



## Offaly Sports Partnership Newsletter

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### Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of the Offaly Sports Partnership newsletter.

In this issue, we report on the Launch of the National Network of Local Sports Partnerships and various other events which have taken place in the last quarter, congratulate Minister Martin Cullen on his new appointment, and advertise upcoming programmes and events.

We are still updating our clubs and facilities databases which will also be available online at [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie). Should you wish your details to be included on our database, please contact Olivia Murphy at the Offaly Sports Partnership.

Likewise, if there are any upcoming events you would like included on the website or in the newsletter, please contact Olivia on 057 93 57462 or by email to [omurphy@offalycoco.ie](mailto:omurphy@offalycoco.ie)

*Eamonn Henry, Coordinator, Offaly Sports Partnership*

### New Minister for Arts, Sports & Tourism



Martin Cullen TD has been appointed Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism replacing Séamus Brennan who stepped down due to illness on 6th May 2008.

A former mayor of Waterford, Minister Cullen has previously held three front bench positions. Offaly Sports Partnership congratulates Minister Cullen on his appointment and wishes him every success in his new role. Offaly Sports Partnership also wishes Deputy Brennan a speedy recovery.

### Offaly Sports Partnership Website Going Live

The Offaly Sports Partnership website, [www.offalysports.ie](http://www.offalysports.ie), will go live in July. Developed by Dotser, this website will provide a comprehensive list of clubs, facilities, events, and training courses for members of sporting organisations and the general public. The website will also feature a variety of news items and profile much of the work of the Partnership.

If you would like your information published on the website (eg club details, events, etc), please contact Olivia Murphy on 057 93 57462 or by email to [omurphy@offalycoco.ie](mailto:omurphy@offalycoco.ie).

## National Network of Local Sports Partnerships Launched

Offaly Sports Partnership was represented at the official launch of the National Network of Local Sports Partnership on April 23rd at Kilmainham Hospital by board members Cllr John Carroll and Eimear Murphy, and by staff members Claire Grehan and Olivia Murphy.



Seven years after the first Partnerships were established, there is now a Local Sports Partnership in every county and city council in Ireland. 20 of the 33 Partnerships are structured under their County Development Boards, and the other 13 are independent companies.

Among the speakers at the launch were Séamus Brennan TD, Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, Ossie Kilkenny, Chairperson of the Irish Sports Council and John Treacy, Chief Executive Officer of the Irish Sports Council.

The Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, Séamus Brennan said "The Sports Partnerships are making a major contribution to the sport sector in Ireland and the completion of the national network must be warmly welcomed. Their essential work is increasing participation amongst those sectors of society that are underrepresented in sport."

Ossie Kilkenny outlined how the Irish Sports Council have set ambitious targets to increase participation in the coming years and the critical role that Local Sports Partnerships will have to play in the realisation of these targets.

John Treacy hailed the launch "as a proud day for the Irish Sports Council". "Our vision of a National Network of Sports Partnerships is finally realised" he said. Mr. Treacy applauded the work of the Local Sports Partnerships to date. This was also reflected in the positive review produced from the SPEAK (Strategic Planning, Evaluation and Knowledge Networking) system. Offaly Sports Partnership is committed to continually inputting the results of our work into this system.

## Change on the Offaly Sports Partnership Management Committee



Orla Dempsey, Sports Development Officer with the IWA Sport replaces Eimear

Murphy on the Offaly Sports Partnership Management Committee.

Orla represented the disability sector on our committee during the strategic planning process but had to take some time out for family reasons. Orla is a renowned basketball player and

has competed from local to international level in the sport. We extend a warm welcome to Orla as she rejoins us.



Eimear is moving on to take up employment with the Peter Bradley

Foundation in Dublin. A native of Westmeath, Eimear is a member of Drumraney Camogie Club and Garrycastle Ladies Football Club.

We extend our thanks and appreciation to Eimear for her work on our management committee, and the support she offered our Sports Inclusion Disability Officer when she commenced employment. We wish her well in her new job.



## Primary Schools Fly the Flag for Offaly



The Mid Leinster Finals of the EA Sports FAI Schools 5-a-side competition saw the county winners of Offaly battle it out to win a place in the Leinster Finals.

30 teams from 12 primary schools in Offaly took part in the competition which was broken down into five separate sections including boys and girls.



Following an excellent day of competition and fun, the following schools were victorious - Boys A Cup: St Broghan's National School, Girls A Cup: Scoil Naomh Colmcille, Boys B Cup:

Mucklagh National School, Boys C Cup: St Patrick's Boys National School. These schools represented Offaly in the Mid Leinster Finals on Wednesday, 30th April 2008.



St Broghan's of Offaly later went on to win all three of their matches in the Mid Leinster finals thereby securing their place in the National Finals which were held in Tullamore Town's Leah Victoria Park on Wednesday, 28th May.

This in itself was a major achievement as it was their first time to compete in a soccer tournament of this level.

At the National Finals in Leah Victoria Park on Wednesday 28th May, the home side of St Broghan's came fourth in the A Schools Division.



## Tír na nÓg Sports Festival for Older People



Tír na nÓg Active Retirement Association ran a very successful Sports Festival on Friday, 26th April in Kilmac Community Centre.

Many of the attendees took part in a wide variety of activities including boccia, kurling, pitchy, carpet bowls, parachute games and dancing.

Well done to Claire O'Driscoll, Physical Activity Leader with Tír na nÓg for organising the event.

## Come Try It Sports Inclusion Disability Day

On Friday 16th May 08, Offaly Sports Partnership hosted its first Come Try It Sports Inclusion Disability Day in the Tullamore Harriers Sports Club.



Forty three students from four special education schools in Offaly participated in a number of sports (e.g. boccia, new age kurling, power soccer, soccer, athletics, hand cycling, spongy polo) and a host of other physical activities on the day.

A tremendous team of experienced and energetic volunteers, sports development officers,

great weather and a lively, enthusiastic bunch of students all contributed to a terrific day, greatly enjoyed by all.



Claire Grehan (SIDO) described the day as a great success as the students now have greater self confidence in participating in sport and physical activity.

In addition, many of the teachers and special needs assistants who participated in the events are now more aware of their students capabilities and are committed to incorporating the activities sampled into their classes.



Claire is looking forward to continuing her work with special education schools in Offaly to ensure greater participation opportunities in sport and physical activity for people with disabilities.



the dormant T h e  
accounts board S p o r t s  
Inclusion

Disability Programme is supported by the Dormant Accounts Board.

## Wheelchair/Power Soccer Club Proposed

Offaly and Westmeath Sports Partnership, in conjunction with the Football Association of Ireland's 'Football For All Programme' are currently recruiting members to join a Wheelchair Soccer/Power Soccer Club in counties Offaly and Westmeath



Wheelchair Soccer is one of the most exciting new sports for wheelchair users. Power Soccer is a true dynamic development for power wheelchair users. This action packed team sport combines the skill of the wheelchair user with the speed and power of the chair itself, to participate in an extremely challenging game very similar to soccer.

Oisín Jordan, National Co-ordinator of the F.A.I. 'Football for All Programme' along with Luke Hardy and Dave Connell, Regional Development Officers, fully support the establishment of this exciting new club and are looking to expand the numbers currently participating. Closing date for receipt of expressions of interest in Power Soccer is Friday 18th July



## Athletics for People with Physical Disabilities

An Athletics Programme for People with Physical Disabilities will take place every Monday evening from 7 - 9pm in the Tullamore Harriers.

For more information on any of the Sports Inclusion Disability programmes contact Claire Grehan, SIDO on 057 93 57463 or by email to [cgrehan@offalycoco.ie](mailto:cgrehan@offalycoco.ie)

## Féile na nGael 2008 - A Resounding Success

Submitted by Alan Walsh, PRO for Féile na nGael

Counties Laois and Offaly jointly hosted the 38th Féile na nGael National Festival over the weekend of Friday, June 20th to Sunday, June 22nd.



Months of preparation went into the organisation of Féile 2008 and while Portlaoise was the focal point of this year's festival, next year the centre for the grand opening parade and the hurling and camogie finals will be Birr. Laois / Offaly previously co-hosted Féile na nGael in 1988/'89.

Féile na nGael is the national festival of Hurling, Camogie and Handball for boys and girls under 14 years of age and is based on the GAA club unit. Féile na nGael is sponsored by Coca-Cola Bottlers (Ire) Ltd. and they have been sponsors since 1971. Each year some 25,000 boys and girls take part - all 32 counties, along with London and Warwickshire also participate.

When the preliminary competition is completed in each county, the winning club then travels to the host county or province where they are hosted by families and engage the host club in hurling, camogie and handball games. Since 1971 over one million boys and girls have participated in this great festival.

Féile na nGael is a national movement with the primary objective of facilitating and enabling the personal, social and cultural development of young people. It also emphasises cultural and community activities, leadership and training through sport. It is recognised by the GAA as a major festival of great importance for the promotion of hurling, camogie and handball among the youth of our country. It also has the full support of the GAA, the Department of Education, Irish Sports Council and other Government bodies and cultural agencies.

Féile na nGael places great emphasis and importance on proper participation, presentation, punctuality and sportsmanship. It reaches through the nation involving the whole community - clubs, schools, social and cultural groups, Gardaí, bands, civic and religious authorities and families. It helps to bond communities, forge friendships, provide educational opportunities and unearth new leaders.

Many events were staged in conjunction with Féile na nGael to raise awareness of the National Festival in June. Almost seventy national schools in Laois and Offaly were visited by well known sporting personalities over four sun filled days in May.



At the launch night on Tuesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> Micheal O'Muircheartaigh, Kilkenny hurler Eddie Brennan, Laois's only All Star hurler Pat Critchley, Offaly's 1981 All-Ireland winning captain Pdraig Horan and Millennium Man Brian Whelahan were guests at a 'Questions and Answers Session' where youngsters from Laois and Offaly posed the questions.

There were a series of cross-county hurling blitzes, camogie blitz days and hurling Skill Star competitions. The Laois and Offaly Sports Partnerships held Code of Ethics workshops. There was a National Schools Table Quiz in Portlaoise Parish Centre on Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup> with teams from Laois and Offaly participating.

Féile na nGael 2008 was a resounding success and here's looking forward to the 2009 Festival! Here are some Féile Facts and Figures: -

In excess of 3,584 young boys and girls Under 14 from all thirty-two counties, London and Warwickshire participated in Féile na nGael 2008. There was Skill Star participants in all three codes also.

200 teams were in action over the weekend. This year's Féile na nGael witnessed the biggest handball entry since the festival began in 1971.

328 matches were played over the weekend of Féile na nGael 2008.

O'Moore Park, Portlaoise and Portlaoise GAA Club Grounds were the venues for ten Féile na nGael National Finals on Sunday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The nine Féile na nGael Handball Finals were staged on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> at alleys in Monavea, Clara, Crinkle, Cullohill, Clogh and Fahy Cross.

The Féile na nGael Torch was carried during the Parade by Laois Hurling Skill Star winner PJ Scully (Borris-in-Ossory) and Offaly Hurling Skill Star winner Kevin O'Connor (Kinnitty).

The Hurling & Camogie Skill Star Competitions took place on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup> in O'Moore Park, Portlaoise and Portlaoise GAA Club Grounds, respectively. The Hurling Skill Star event was co-ordinated by Offaly 1981 & 1985 All-Ireland SHC medal winner Ger Coughlan, along with Laois's only Hurling All Star recipient Pat Critchley.

Sixty-four primary schools across Laois and Offaly were visited during four days in May to promote Féile na nGael and the games of Hurling, Camogie and Handball. Since 1971 more than one million boys and girls have participated in Féile na nGael.

For more information on Féile na nGael, visit [www.feilenangael08.gaa.ie](http://www.feilenangael08.gaa.ie)



## Summer Athletics Programme



Offaly Sports Partnership, Offaly GAA and Athletics Offaly have come together in an effort to rejuvenate juvenile athletics in Offaly. Coaching of children for the upcoming cross country season will be held from the first week in July in 12 GAA fields across the county and will continue into September.

Participants will have the chance to compete in the Cross Country Championships in October and possibly be selected to represent Offaly in the Leinster Championships. Offaly Sports Partnership feels that this is an excellent example of governing bodies working together to promote complementary sports. According to John Leahy, Games Promotion Officer with Offaly GAA, "this programme offers an opportunity for children participating in GAA and other sports to improve fitness, speed and stamina for their chosen sport, and we are pleased to give our full support". Paul McNamara, Regional Development Officer with Athletics Ireland added his support, "this is a fantastic opportunity to re-establish cross country running as a mass participation sport for children at local level. We in Athletics Ireland are grateful to Offaly GAA, Offaly Sports Partnership and the other partners that have pulled together to support the project. We hope that it is a huge success and is something that will be replicated in other counties in Ireland".

This programme is being offered free so why not come along, get fit and see how far you progress. Training details for your local area can be found in our upcoming events on pages 7 and 8. This programme is supported by Offaly County Council with Athlone and Tralee Institutes of Technology, and additional support in north Offaly from the Edenderry Community Development Project and OAK Partnership.

### Travellers in Sport Programme

The Travellers in Sport working group of Offaly Sports Partnership are continuing to advance plans to support the increased participation of Travellers on a peer led programme.

A training programme for Physical Activity Tutors from within the Traveller Community will commence in September. A three year business plan for submission to Pobal under the Community Services Programme will also be developed with a view to employing some of the physical activity tutors on peer led programmes.

Offaly Sports Partnership wishes to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of the members of the working group and the organisations that they represent for bringing the project to fruition. These are Séan O'Brien FÁS, Bridget McInerney Traveller Information Officer Offaly County Council, Fergal Fox HSE Traveller Health Unit, Donna Quinn Tullamore Wider Option, Liam McGlynn Offaly Outreach Education Project, Eileen Connolly, Jobs Facilitator Department of Social and Family Affairs, Leanne Greville Offaly Cohesion Working Group and Thomas McDonagh. Tullamore Traveller Movement.

### Community Services Programme



Calls for applications under the Community Services Programme closed on May 31st.

Offaly Sports Partnership promoted this programme to a number of eligible groups in order to ensure that potential investment for sports and physical activity projects is secured.

Six quality applications have been received under the programme with a focus on sport and physical activity from the following organisations: -

**Strand 1** - Daingean Sports Complex Committee and Crinkle Sport & Recreation Centre

**Strand 2** - Rahan Parish Development and Offaly Camogie Development Committee

**Strand 3** - Offaly Centre for Independent Living and St Joseph's Sports Committee

We wish the applicants well in the local and national competition for this programme.

## Upcoming events

### 7th Annual Laois Walks Festival

**Date:** 24 June - 25 July

**Location:** 18 walks at 12 locations around Laois featuring Woodland, Mountain, Canal, Bog and Road walks.

**Contact:** Laois Leader on 057 86 61900

### Athletics for People with Physical Disabilities Summer Programme

**Date:** Every Monday night from 7 - 9pm

**Location:** Tullamore Harriers Sports Club

**Contact:** Orla Dempsey, IWA Sport on 087 2791811

Claire Grehan on 057 93 57463

### Daingean Badminton Club

Meet every Tuesday at 8pm in the Town Hall. New members welcome

### GAA Cul Camps Offaly 2008

**Date:** 7 - 14 July

**Locations:** Clara, Ferbane, Coolderry

**Date:** 14 - 18 July

**Locations:** Rhode & Banagher

**Date:** 21 - 25 July

**Locations:** Edenderry, Clareen & Doon

**Date:** 28 July - 1 August

**Locations:** Tullamore, Shamrocks, Rath & Shinrone

**Date:** 14 - 18 July

**Locations:** Rhode & Banagher

**Date:** 21 - 25 July

**Locations:** Edenderry, Clareen & Doon

**Date:** 28 July - 1 August

**Locations:** Tullamore, Shamrocks, Rath & Shinrone

**Date:** 11 - 16 August

**Locations:** Gracefield & Birr

**Date:** 18 - 22 August

**Location:** Daingean

**Time:** 10am to 2.30pm

**Age group:** 2nd - 6th class

**Cost:** €55

**Closing date:** 30 May

**Contact:** John Leahy on 087 2073226

### Offaly Sports Partnership Summer Athletics Programme

**Date:** Every Monday &

Thursday from 3 - 4.30pm

**Location:** Edenderry GAA field

**Date:** Every Monday & Thursday from 5 - 6.30pm

**Location:** Rhode GAA field

**Date:** Every Tuesday & Friday from 3 - 4.30pm

**Location:** Daingean GAA field

**Date:** Every Tuesday & Friday from 5 - 6.30pm

**Location:** Geashill GAA field

**Date:** Every Wednesday from 3 - 4.30pm & Saturday from 10 - 11.30am

**Location:** Walsh Island GAA field

**Date:** Every Wednesday from 5 - 6.30pm & Saturday from 12 - 1.30pm

**Location:** Gracefield GAA field

**Date:** Every Monday & Thursday from 3 - 4.30pm

**Location:** Birr GAA field

**Date:** Every Monday & Thursday from 5 - 6.30pm

**Location:** Kilcormac GAA field

**Date:** Every Tuesday &

Friday from 3 - 4.30pm

**Location:** Coolderry-GAA field

**Date:** Every Tuesday & Friday from 5 - 6.30pm

**Location:** Shinrone GAA field

**Date:** Every Wednesday from 3 - 4.30pm & Saturday from 10 - 11.30am

**Location:** Clara GAA field

**Date:** Every Tuesday from 5.30 - 7pm & Saturday from 12 - 1.30pm

**Location:** Ferbane GAA field

**Contact:** Eamonn Henry on 057 93 46843

### Summer Madness Summer Camps 2008

**Date:** 7 - 11 July

**Location:** Coláiste Íosagáin

**Date:** 14 - 18 July

**Location:** Mountmellick Community Schools & Sports Complex

**Time:** 9.30am - 3pm

**Age group:** 4 - 6, 7 - 9 & 10+

**Cost:** €95

**Contact:** Frances Deverell on 057 86 26387 or 087 6359354 (between 5.30 & 7.30pm)

<hr/> <p><b>Slieve Bloom Walks</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> Every Sunday from July to September</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Gerry Hanlon on 086 8210056</p> <hr/> <p><b>FAI Summer Soccer Schools 2008</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 7 - 11 July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Birr Town Football Club</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 14 - 18 July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Tullamore Town Football Club</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 21 - 25 July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Gallen United, Ferbane</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 28 July - 1 August</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Killeigh Schoolboys/Schoolgirls Soccer Club, Killeigh</p> <p><b>Date:</b> 4 - 8 August</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Tullamore Town Football Club</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10.30am - 3pm</p> <p><b>Age group:</b> 7 - 15 years</p>	<p><b>Cost:</b> €99</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> www.fai.ie</p> <hr/> <p><b>Sports Turf Seminar</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 10th July 2008</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Kildalton College, Piltown, Co Kilkenny</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10am - 1.30pm</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> €50</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Kildalton College on 051 64 4418</p> <hr/> <p><b>IWA Sport National Junior Athletics Championships</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 12th July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Irishtown Stadium, Dublin</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10am - 4.30pm</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> €10</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Irish Wheelchair Association on 01 8186400</p> <hr/>	<p><b>Athletics Ireland Farmleigh 5k &amp; Family Fun Fitness Day</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 27 July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Phoenix Park, Dublin</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10am - 2pm</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Athletics Ireland on 01 8869933</p> <hr/> <p><b>Parks Tennis</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 28 July - 1 August</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Wilmer Tennis Club, Birr</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> €30</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Wilmer Tennis Club on 086 4052559</p> <hr/> <p><b>Leinster Rugby Summer Camp</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 28 July - 1 August</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Tullamore Rugby Football Club</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 9.30am - 1.30pm</p> <p><b>Age group:</b> 6 - 12 years</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> €99</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Amy Murphy</p>	<p>on 01 2693224 or by email to amy.murphy@leinsterrugby.ie</p> <hr/> <p><b>IWA Sport Junior Summer Camp</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 29 - 31 July</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Dublin City University &amp; IWA Sports Centre, Dublin</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 11am - 1pm</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> Irish Wheelchair Association on 01 8186400</p> <hr/> <p><b>FAI Summer Soccer Goalkeeper School 2008</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> 5 - 7 August</p> <p><b>Location:</b> Tullamore Town Football Club</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 6 - 9pm</p> <p><b>Age group:</b> 7 - 15 years</p> <p><b>Cost:</b> €70</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> www.fai.ie</p> <hr/>
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Offaly Sports Partnership are looking for news items, photographs, club/facilities profiles, upcoming events, etc for their newsletter.

If you have a story, photograph, club, facility or event that you would like profiled in the newsletter, contact Olivia Murphy on 057 93 57462 or by email to [omurphy@offalycoco.ie](mailto:omurphy@offalycoco.ie)

Offaly Sports Partnership is a sub group of Offaly County Development board and is supported by the Irish Sports Council.

