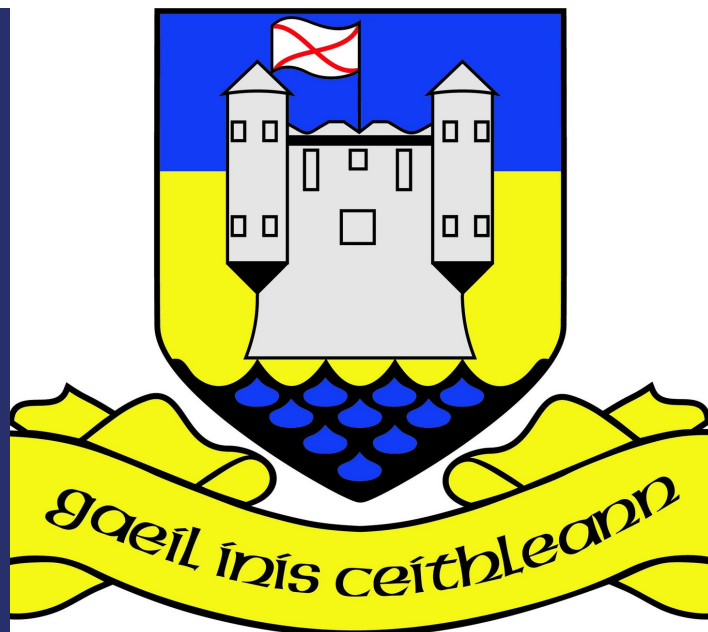


ENNISKILLEN GAELS YOUTH NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2020



U13S CAPTURE LEAGUE TITLE TO CAP A FINE CAMPAIGN

It was a case of a short but sweet season for our U13s.

Playing in Division Two their league eventually got underway three months later than scheduled. The panel was made up of boys born in 07 and 08.

Unfortunately, due to Covid restrictions we were unable to enter a B team, however the younger lads got lots of football in the Street League and under 11.5's.

With an August start, first up was an away trip to Teemore, the home team living up to their division favourites tag inflicting an early defeat on the lads. However, this was a game that focused the boys for the remainder of the league, a lot of valuable experience was gained and now training twice a week the lads were determined to improve and develop, their sights firmly set on getting to a division final.

To achieve this a win in all remaining games was required.

With a combination of competitive and challenge matches the team went from strength to strength and remained undefeated eventually qualifying for the final, again against Teemore.

Despite conceding home advantage the lads travelled to Teemore full of confidence and determination to end the season with some silverware.

What followed was an excellent game of football with the Gaels running into an early lead but Teemore never giving up and entering the final quarter with a two point lead.

It was in the final quarter that the lads took control of the game showing their true determination and skill scoring four unanswered points to run out worthy league winners.

This was a fitting finale to a great season for the lads who proved that they can compete with any team in the county at this age level, having recorded a strong win and a draw in challenges against the eventual Division One finalists.

Comhghairdeas to the lads, a team to watch for in the future.



TOP: Our successful U13 team who won the Division Two title.
ABOVE: Captain Josh Hamill pictured before the final against Teemore.



The U8s enjoying their game against St. Aidan's.

HURLING CONTINUES TO GROW AT THE CLUB

We had over 50 kids playing hurling this year ranging from U8s-U15s. Unfortunately Covid put an end to the U15 league but our U11.5s and U13s fulfilled all fixtures. U11.5s made it to the 'C' final (the Queens Cup) And beat Lisbellaw to lift the trophy.

Our U13s made it to the 'A' final (the Boston Cup) but unfortunately lost to a very strong Bellanaleck team. Both teams showed great improvement in their skills in what was a very short year.

We then had St Aidan's Derrylin in Brewster Park on the morning of the championship final day playing at U10.5 and U8 with over 50 kids playing hurling on our brilliant pitch.

We are getting stronger but would love to see more of our footballers trying out hurling as both games compliment each other.

We also had two players represent the club at county minor level this year, Cahir McManus and Patrick Henderson.

Again, unfortunately, Covid stopped their activities this year. Both lads fully deserved their position in the squad after going through three trials before we cut the squad from 45 to 32 players.



Our U11.5 hurlers pictured with the Queens Cup following their victory over Lisbellaw in the final.



Our U13 hurlers are pictured before their Boston Cup final.

U15s have their season cancelled twice

The Enniskillen Gaels U15s team are probably the unluckiest group of players in the country. A league that was scheduled for March was wiped out because of the pandemic. A league that was scheduled for October was also wiped out.

These players have completed pre-season twice and have had two challenge matches to show for their efforts.

But rather than looking at the season as a year lost these players have been very resilient as they develop into future Enniskillen Gaels senior players.

Our year started in November 2019 when our players spent eight weeks in the gym learning about strength and conditioning.

We gruelled around the pitches and track of the Forum and the lads were ready for a tough season when the first wave crashed.

A summer season promised never came. But for the lads it was not a time wasted but a chance to remember why we all love football.

Unfortunately the 2020 U15 season won't be and the opportunity to watch these talented players will have to wait.

But the future is bright for Enniskillen and Fermanagh with an incredibly hungry, talented and intelligent footballers coming through.

And if anything has come through in these times is we have a group of 25+ young men who are friends through football. Long may that continue for every one of them.



Action from the Junior Street League.

JUNIOR STREET LEAGUE THE HIGHLIGHT FOR U8S

The U8s got underway early July and enjoyed some great matches against Ederney, Irvinestown and Kinawley. There were some great young footballers on show, even amid the floods in Ederney and the future is bright for this young group. The year highlight was the Junior Street league in which some parents excelled in their new found coaching roles. Unfortunately, it came to a premature end with Connaught and Munster leading the way.



Action from the Junior Street League.

Large numbers at U6s enjoy fun sessions

The U6s had 122 players registered over the eight week programme on a Saturday morning. We had 30 plus coaches and Also parents helping out, the effort was hugely inspiring and hence the kids always kept coming back for more fun each week. We were also blessed by the good weather. We look forward to starting again in the new year and seeing the children develop further.



The U6s enjoyed the coaching on Saturday mornings.

U11.5 Ladies team making great strides in their development

This was the first year this league had been played for the girls U11.5. We had a large number attending training which was fantastic to see. We had four games Belcoo, Ederney, Irvinestown and Tempo. The girls played extremely well throughout all the games. The development in all the girls was great to see. There was too many to start naming who stood out. What was refreshing to see was that all the clubs were interested in the development of the girls and the game. I hope all these girls are still practising their solo, fist and kick pass. The future is bright for Enniskillen Gaels ladies. Hopefully it won't be long before we're back out on Brewster Park



The Enniskillen Gaels Ladies U11.5 squad.

ULSTER MAKE IT TWO IN A ROW AT ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL URBAN LEAGUE COMPETITION

As for everyone both on and off the field of play, 2020 has proved to be a hugely frustrating year for our Under 11.5 players and management team.

We trained indoors at Erne Integrated College in the early part of the year and then, just as we were beginning to get back out onto the grass in preparation for the start of the league on 14th March, the pandemic kicked in and lockdown was upon us.

We started back bright and early on Sunday 12th July and continued with the Sunday morning sessions right through until the kick-off of the Street League on 23rd August.

Our Street League (for P5-1st year children) started on the 23rd August and ran for a period of five weeks, concluding with Finals Day on 20th September.

A big effort was made this year to make the day a real 'event' for the kids – something they would remember in years to come – and hopefully being introduced on to the pitch to the Sunday Game theme tune, having their names read out and having to sit on the bench for the Finals Day team photo will stick with them. It was just a pity we couldn't finish off the event with a barbecue for one and all.

The Shield Final saw Leinster topple Connaught by a single point, avenging last year's defeat, and a victory by the same margin in the Cup Final saw Ulster get over the line for their second year in a row. Congratulations to both teams.

The running of the Street League would not have been possible without the help of our 13 coaches, our helpers behind the scenes, and our referees – thank you one and all! To the parents also who brought their kids along, and especially those who stayed for the matches and cheered on the teams – thank you.

Lastly, congratulations to all 76 kids who participated throughout the tournament. The games were of a high standard, hugely competitive (on the sideline as well as on the field of play!), but most important of all I think they gave the kids great enjoyment.

Roll on next year and Ulster's bid for 3-in-a-row.

Outside of the Street League, training for the U11.5s continued on Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoons in preparation for what we believed would be the rescheduled commencement of our league on 10th October. We squeezed in a couple of challenge matches to develop a competitive edge but, as we all know, everything got halted again in the first weekend in October, and the league now looks very unlikely to happen at all in 2020.



Action from the popular Urban League.

U17s make good progression

Our U17s played in Division Two with the league made up of six sides (Enniskillen, Devenish, Roslea, Teemore and Belcoo) each team playing each other once with the top two qualifying for the league final.

Wins over Lisnaskea and Devenish left us having a chance of reaching the league final going into the last round of fixtures but defeat to Teemore ended our hopes as we finished mid-table in the league.

The side also played three challenge games during the course of the campaign against St. Pat's, Irvinestown and Derrygonnelly.

A youthful squad made good progression throughout the season and this was despite losing joint captain Cody Halligan to injury in the second game of the league.

The coaches would like to thank all the players for their commitment and efforts.



Action from the popular Urban League.

U14 Girls side clinch Division Three title

The U14 league began in a different manner to normal this year due to COVID-19, matches of two 20 minute halves, a goal equalling a point and over the bar becoming 2 points, was the set up the Gaels girls had to get used to this season.

We started our training in May with a strong turn out and this only grew throughout the season making one of the strongest U14 girls teams the club has seen in a number of years.

The girls trained hard throughout the summer and were well rewarded winning their first game against Bellnaleck.

Tough games Kinawley and Knockninny followed and the girls continued to put the effort and commitment in at training.

A Division Three semi final against Maguiresbridge followed and the girls produced a brilliant win which led them on to the final in Lisnaskea against Newtownbutler.

The girls came out ready to win on the day of the final, everyone who was apart of the U14 panel were at the game ready to play and support each other as they had done so well through out the season.

The match was competitive from the get go, with every tackle we made Newtownbutler made one too, and every point they scored our girls would hit one straight back at them.

It was a great performance from every single player, they put the work rate in from the start and even when we looked like we were down, they preserved, and were rewarded when the final whistle blew.

The Gaels U14 team won their final by 1 point, a tight fought game by both teams, but a well deserved victory for our Gaels girls.

The work these girls put in through out their season was brilliant, the commitment from such a young side of girls was something any other player in the club should take note of. Their coaches pushed them at training and they took it all on the chin.

If their coaches had them training in sweltering heat on Saturday mornings in summer or when Fionnuala had them out on Thursday nights in the pouring rain (and sent them home covered in mud to their parents... sorry about that) they were committed and put in the work.

From May to September there was a massive change in the team that was created, from the girls not knowing each other's names, to being one of the most competitive sides around, they did themselves proud. The U14 girls team this year is one that the club should be immensely proud of, well done girls!!

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The victorious Gaels U14 Girls side who won the Division Three title.