

# ***Munster GAA Annual Report 2012***

As we look back on the activities of 2012, there are many successes to recall on the field of play and indeed as many off the field also. From a Munster GAA perspective, the move to our splendid new offices at Castletroy Limerick certainly deserves to lead this report for 2012.

## **New HQ**

Our new Headquarters building will serve this Council for many years to come and stands out as a fitting symbol for Gaelic Games in this Province. Our new headquarters was delivered under budget and was completed to a top of the range specification which is a true testimony to all those involved.

Firstly, the Officers and Council members whose vision led to the decision to build on a green field site and with that in mind -former Chairman, Jimmy O'Gorman stands out as the driver in chief. The present Council under Chairman, Sean Walsh who, when the downturn came persisted with the plan and insisted that the completed building would be a modern icon for the Council for many years to come. The former Deputy Enda McGuane whose knowledge of the building game as well as finance, was vital to the Council as we worked our way through the development. Paddy Leydon, Architect certainly delivered from his end as he continues to keep a watchful eye on the building to ensure everything is as specified.

What remains now is for this headquarters through its staff to serve this Council, it's counties and its clubs in the years ahead, and in so doing deliver a strong, vibrant and relevant Association capable of fulfilling the needs of our members and supporters. We thank all those who attended our launch on Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup> and in particular, Liam O'Neill, Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael for his presence to officially open our new premises.

## **Munster Senior Championships 2012**

In 2012 we again launched our senior championships in the splendid facility of Mallow GAA complex on May 16<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to players, managers and officials whose attendance and support help us greatly with our championship promotion. In general, the assembled media present were very happy with the access to the players and officials in advance of the launch itself where former Kerry GAA player Pat Spillane was the entertaining guest speaker.

## Senior Football

**Sponsors:** Ulster Bank: SuperValu: Eircom

The Football championships again started off our summer campaign with Quarter finals involving Limerick and Waterford and Tipperary facing Kerry once again. In a new departure we had a mixed double bill at Semple Stadium involving the Footballers of Tipperary against the Kingdom and Tipperary, Munster Hurling champions 2011 facing an improving Limerick side. Kerry favourites for this football clash having disposed of this opposition in the previous two years however the Kingdom struggled to reach their form and Tipperary although never really challenging stayed with the opposition until the three quarter mark when Kerry put a little distance between them and their challengers to run out as six point winners.

The other Quarter-Final saw Limerick with home advantage against Waterford in what was expected to provide a comfortable win for the Treaty side. That did not appear likely in a first half where Waterford gave as good as they got. A 19<sup>th</sup> minute Limerick goal by Seamus O'Carroll helped Limerick to a one point interval lead and an interesting second half lay in store. When Waterford was awarded a penalty two minutes after the restart, the opportunity for an upset looked a distinct possibility. However, Limerick goalkeeper Brian Scanlon saved the penalty from Mark Ferncombe and this proved to be the turning point of the match. Waterford would go on to kick 8 wides in the second half without registering another score while Limerick added 1-7 to run out deserving winners in the end by 11 points.

The first semi-final between Clare and Limerick provided an excellent opportunity for both sides to qualify for the Munster Final. If ever there was a game of two halves, this encounter at the Gaelic Grounds was it. Limerick were favourites to get through but were not at the races at all in the first half, allowing Clare to dominate and generally do as they pleased building up a 1-9 to 0-3 interval lead. When Clare's lead reached 10 points early in the second half, this game seemed over as a contest but Limerick had different ideas. Amazingly, Limerick not only pegged back the deficit point by point but took the lead with four minutes remaining. Clare seemed out on their feet but their dangerous sharp-shooter David Tubridy popped up with two late points to give Clare a one point victory – 1-13 to 0-15.

The following day at Pairc Ui Chaoimh saw the clash of the Old Firm as Cork took on Kerry in the second semi-final. In a low scoring first half, Cork got the better start before Kerry took a one point lead midway through. Cork finished the half stronger and despite some missed chances by Kerry, Cork led by three points at the interval. Kerry introduced a couple of subs for the second half and while their general play improved, their lack of a free taker (in the absence of the injured Bryan Sheehan) meant they did not get the scores their play deserved. With ten minutes remaining, Cork still led by two points and a grandstand finish looked on the cards. However, Cork upped the tempo and dominated those closing minutes, adding a further four points to one for Kerry and by the final whistle, it was Cork who had qualified for the Munster Final with five points to spare.

The Munster Senior Football Final on July 8<sup>th</sup> in the Gaelic Grounds Limerick had a novel feeling to it with the clash of Cork and Clare being the first of its kind since 1949. Cork were strong favourites but memories of Clare's 1992 Munster Final success on the same ground gave hope of an upset. However, from the moment Cork struck for their first goal through Fintan Goold after 13 minutes, there was never any doubt about the result here. Aidan Walsh and Nicholas Murphy added further green flags for Cork and by half-time, the goals were the difference between the sides – 3-7 to 0-7. To their credit, Clare never gave up but the result was never in doubt throughout the second half as Cork continued to pick off their scores from play with an ease that Clare could not match. Cork's final tally of 3-16 was all the more impressive when one considers it all came from open play as all their forwards scored in additions to two of the subs.

One item of note during the year in relation to this Championship was the debate on the return of the seeded draw. This came up as one of many items for consideration during a Munster Council meeting held during the middle of Championship. However, once in the public domain it drew much comment from familiar sources for and against such a Championship format. While debate on such topics is a good thing, sadly some of the comments made were of a personal nature towards members of the Council which was regrettable. If any of the six counties in the province decide to bring this matter to the table for a decision in the future, one would hope the debate is conducted by championing the merits of each side and decided accordingly.

No. of games: 5

Total No of scores: 137 (164 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 6 goals 131 points (16 goals 148 points in 2011)

Average per game: 1.2 goals 26.2 points (3.2 goals 29.5 points in 2011)

2012 Munster GAA Football Championships							
Quarter-Final	Limerick	2-12	Waterford	0-7	20/5	Gaelic Grounds Limerick	2341
Quarter-Final	Kerry	0-16	Tipperary	0-10	27/5	Semple Stadium Thurles	See Hurling – Tipp v Limerick
Semi-Final	Clare	1-13	Limerick	0-15	9/6	Gaelic Grounds Limerick	4446
Semi-Final	Cork	0-17	Kerry	0-12	10/6	Pairc Ui Chaoimh	23184
Final	Cork	3-16	Clare	0-13	8/7	Gaelic Grounds Limerick	9139

**Average 2012**

**9,778 (down 24%)**

**Comparable average Figure 2011**

**12,808**

### Senior Hurling

**Sponsors:** Guinness: Centra: Etihad Airways:

The Munster Senior Hurling Championship of 2012 gave us four high tempo games of quality as Limerick, Clare and Cork in particular gave some of their promising underage players of recent years their opportunity. While all three ultimately bowed out at the first attempt in Munster, the progress of these young players in ensuing All-Ireland series shows that all three counties will mount a stern challenge for Munster honours in 2013.

The opening match between Tipperary and Limerick in Thurles looked set up on paper for a Tipperary victory. However, Limerick ignored any such predictions and took the game to Tipperary from the opening throw-in, building up a deserved three point lead. A Tipperary goal against the run of play brought the sides level before a Limerick goal but them back in control again with a four point lead heading towards the interval. Tipperary finished the half strongest and by the interval, Limerick lead by a solitary point and it was all to play for. An expected Tipperary backlash following half-time did not materialise as Limerick upped their game to an intensity which Tipperary could not cope with as they opened a 7 point lead with 15 minutes remaining. The Premier County began to empty the bench at this stage and while no apparent solution to Limerick's domination seemed imminent, slowly Tipperary began to get back in to the game with Bonner Maher in particular leading the line. Having been restricted to 1-9 in the opening 50 minutes, the Tipperary forwards in particular finally found their feet, scoring 1-11 in the final 20 minutes. Brian O'Meara's 65<sup>th</sup> minute goal put Tipperary in front for good and Limerick's efforts would not get the rewards their play for so long deserved.

The build-up to the first semi-final between Clare and Waterford was dominated by the fact that new Clare manager Davy Fitzgerald would be taking on his former charges Waterford. All such talk meant little when the ball was thrown in as Clare raced in to an early three point lead. Waterford are an experienced outfit though and managed to respond with a burst of 2-4 to take a six point lead. Clare would not be distracted though and responded with a goal of their own and by the interval, Waterford led an entertaining match by 2-8 to 1-9. Waterford stretched their lead out to three points before the Banner County got on top, hitting five unanswered points to take the lead heading in-to the final quarter. Without any specific momentum changer, suddenly Waterford got on top and scored five unanswered points of their own to retake the lead. The last 10 minutes was tense as Waterford looked to hold on to a slender lead. Clare had the better possession during the period but a combination of poor shooting and good defending by the Waterford rearguard ensured that it was Waterford who held out for a two point victory.

In the second semi-final, Tipperary headed in to the cauldron of Pairc Ui Chaoimh to face a Cork side encouraged by their League performances where they deservedly qualified for the League Final before getting soundly beaten by Kilkenny. If supporters wondered which Cork would show up, the same was true of a Tipperary side which needed a strong final 20 minutes to get over Limerick in the Quarter-Final. The opening twenty one minutes produced twenty scores as Cork led by 0-12 to 0-8 – an amazing testament to the quality of players on show as supporters enjoyed the high scoring game. By the interval, Cork still led by 0-14 to 0-12 with all to play for in the second half. Tipperary hit the front in the 46<sup>th</sup> minute when Noel McGrath finished a good Tipperary move to the net. Another Tipperary point put them three up before Tipperary's John O'Brien received his marching orders. The benefit of the extra man did not materialise for Cork on the scoreboard and though the Rebel county had chances, Tipperary ultimately held out for a two point victory.

And so to a familiar Munster Final pairing in recent years – the clash of Tipperary and Waterford on July 15<sup>th</sup>. In keeping with the tradition of recent years, the CCC meet in advance of the Provincial semi-finals to decide on the venue permutations. All counties are aware of this knowing that whatever preferences they wish to propose need to be discussed as a County Board and with their team managements in advance of this meeting. At the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CCC, there was only one proposal put to the meeting for a possible Tipp v Waterford clash in a Munster SH Final – Pairc Ui Chaoimh being the unanimous choice of venue. In spite of this, once Waterford and Tipperary subsequently qualified for the Munster SH Final, talk of moving the match away from Pairc Ui Chaoimh began to surface followed by Monday lunch-time by a request from Waterford for a change and to play the game at Semple Stadium Thurles.

A meeting of the CCC was convened for that Monday evening June 25<sup>th</sup> where the majority of CCC delegates expressed their disappointment about the late nature of this request given that just 18 days previously a decision on this matter had been taken. With a two-thirds majority required for a change, such a U-turn was never on the cards as just Waterford and Tipperary voted for the change. There was much subsequent criticism of this decision in the media and by supporters. Of course, this is not the first time such a late request has come through from counties. With many months to go to the 2013 Munster Senior Hurling Finals, one can only hope that counties will do their homework in advance and come to the CCC meeting next June armed with their venue preferences and not look to make late changes for whatever reasons.

Back to the playing field and focus soon focused in on one of the highlights of the hurling year – the Munster Senior Hurling Final. After the concession of 7 goals to Tipperary in the 2011 decider, Waterford were determined to not to give their opponents a head-start in this one. In fact, it was Waterford who began the better side and led by three points early on. A John O'Brien goal brought Tipperary on level terms and though they edged in front, Waterford finished the first half stronger and the sides were level at the interval. Waterford took the lead after the restart but gradually, Tipperary began to dominate and they led by two points with 15 minutes remaining when substitute Shane Bourke goaled to put his side in front by five. Waterford tried hard to get back in to the game but with Brendan Cummins in good form, the Decies were never likely to add a green flag they so badly needed and Tipperary retained their title by a somewhat flattering seven point margin.

No. of games: 4

Total No of scores: 162 (171 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 9 goals 153 points (21 goals 150 points in 2011)

Average per game: 2.25 goals 38.25 points (5.25 goals 37.5 points in 2011)

2012 Munster GAA Hurling Championships							
Quarter-Final	Tipperary	2-20	Limerick	1-19	27/5	Semple Stadium Thurles	22068
Semi-Final	Waterford	2-17	Clare	1-18	17/6	Semple Stadium Thurles	12446
Semi-Final	Tipperary	1-22	Cork	0-24	24/6	Pairc Ui Chaoimh	32568
Final	Tipperary	2-17	Waterford	0-16	15/7	Pairc Ui Chaoimh	26438

**Average 2012**  
**Comparable average figure 2011**

**23,380 (down 0.32%)**  
**23,455**

## **Bord Gáis Fé 21 Hurling Championship**

The 2012 Munster Under 21 Hurling Championship began in Pairc Ui Chaoimh on June 6<sup>th</sup> with a clash between old rivals Tipperary and Cork. Torrential rain in the hours leading up to the match left the game in doubt but a let-up in the rain and good soakage on the Pairc Ui Chaoimh sod led to the pitch passing all inspections though undoubtedly the conditions put off some patrons from attending. This was a game which didn't reach the heights of recent underage clashes but was in the melting pot all through. Cork were marginally the better side in the first half and led by three points at the interval. Indeed, that pattern of play continued well in to the second half as Cork led by four points with six minutes remaining. What happened next did not seem likely to anyone watching the game as Tipperary suddenly went on a spurt which ultimately brought them level and then saw them hit the front with a late Sean Curran point – their only lead of the game but at the only time that counts.

After a six week gap, Tipperary next travelled to take on the 2011 champions Limerick in the Gaelic Grounds Limerick. Tipperary dominated the opening half with wind advantage and should have been much more than two points in front at the interval having hit 11 wides along the way. A Limerick revival in the second half was expected but instead it was Tipperary who stretched their lead and a late goal for Limerick was their only consolation in a five point defeat.

On the following night, the meeting of Clare and Waterford in Ennis looked a mouth-watering prospect as both sides had won Munster Minor Hurling titles in the previous 3 years. However, this match was not a contest for long as Clare dominated in most areas and inflicted a 19 point defeat on Waterford and laid down a marker for all that they would take stopping.

A large crowd descended on Ennis on August 8<sup>th</sup> to see Clare and Tipperary battle it out for Munster honours. Clare dominated the opening exchanges everywhere except on the scoreboard and it took quite a while for their first score to arrive. Tipperary were more economical with their chances in the first half and the Premier County led by 0-6 to 0-5 at half-time. Clare hit the front mid-way through the second half only to be pegged back again by a John O'Dwyer goal for Tipperary. The final 10 minutes was end to end stuff with Tipperary keeping their noses in front heading in-to injury time. Clare had the final say and in stunning fashion as substitute Niall Arthur latched on to a breaking ball to hit the net and ensure Clare were champions on a two point winning margin amid joyous scenes at Cusack Park. Clare would ultimately go on to win a deserved All-Ireland at this grade, their second since 2009.

No. of games: 4

Total No. Of scores: 129 (167 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 6 goals 123 points (18 goals 149 points in 2011)

Average per game: 1.5 goals 30.75 points (4.5 goals and 37.25 points in 2011)

2012 Bord Gais Energy Munster GAA Hurling Under 21 Championship							
Quarter-Final	Tipperary	0-18	Cork	0-17	6/6	Pairc Ui Chaoimh	3026
Semi-Final	Tipperary	1-16	Limerick	1-11	18/7	Gaelic Grounds Limerick	5138
Semi-Final	Clare	2-22	Waterford	0-9	19/7	Cusack Park Ennis	3176
Final	Clare	1-16	Tipperary	1-14	8/8	Cusack Park Ennis	8379

**Average 2012**

**4,930 (down 2.4%)**

**Comparable average figure 2011**

**5,052**

#### **Cadburys Fé 21 Football Championship:**

For the second consecutive year, the Munster Under 21 Football Championship was played mid-week under lights and once again this proved a success with our patrons. The Quarter-Finals were played on March 14<sup>th</sup> and it proved a good night for the away teams. In the Gaelic Grounds Limerick, a goal in each half by Clare's Cathal McInerney proved to be the deciding scores in a 2-7 to 0-10. In the other Quarter-Final at Semple Stadium, Kerry were dominant both early and late to run out decisive winners against Tipperary. Kerry raced in to a 0-5 to 0-0 lead early on. Tipperary came roaring back in to the match in the second quarter and trailed by just 0-7 to 0-5 at the interval. That would be as good as it got for the young Tipperary team as the Kerry defence were on top through the second half, holding Tipperary scoreless while adding four additional points of their own to run out 0-11 to 0-5 winners.

With home advantage in the semi-finals on March 28th, Kerry and Cork had little difficulty qualifying for the final. In Tralee, Kerry led Waterford by four points after 15 minutes before the floodgates opened. Four Kerry goals in the second quarter ensured they went in for the half-time break in front by 4-12 to 0-2 and despite a late consolation goal by Waterford, Kerry qualified for the final with 31 points to spare. In the other semi-final at Pairc Ui Rinn, Clare got off to a good start against Cork, led by two points after 20 minutes. However, a run of 1-6 before half-time put Cork in front to stay and the second half was mainly one-way traffic with Cork winning by 15 points in the end.

The final played in Tralee on April 11<sup>th</sup> pitted the age old rivals Cork and Kerry and extra time was needed before the champions were crowned. This was a game where both sides had their periods of dominance. Cork raced in to a four point lead within five minutes of the first half. Kerry soon got in-to their stride and were level by the 20<sup>th</sup> minute. Cork went in-to the half-time break in front thanks to a Donal Og Hodnett goal just before the interval. Cork kept their noses in front during most of the second half before a late Kerry surge left the teams level at the end of normal time. If one expected that Kerry now had the momentum that proved incorrect as Cork began the extra time period with a tally of 1-3 without reply. As had been the case in normal time, Kerry again fought back adding point after point to get to within one as time ran down. Despite great Kerry pressure, the Cork rearguard held out for a one point victory – 2-12 to 1-14 after extra time.

No. of games: 5

Total No of scores: 124 (134 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 14 goals 110 points (13 goals 121 points in 2011)

Average per game: 2.8 goals and 22 points (2.6 goals and 24.2 points in 2011)

2012 Cadbury Munster GAA Football Under 21 Championship							
Quarter-Final	Kerry	0-11	Tipperary	0-5	14/3	Semple Stadium Thurles	1050
Quarter-Final	Clare	2-7	Limerick	0-10	14/3	Gaelic Grounds Limerick	1013
Semi-Final	Kerry	4-26	Waterford	1-4	28/3	Austin Stack Park Tralee	1231
Semi-Final	Cork	3-15	Clare	1-6	28/3	Pairc Ui Rinn	1129
Final	Cork	2-12	Kerry	1-14	11/4	Austin Stack Park Tralee (AET)	5318

**Average 2012**  
**Comparable average figure 2011**

**1,948 (up 5.4%)**  
**1,849**



## **Electric Ireland Minor Hurling and Football Championships**

The Munster Minor Football Championship got underway with three matches on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Cork had 16 points to spare over Limerick in the Gaelic Grounds while Clare defeated Waterford at Ennis by 20 points. The highlight of the first round was the meeting of Kerry and 2011 Munster and All-Ireland champions Tipperary in Tralee. After a low scoring first half, Kerry led a wasteful Tipperary side by 0-4 to 0-2. However, the second half was a different story and a couple of Colman Kennedy goals helped Tipperary to a seven point victory and with it, signalled their intent to retain their Munster crown. The Quarter-Final losers now set about earning their way back in to the semi-finals via the playoffs. Kerry and Waterford met in Dungarvan on April 17<sup>th</sup> and despite a slow start, Kerry eventually got on top against Waterford to win by 1-14 to 1-3. This earned Kerry a home tie v Limerick in Tralee a week later. For three-quarters of this game, there was little between the sides and if Limerick were more clinical in front of goal, they could have been in the lead. With Kerry in front by three points heading in to the final quarter, the home side finally got on top to record 2-4 without reply to run out winners by 3-9 to 0-5.

The semi-final line-up was now complete with Clare hosting Kerry and Cork at home to Tipperary. Both semi-finals were played on May 16<sup>th</sup>. In Ennis, Kerry had the better of the first half but the concession of two goals saw Clare trail by just a point at the interval. Kerry edged further in front in the second half but failed to put away the Clare challenge and with a minute of normal time remaining, a Conor Cleary goal for Clare left Kerry in front by a solitary point. Kerry would not be denied, adding three further points in added time to win by 0-17 to 3-4. In the other semi-final at Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Tipperary and Cork served up an engaging semi-final. The sides were level after a low scoring first half but the crucial score arrived in the 32<sup>nd</sup> minute when Tipperary's Philip Quirke availed of the new rule concerning the square ball to punch to the net from close range. Cork stayed in contention throughout the second half but they failed to get closer than two points and the Tipperary defence held out to qualify for the Munster final with four points to spare.

The Munster Final on July 8<sup>th</sup> was played in the Gaelic Grounds Limerick and was a repeat of the first round meeting of Tipperary and Kerry. Tipperary were in the strange position of favourites but it was Kerry who dominated the first half, building up a seven point lead before retiring at half-time with a deserved five point advantage. The second half was a different story as Tipperary scored 2-4 without reply after the interval to take a five point lead. Kerry did respond and heading in to the closing stages, had reduced the deficit to just two points but they could not get the goal required and Tipperary were crowned Munster Minor Football champions for the second consecutive year.

No. of games: 8

Total No of scores: 181 (193 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 19 goals and 162 points (23 goals and 170 points in 2011)

Average per game: 2.38 goals and 20.25 points (2.88 goals and 21.25 points in 2011)

2012 Electric Ireland Munster GAA Football Minor Championship						
Quarter-Final	Cork	3-13	Limerick	0-6	14/4	Gaelic Grounds Limerick
Quarter-Final	Tipperary	2-9	Kerry	0-8	14/4	Austin Stack Park Tralee
Quarter-Final	Clare	2-20	Waterford	0-6	14/4	Cusack Park Ennis
Play-off 1	Kerry	1-14	Waterford	1-3	17/4	Fraher Field Dungarvan
Play-off 2	Kerry	3-9	Limerick	0-6	24/4	Austin Stack Park Tralee
Semi-Final	Tipperary	1-10	Cork	0-9	16/5	Pairc Ui Chaoimh
Semi-Final	Kerry	0-17	Clare	3-4	16/5	Cusack Park Ennis
Final	Tipperary	2-14	Kerry	1-14	8/7	Gaelic Grounds Limerick

The Munster Minor Hurling Championship began on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Tipperary had an easy victory over Kerry in Thurles but the other first round games were much closer. In Ennis, it took extra time before Waterford got the better of Clare on a scoreline of 1-20 to 3-13 after an entertaining match. With home advantage, Cork were expected to defeat Limerick but instead the visitors earned a one point victory, 0-16 to 1-12. Cork got their semi-final aspirations back on track three days later when after a slow start, they defeated Kerry to set up a game with Clare to earn the final semi-final position. Played in Ennis, Cork were the better team in the first quarter as they led Clare by 0-4 to 0-0. Clare however were level by half-time and scored the first 9 points of the second half to take control. A late Cork goal had no bearing on the result as Clare still had 6 points to spare at the final whistle.

The semi-finals were held after the Leaving Cert as normal and resulted in victories for both home teams though in different circumstances. In Semple Stadium on June 27<sup>th</sup>, Tipperary showed signs of having a team capable of future honours when they inflicted a 19 point defeat on Waterford. In the other semi-final two nights later in Ennis, Clare seemed destined to qualify for the final when they led by six points deep in to the second half. However, two late goals for Limerick meant the game went oin to extra time. In the additional period, Clare got their noses in front and managed to hold on for a hard-earned two point victory.

The Munster Minor Hurling Final was played on July 15<sup>th</sup> at Pairc Ui Chaoimh. Clare got off to a fast start, scoring a goal and a point before Tipperary got off the mark. When they did score however, they did so in dominant fashion as they scored 1-10 to turn a four point deficit in to an eight point lead approaching half-time. Clare had the better of the exchanges either side of half time and by the 42<sup>nd</sup> minute, Tipperary led by just two points – 1-12 to 1-10. Just one score separated the sides up to the final stages and it took two late frees to ensure Tipperary were crowned champions on a scoreline of 1-16 to 1-12. Tipperary proved their class by going on to win the All-Ireland title, defeating Dublin after a replay in the final.

No. of games: 8

Total No of scores: 270 (262 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 26 goals and 244 points (32 goals and 230 points in 2011)

Average per game: 3.25 goals and 30.5 points (4 goals and 28.75 points in 2011)

2012 Electric Ireland Munster GAA Hurling Minor Championship						
Quarter-Final	Waterford	1-20	Clare	3-13	2/5	Cusack Park Ennis (AET)
Quarter-Final	Tipperary	6-21	Kerry	0-11	2/5	Semple Stadium Thurles
Quarter-Final	Limerick	0-16	Cork	1-12	2/5	Pairc Ui Chaoimh
Play-off 1	Cork	6-22	Kerry	1-4	5/5	Austin Stack Park Tralee
Play-off 2	Clare	0-18	Cork	1-9	10/5	Cusack Park Ennis
Semi-Final	Tipperary	2-25	Waterford	0-12	27/6	Semple Stadium Thurles
Semi-Final	Clare	1-19	Limerick	2-14	29/6	Cusack Park Ennis (AET)
Final	Tipperary	1-16	Clare	1-12	15/7	Pairc Ui Chaoimh

## Underage attendances 2012

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total attendance</u>	<u>Number of games</u>	<u>Average attendance</u>	<u>Averages 2011</u>
Under 21 Football	9741	5	1948 (up 5.4%)	1849
Under 21 Hurling	19719	4	4930 (down 2.4%)	5052
Minor Hurling *	13508	7	1930 (down 1.1%)	1951
Minor Football*	8685	7	1241 (up 51.71%)	818
<i>Total Underage Attendances</i>	<i>51653 (up 5.7%)</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>2246</i>	<i>2124</i>

\* Does not include finals.

### Intermediate Hurling and Junior Football

The Munster Intermediate Hurling Championship began on May 26<sup>th</sup> in Nenagh when Tipperary had an easy win over Limerick – 2-20 to 1-11. Three weeks later, Clare proved too strong for Waterford in the first of the semi-finals at Semple Stadium Thurles. Clare led by eight points midway through the first half and stretched the lead to twelve points with ten minutes remaining. Two late goals for Waterford made for an interesting finish but Clare still had four points to spare at the final whistle. In the other semi-final a week later at Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Tipperary put in an impressive first half showing to lead by 3-10 to 0-6 after playing with the wind. In fairness to Cork, they kept battling and reduced the deficit to just six points coming in to the closing stages. However, two late Tipperary points ensured that an injury time goal for Cork was a mere consolation in a 3-18 to 2-16 win for Tipp.

The Munster Final was played on July 25<sup>th</sup> in Nenagh between Tipperary and Clare. There was little between the sides in the first half until a goal by David Butler on the stroke of half-time ensured Tipperary led by 1-10 to 0-10 at the interval after a high scoring first half. Tipperary extended their lead to six points early in the second half as Clare squandered numerous scoring opportunities. Despite hitting nine wides in the second half, Clare managed to reduce the deficit to two points with five minutes remaining. However, Clare could not find the key to unlock the Tipperary defence for a goal and late scores for Tipperary ensured victory by a flattering four point margin – 1-18 to 0-17. Tipperary would go on to defeat Kilkenny in the All-Ireland Final to round off a successful year for this team.

No. of games: 4

Total No of scores: 141 (125 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 13 goals and 128 points (14 goals and 111 points in 2011)

Average per game: 3.25 goals and 32 points (3.5 goals and 27.75 points in 2011)

2012 Munster GAA Hurling Intermediate Championship						
Quarter-Final	Tipperary	2-20	Limerick	1-11	25/5	MacDonagh Park Nenagh
Semi-Final	Clare	1-19	Waterford	3-9	17/6	Semple Stadium Thurles
Semi-Final	Tipperary	3-18	Cork	2-16	24/6	Pairc Ui Chaoimh
Final	Tipperary	1-18	Clare	0-17	25/7	MacDonagh Park Nenagh

The Munster Junior Football Championship kicked off on May 20<sup>th</sup> as Waterford got the better of Limerick by 2-13 to 1-10 at the Gaelic Grounds Limerick. Two Waterford goals in the first half proved crucial to Waterford's success as they led by six points at half-time and despite some good play by Limerick in the second half, Waterford were still six points up at the end. The second Quarter-Final held in Nenagh six days later was a close affair between Kerry and Tipperary. The home side scored the first two points before Kerry began to dominate and a Niall Ó'Sé goal helped Kerry to a seven point interval lead. Tipperary were on top for long periods of the second half and a 36<sup>th</sup> minute goal by Damien O'Brien brought Tipperary back in to contention. The gap was down to two point's midway through the second half but despite not playing well, Kerry managed to get the all-important scores to ensure victory by 1-11 to 1-9.

The first of the semi-finals on June 9<sup>th</sup> at the Gaelic Grounds Limerick saw Clare easily account for Waterford on a scoreline of 0-13 to 0-6. On the following day at Pairc Ui Chaoimh, Cork got off to a good start to lead by four points inside 12 minutes. However, by the interval, Kerry had edged in front by a point. Kerry dominated most of the second half and the game seemed to be petering out when the Kingdom led by six points with 8 minutes left. However, Cork put in a powerful closing surge, scoring four points without reply to reduce the deficit and at the final whistle, Kerry were relieved to still have two points to spare over Cork, winning by 0-13 to 1-8.

The Munster Final was played in Miltown-Malbay on July 11<sup>th</sup>. The home side dominated the opening exchanges and two Clare goals put them in the driving seat. However, Kerry added 1-2 without reply before half-time to reduce Clare's lead to 2-5 to 1-7 at half-time. Kerry took the lead early in the second half picking off point after point as they began to dominate in all areas. The match was as good as over when Kerry added two late goals and despite a consolation goal for Clare at the end, Kerry were still eleven points to the good at the final whistle – 3-18 to 3-7. Kerry would go on to capture the All-Ireland Junior Football title with a victory over Mayo in late August.

No. of games: 5

Total No of scores: 120 (119 in 2011)

Actual Scores: 12 goals and 108 points (11 goals and 108 points in 2011)

Average per game: 2.4 goals and 21.6 points (2.2 goals and 21.6 points in 2011)

2012 Munster GAA Football Junior Championship						
Quarter-Final	Waterford	2-13	Limerick	1-10	20/5	Gaelic Grounds Limerick
Quarter-Final	Kerry	1-11	Tipperary	1-9	26/5	MacDonagh Park Nenagh
Semi-Final	Clare	0-13	Waterford	0-6	9/6	Gaelic Grounds Limerick
Semi-Final	Kerry	0-13	Cork	1-8	10/6	Pairc Ui Chaoimh
Final	Kerry	3-18	Clare	3-7	11/7	Miltown-Malbay

### **Waterford Crystal and Mc Grath Cup competitions**

The 2012 McGrath Cup Senior Football competition was won by Cork and was covered in the report for 2011. The 2012 Waterford Crystal Cup began on January 22<sup>nd</sup> as Tipperary began their year with a 2-24 to 1-16 victory over LIT. The competition provided competitive games over the ensuing three weekends, including a draw after extra time between Limerick and Clare – sides that would meet again in other competitions as the year progressed. The semi-finals on February 12<sup>th</sup> were high scoring affairs as Clare defeated Waterford by 3-17 to 4-9 in Walsh Park Waterford while Tipperary needed extra time to defeat Cork by 0-26 to 1-19 in Templemore. The final needed to be put back 2 weeks due to Munster's involvement in the M Donnelly Inter-Provincial Hurling Semi-final and was played on Sunday March 4<sup>th</sup> in Sixmilebridge. Clare led early on but by the interval, Tipperary had earned a 1-12 to 1-7 lead. A Clare goal midway through the second half left just a point between the teams. However, Clare accuracy in front of goal let them down, recording 16 wides over the 70 minutes. Tipperary emptied the bench in the final quarter and secured a six point victory on a scoreline of 1-21 to 2-12.

### **AIB Munster GAA Club Championships**

Before detailing our 2012 Munster Club Champions, congratulations to Milltown-Castlemaine (Kerry) who became the only Munster club champion from 2011 to go on and capture All-Ireland honours in February 2012 with a seven point victory over Davitts (Mayo).

The 2012 Munster Club Championships got underway on the last Sunday in October when Thurles Sarsfields and Kilmallock served up a thriller in the Munster Club Senior Hurling Championship with the Tipperary champions winning by 2-12 to 0-15. Two weeks later, Thurles Sarsfields again showed resolve when despite losing a lead to Sarsfields (Cork), they managed to score 1-2 without reply in injury time to win. The other semi-final between De La Salle and Newmarket-on-Fergus proved to be just as exciting, decided by a late De La Salle goal. The Munster Club Senior Hurling Final was played on November 25<sup>th</sup> and was a repeat of the 2010 decider won by De La Salle. Thurles Sarsfields had the better of the early exchanges but a De La Salle goal just before the interval brought the Waterford champions back in to contention. Crucially, De La Salle also had a man sent off just before half-time and Thurles Sarsfields led by 1-9 to 1-7 at the break with the prospect of a man advantage to come. De La Salle made light of this burden early in the second half as they drew level but in the final stages, Thurles Sarsfields managed to get the scores needed and ran out winners by five points – 1-21 to 1-16.

The Munster Club Senior Football Championship began on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Castlehaven (Cork) had too much for Dromcollogher Broadford (Limerick) at Clonakilty, winning by 1-15 to 0-7. Meanwhile, Dr. Crokes (Kerry) built up an impressive eight point lead over Kilmurry-Ibrickane (Clare) at Quilty in the second semi-final only to see the home team dominate the final 20 minutes. The comeback yielded eight points to just one for Crokes but that final point for the Kerry side proved to be enough as they hung on for a 2-8 to 0-13 victory. Dr. Crokes had no such troubles in the semi-final, defeated Clonmel Commercial (Tipperary) in their own pitch in Killarney by 1-14 to 0-6. The other semi-final was the proverbial game of two halves in Clonakilty. With wind advantage in the first half, Waterford champions Stradbally led by 0-6 to 0-1 at half-time. Castlehaven (Cork) came more in to it in the second half and drew level with 11 minutes remaining when they scored the only goal of the game. Castlehaven would go on to add two further points and in difficult conditions, held out for a 1-5 to 0-7 victory. The final played at Pairc Ui Chaoimh on December 2<sup>nd</sup> saw Dr. Crokes of Kerry retain their title in some style. They dominated the first half and led by 0-11 to 0-4 at the interval and stretched this lead to 11 points midway through the second half. Castlehaven had the better of the final quarter but at the final whistle, Dr. Crokes had successfully retained their title on a scoreline of 0-19 to 0-12.

The Munster Club Intermediate Hurling Championship began on the October bank holiday weekend. The first Quarter-Final saw Silvermines (Tipperary) easily account for Ruan (Clare) by 1-15 to 0-6 at Sixmilebridge. The second Quarter-Final proved not to be so straightforward as Ballybrown (Limerick) and Ballinhassig (Cork) could not be separated during 80 minutes of entertaining action at Pairc Ui Rinn. The replay at Kilmallock on November 3<sup>rd</sup> resulted in a six point victory for Ballybrown. In the semi-finals, Silvermines were made to fight all the way against An Rinn (Waterford), eventually getting the late scores required to ensure a 0-13 to 0-11 victory at Dolla. The other semi-final saw Ballybrown again needing extra time, this time with Ballyduff (Kerry) as the opposition. However, it was Ballyduff who were the better side in the additional 20 minutes as they qualified for the final by 2-13 to 0-14. The final played at Semple Stadium Thurles on November 24<sup>th</sup> was certainly a game of two halves. Ballyduff dominated the first half in almost every facet but 10 wides in this period meant their reward for this dominance was a 0-6 to 0-3 interval lead. Silvermines would improve greatly in the second half, going on to outscore their Kerry opponents by 0-11 to 0-2 with six of these points coming in the final 8 minutes to ensure a 0-14 to 0-8 win for the Tipperary champions.

The Munster Club Intermediate Football Championship began on Saturday November 3<sup>rd</sup> when St. Vincent's (Cork) proved too strong for Moycarkey-Borris (Tipperary) at Pairc Ui Rinn, winning by 1-12 to 0-6. The other Quarter-Final played on the final day was much closer with Pallasgreen (Limerick) having a point to spare over Ballinameela (Waterford) at Cappoquin, winning by 2-8 to 2-7. A week later, the semi-finals were both close affairs. Kerry's Finuge had just three points to spare over Pallasgreen at Bruff, winning by 2-9 to 1-9 while St. Vincent's earned a one point victory over O'Curry's (Clare) by 0-7 to 0-6 at Pairc Ui Rinn. The Munster Final was played at Mallow on November 25<sup>th</sup> and was a low scoring affair. James Flaherty's early second-half goal for Finuge proved to be the crucial score as the Kerry champions won by 1-5 to 0-5 over St. Vincent's.

The Junior Club Hurling Championship in Munster began with a 0-14 to 1-2 victory for St. Kieran's (Limerick) over Kilsheelan-Kilcash (Tipperary) in the Gaelic Grounds Limerick. A week later, St. Kieran's would have a tougher game in their semi-final with Kenmare Shamrocks in Fitzgerald Stadium Killarney, winning by 1-11 to 1-7. The other semi-final saw Kildorrery (Cork) proving too strong for Butlerstown (Waterford) at the WIT GAA Grounds, winning by 4-19 to 0-11. In keeping with the tradition in recent years, the Munster Club Junior Hurling Final was played in Mallow on the second Sunday of December and it produced one of the matches of the year. St. Kieran's deservedly led by three points at half-time and still led by a point midway through the second half. However, a Kildorrery goal by Peter O'Brien in the 48<sup>th</sup> minute helped put the Cork champions in front, a lead extended to four points with 10 minutes remaining. St. Kieran's applied all the pressure in the final stages but at the final whistle, Kildorrery were two points in front, 1-11 to 0-12 and were crowned Munster champions.



The Munster Club Junior Football Championship began on November 18<sup>th</sup> as Cappamore (Limerick) travelled to Borrisokane (Tipperary) and defeated the home side by 2-7 to 0-6. A week later, Kenmare Shamrocks (Kerry) signalled their intentions with a 1-23 to 0-3 victory over Kilmacthomas (Waterford). Kenmare continued their good form in the semi-final with a 2-15 to 1-8 victory over Rockchapel (Cork) in Fitzgerald Stadium Killarney. The other semi-final was a low scoring affair with Cappamore (Limerick) defeating Clarecastle (Clare) by 1-6 to 0-4 in the Gaelic Grounds Limerick. The final played at Mallow on December 9<sup>th</sup> was a high scoring affair with the Kenmare forwards in particular in good form. Kenmare led by 0-9 to 0-2 after the first quarter and despite adding another five points before the interval, Cappamore got back in to contention with 1-4 of their own to leave the half-time score 0-14 to 1-6. The rate of scores decreased unsurprisingly in the second half as Kenmare extended their lead to eight points. A late Cappamore goal served as a consolation score as Kenmare were crowned champions by 0-20 to 2-8.

### **M Donnelly Inter-Provincial Championships**

The Munster hurlers managed by Liam Sheedy (Tipperary) played Leinster in the semi-final of the Martin Donnelly Inter-Provincial Hurling Championship on Sunday February 19<sup>th</sup> at Nowlan Park Kilkenny. A Leinster team dominated by Kilkenny players were much better than their Munster counter-parts in the first half en-route to a 3-8 to 0-8 interval lead. Munster played much better in the second half, reducing the deficit to just two points with five minutes remaining. Munster had one last chance but Pat Horgan's penalty was saved and Leinster added two late points as insurance to run out winners by 3-14 to 1-16.

The Munster footballers managed by Ger O'Sullivan (Cork) also drew Leinster with this match being played in Parnell Park Dublin on February 19<sup>th</sup>. Munster had the better of the opening half and deserved led by 1-10 to 1-4 at the interval. Leinster's play improved in the second half but Munster kept their noses in front and secured a place in the final by virtue of a 1-16 to 1-13 victory. The Martin Donnelly Inter-Provincial Football Championship final was played a week later in the Morgan Athletic Grounds Armagh with Ulster providing the formidable opposition. After a close first half, Ulster led by 1-7 to 0-9 at half-time. Munster were the better team for much of the second half, taking a three point lead on two occasions and most crucially, heading in to the final 5 minutes. Ulster added two points to leave just the minimum between the sides before Ulster struck for a late goal by full-back Neil McGee (Donegal) to seal a come from behind 3-11 to 1-15 success.

### **Inter County/ Inter Club Championships – 2012 Roll of Honour**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Team</b>
Inter-County Senior Hurling	Tipperary
Inter-County Senior Football	Cork
Inter-County Intermediate Hurling	Tipperary
Inter-County Junior Football	Kerry
Inter-County Fé 21 Football	Cork
Inter-County Fé 21 Hurling	Clare
Inter-County Minor Hurling	Tipperary
Inter-County Minor Football	Tipperary
Waterford Crystal Cup 2012	Tipperary
McGrath Cup 2012	Cork
Inter-Club Senior Hurling	Thurles Sarsfields (Tipperary)
Inter-Club Senior Football	Dr Crokes (Kerry)
Inter-Club Intermediate Hurling	Silvermines (Tipperary)
Inter-Club Intermediate Football	Finuge (Kerry)
Inter-Club Junior Hurling	Kildorrery (Cork)
Inter-Club Junior Football	Kenmare Shamrocks (Kerry)

### **Referees**

At Provincial level we continue to be served well by a bunch of high quality dedicated referees who continually perform their role in a professional manner. In particular, it is good to see new, younger referees gaining experience at inter-county level and we look forward to their continued progress in the coming year. Thanks to the referees committee led by Willie Barrett and Kevin Walsh for their organisation and support of our referees, linemen and umpires without which we would have no games.

## **Inter County Championship Final Referees 2012**

Iomáint Shinsir	Cathal Mc Allister (Cork)
Peil Shinsir	Eddie Kinsella (Laois)
Iomáint Idirmheanach	Diarmuid Kirwan (Cork)
Peil Shóisir	Brian Tyrell (Tipperary)
Iomáint Fé 21	John Sexton (Cork)
Peil Fé 21	Keith O' Brien (Tipperary)
Iomáint na Mionúr	Colm Lyons (Cork)
Peil na Mionúr	Conor Lane (Cork)
Corn Mhic Craith	Pádraig O' Sullivan (Kerry)
Waterford Crystal Cup	Diarmuid Kirwan (Cork)

## **Club Championships Referees 2012**

Iomáint Shinsir na gClub	Shane Hourigan (Limerick)
Peil Shinsir na gClub	Michael Meade (Limerick)
Iomáint Idirmheanach na gClub	Jer Lynch (Kerry)
Peil Idirmheanach na gClub	Derek O'Mahoney (Tipperary)
Iomáint Shóisir na gClub	Damian Fox (Clare)
Peil Shóisir na gClub	Maurice Condon (Waterford)

## **NACB**

The partnership between the North American County Board (NACB) GAA and Munster GAA continues to evolve with the ultimate aim of ensuring the long term sustainability and growth of our Games in North America. The NACB, which was established in 1959, caters for more than 10,000 players playing with 114 clubs and is currently engaged in 15 youth programmes. The official launch of the North American County Board Strategic Plan at the 2012 Annual Congress is another step in securing the future of our games in North America in the coming years. The strategy document, which was devised with the assistance of Munster GAA, covers the promotion of Hurling, Gaelic football, Camogie and Ladies Football across the continent. The plan covers the following areas - Games Development; Communications, Sponsorship and Marketing; Volunteers, Player Welfare and Club Excellence; Administration, Structures, Operations and Fixtures; Facilities; Financial Excellence; Insurance; NACB and Munster GAA Partnership. Like any plan, the success will come from the hard work required to achieve the objectives as laid out and Munster GAA remains committed to ensuring we provide whatever assistance that is required to meet this challenge.

## **Council Sub Committees**

The work of the numerous Munster GAA sub-committees continued unabated during the past year. The importance of this subcommittee structure is crucial and we thank all of those voluntary GAA officials who give of their time to serve on these sub-committees.

## **Annual Awards**

Bord Gais Energy were once again the sponsors of our Annual Awards and we thank them for their continued support. Hosted at the Malton Hotel Killarney, the night was a huge success and enjoyed by all present and we thank the hotel for the excellent meal and for the hospitality shown on the night. To the many worthy Award recipients, thank you for your positive contribution to our games and the GAA.

## **Playing Awards**

Minor Hurler of the Year	John McGrath (Tipperary)
Minor Footballer of the Year:	Colman Kennedy (Tipperary)
Under 21 Hurler of the Year:	Tony Kelly (Clare)
Under 21 Footballer of the Year:	Donal Og Hodnett (Cork)
Intermediate Hurler of the Year:	David Butler (Tipperary)
Junior Footballer of the Year:	David Callaghan (Kerry)
Camogie Player of the Year:	Fiona Lafferty (Clare)
Ladies Gaelic Footballer of the Year	Brid Stack (Cork)
Handballer of the Year:	John Ferncombe (Tipperary)
Senior Footballer of the Year:	Donncha O'Connor (Cork)
Senior Hurler of the Year:	Patrick "Bonner" Maher (Tipperary)

## **Distinguished Service / Other Awards Categories**

Coaching & Schools GAA:	Tim O'Byrne (Waterford)
Media Award:	Weeshie Fogarty (Kerry)
Refereeing Award:	John Motherway (Cork)
Special Merit Award:	Michael McDonnell (Limerick)
Distinguished Service to the GAA	Harry Greensmyth (Limerick)
Club of the Year:	Dr. Crokes (Kerry)
Manager of the Year:	Donal Moloney and Gerry O'Connor (Clare)
Hall of Fame (Football):	Denis Coughlan (Cork)
Hall of Fame (Hurling):	Pat Hartigan (Limerick)
Supporter of the Year	Donal O'Leary (Kerry)

## **Ladies Football / Camogie / Handball**

Munster GAA continues to have has a good relationship with our sister Associations and with handball which serves the GAA community well. With the completion of our new HQ, the offices of all three Associations now use the new facilities – something which further enhances this cooperation. We wish all three Associations continued success in the future as we look to further improve our relationship with them, not just as Provincial level but also at Club and County.

## **Croke Park Staff**

Many thanks to the Croke Park team under the stewardship of Paraic Duffy for their help and assistance to the staff and members of the Munster Council during the year.

## **Uachtarán**

At the 2012 Congress in Laois, Liam O'Neill took over from Christy Cooney as Uachtarán CLG. We congratulate Liam on his elevation to this office and thank him for his help and cooperation to the Munster Council at all times.

## **Schools**

The role of our schools at all levels is critical to the success of developing and promoting our games and Association. We thank all of those in the education sector who through their dedication and work continue to grow our games at schools level.

At Primary Schools level, there is excellent work on-going at Cumann na mBunscol level and the help and assistance of local clubs is crucial in ensuring this continues. The Primary Game continues to be the aspiration of many of our young boys and girls who dream of wearing their county jersey one day. We thank The Star newspaper for their continued sponsorship of this important promotion.

At Post-Primary schools level, we continue to enjoy great games. As we look forward to the 2013/2014 school year, the plans to run competitions which will include teams from what were historically known as the Colleges and Vocational Schools sectors is a welcome development.

At Third Level, our GAA colleges within the province continue to do great work. UCC hosted the centenary Fitzgibbon Cup and duly won the competition and we congratulate them and all the other colleges from the province who achieved success during the past year.

## **Development Grants**

Despite the difficult economic times, the Munster GAA Development Grants continue to be an important financial support for our clubs across Munster. The total number of grant applications was down slightly in 2012 with 158 applications (compared to 164 for 2011). Munster GAA remains in a position to support clubs with the same percentage of the overall spend as in better times, something which is much appreciated by clubs who continue to develop their facilities.

## **Financial Matters**

The review of our Financial report will be covered by our Treasurer Michael Fitzgerald and our former Financial Controller Enda Mc-Guane.

## Attendances

Throughout recent years, there has been a specific focus on attendances by sections of the media and this reached new heights in 2012. A similar focus does not seem to be as apparent with other sports for some reason. By citing falling attendances, the media then turn to GAA personalities past and present to attribute this perceived fall-off on items such as ticket prices, the format of the championship, the standard of play on offer etc. From a media perspective, this is a common practice but if attendances are not falling dramatically then the original premise of the issue at hand is based on incorrect information. The facts of the matter when highlighted at the end of the year rarely receive back-page comment or mention of any description when they show that the dramatic fall-off in attendances written about during the summer months turns out not to be accurate.

The most focus on attendances was reserved for the Munster Senior Hurling Championship. In the four matches, despite negative comments about all the size of the crowds on each occasion, the trend in attendance is down by 0.32% or in actual figures, a collective reduction of 300 patrons less than in 2011. Measure this against a 5.7% increase in attendances for the Munster Minor and Under 21 Hurling and Football matches – an increase of 2802 patrons from 2011 and it puts in to perspective the negative agenda in relation to our attendance figures.

The easiest target for criticism on attendances came in the Munster Senior Football Championship which dropped by 24% or in total, by just over 12,000 in total. This reduction can be attributed to the attendance of the Cork v Kerry match which in 2011 attracted over 41,000 people for a Munster Final in Fitzgerald Stadium Killarney. This year's meeting for the semi-final clash of the old rivals attracted an attendance of 23,184. Comparisons between these two figures without consideration of the venue or the stage of the competition were held as evidence of falling attendances. It is worth pointing out that in Cork v Kerry championship matches played in Pairc Ui Chaoimh over the last ten years, the attendance levels has been remarkably consistent with just two exceptions (see below). This clearly illustrates that for various reasons, the Cork v Kerry attendances in Killarney tend to be significantly higher than for the same pairing at the Pairc Ui Chaiomh venue.

2002 Munster Semi-Final Replay – 22568

2005 Munster Final – 32000

2006 Munster Final Replay – 23683

2008 Munster Final – 22784

2009 Munster Semi-Final Replay – 30270

2010 Munster Semi-Final – 23465

2012 Munster Semi-Final – 23184

## **Admission Prices & Packages**

During the 2012 Championships, cost was an important factor for supporters wishing to attend our games. A series of packages focused on value for families and GAA members was rolled out to counties and via local radio in particular in advance of the Munster Championship and during the season. While the take-up of these was high in a minority of counties, for whatever reason this strategy was not successful in reaching our supporters who seemed unaware in a lot of cases of the discounts on offer. What did seem to work was the strategy of giving a 5 euro reduction to those who purchased in advance of both of our Munster Finals and this is something which will need to be looked at for the 2013 season. The GAA continue to be to the forefront in allowing our Under 16s to attend our Championship matches either free of charge or for 5 euro at ticketed games, something which receives widespread praise from supporters and commentators alike.

## **Council Officers**

Munster GAA is well served by the Officers elected to lead this Province. As Sean Walsh finishes his three year term as Chairman of the Munster Council, he does so in the knowledge that he has done an excellent job in difficult times for our GAA units and supporters alike. We wish him well in whatever GAA role he takes up in the future.

Robert Frost will assume the role of Munster GAA Chairman at Convention after three years as Vice-Chairman. During this time, Robert has provided important leadership in the area of Coaching and Games and we wish him every success in his new role leading our Council for the next three years.

In the role of Treasurer, Michael Fitzgerald has worked well with our former Financial Controller Enda McGuane and this team work serves the Council well. While our PRO Ed Donnelly works well with the media and our GAA units to keep all informed and to promote our Games.

## **Sympathy**

As with every year The Association in the Province has lost many of its members over the past twelve months. On Behalf of the Council I wish to convey sympathy and condolences to all bereaved relatives and friends of those who passed away during 2012. Go dtuga Dia snaimhneas siorai da n-anamnacha do léir.

## Buíochas

In concluding this report, many thanks to the following for their cooperation with Munster GAA during 2012 -

- To the County Officers in the six County Committees in Munster.
- To the Referees, Linesmen, Fourth officials, Umpires and Assessors for the manner in which they officiated at our games in 2012
- To the officers and members of the schools bodies for the ongoing work they do in support of our games in the various levels of schools.
- To the Event Controllers, Safety Officers, and Chief Stewards in our stadia.
- To the several Stilesmen, Stewards, Groundsmen, Catering personnel who have helped us during the year in ensuring that access to our games, at whatever level, is safe and efficient. Also to the Event Controllers in the major venues and to the Gardai, Health Board personnel, and many others who make our games safe for patrons.
- To all the Players at every grade who provided the entertainment through their efforts and dedication. The popularity of the games for the patrons attending the games and for those watching or listening to media coverage is testament to the level of excellence you have achieved in your chosen sport and the commitment and passion you have shown for our games and Association.
- To all the GAA clubs, thanks for everything you do to keep the GAA to the forefront of every community in the province.
- To the media personnel, national and local, for the excellent coverage which our games receive at every level throughout the year.
- To the Sponsors who provide generous sponsorship to the Council
- To the Uachtarán, Ard Stiurthóir and all the staff in Páirc an Chrócaigh for the co-operation and assistance received during 2012
- Thanks for the contribution made to the work of the Council by all of staff of Comhairle na Mumhan: Enda, Kathleen, Nuala and new arrival Mary O'Mahony who joined the staff following Kathleen's retirement. Thanks also to Joey Carton and Pat O'Shea for their leadership on the Coaching front. This year also we had 2 students on placement John and Nicola. My thanks to both for their commitment and hard work.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh.

Mise le meas,

Eamonn Ó Donnghaile | Ed Donnelly

Oifigeach Caidreamh Poiblí

Comhairle na Mumhan CLG