

An Chraobh na Clairseacha

Secretary's Report (AGM 7 Dec 2009)

Introduction

A chairde Gael

I would like to welcome you all on this 7th December night for our Annual General Meeting for 2009. This was a year that the club had contrasting fortunes. The great success of our Sports Lottery application for our new playing facilities brought great happiness, with the £245,000 grant. However we lost our intermediate status with relegation to division 3/junior football for the first time since 2004. I am convinced that we have the potential to make an immediate return to the intermediate grade in time for the opening of our new field in the 2011 season.

Senior Team

After a good season in 2008 with a high finishing place in division 2, expectations were high for 2009. After some searching Terry McCann from Killyclogher was appointed as team manager with assistance from Paddy Park, Mark Doran and Fergal Logan. Training for seniors and reserves began early February and we erected lights to train on the field purchased for the new pitch with circuit training in the pavilion. There were large attendances and great commitment shown by all. Eventually the field became heavy and training switched to MUSA for two nights a week.

Challenge matches followed for both teams in preparation for the division two league beginning in early April.

The first league game was away to Eskra where we were narrowly beaten in a game which we had every chance of winning. Our next game was on Easter Tuesday at home to Gortin and we put in a great team performance to win by a large margin. A reality check followed when we were well beaten by a fitter more determined team at Greencastle. This was soon followed by a one point defeat at Moortown when we surrendered a two point lead by conceding a goal late in injury time. By this stage injuries were beginning to grow and 2009 would prove to be our worst season for a long time in this regard.

We had an early start in the IFC when we played Killyman at Brackaville on Friday 1st May. After dominating the first half we lost our way but did enough to eventually win by three points, despite the severe sending off of C P Devlin early in the second half. We suffered several league defeats before gaining a morale boosting win at home to rivals Derrylaughan in early July. However this was short lived as we travelled to Augher the next week and were well beaten before the July 3 week break. With our management decision to withdraw from the league cup had to seek a couple of challenge matches for this period.

With growing frustration from poor results and the long injury list and dissatisfaction with senior management a delegation of players asked the committee to consider the position of the senior manager. At the committee meeting of 3rd August we voted to dispense with the services of Terry McCann and continue with the rest of the management team. Victories were scarce except for one over bottom placed Killyman and second from bottom team Rock, both at home. We had a great chance of avoiding the relegation play-offs with a home game with fellow strugglers Killeeshil but had to settle for a draw after a late equalizer from the visitors.

We lost the IFC quarter final by 2 points to Eskra despite a great comeback in the final quarter but alas it was not enough.

With ourselves and Killeeshil now joint third from the bottom of Division 2 we faced a play off with the winners to be safe and the loser to go into another relegation play off. We played Killeeshil on a very windy day at Killyman and lost by 3 points . the following Saturday we had home advantage against Rock in the final play off. However the nightmare continued and we lost by 2 points to end our stay in division 2.

Reserves

The reserve team had a difficult year as a result of the many injuries suffered by the senior panel which necessitated in players needed for the seniors. Never the less we fielded in all our games and finished fourth from the bottom of the league. We had an early exit from the championship when we were surprisingly beaten at home by bottom placed Killyman. A worrying aspect of this year's reserve league was the failure of three teams to travel – we would rather have a competitive game than be conceded the points. Maybe its time for the County C C C to examine the state of reserve football in the county – it plays a very important role in our clubs.

Youth Teams

It is worth recording that all our youth teams played at grade 2 level which shows the good progress of our youth coaching. However playing in this grade made it more difficult to win and as a result we have no underage trophies this season.

a) U-14

The season began at the end of February and due to the poor condition of our pitch we played all first round games away. Despite this we reached the semi final of both leagues (lost by one point to Eglis), and championship (lost to Loughmacrory).

b) U-13

This competition began early in September and the boys won all the games and the semi final to face Eglis in grade 2 final. Unfortunately our good form deserted us and our last chance of underage success disappeared in a narrow defeat.

c) U-16

The U-16's played very well in a competitive league with victories over teams like Ardboe, Coalisland, Donaghmore and Eglis and there were high hopes of success in league and championship. However we lost our good form and were beaten in the quarter finals of both league and championship after winning our section of the league. There is great potential in this group of boys.

d) Minor

Our minor team acquitted themselves very well in the league and championship and reached the semi finals of both competitions. However the loss of three key players due to injury cost us dearly as we are working from a small panel and we lost both semi finals. Nevertheless it was a good achievement in our first year in grade 2.

e) U 8/10/12

The u 12 team played ten games in their go games league and competed very well against teams from larger clubs. however there were problems with those clubs who did not play to the spirit and rules of the Go games. The u 8/10 teams played in a series of enjoyable blitzes and we hosted two of these. This is vital work for the future of our club and should be valued by everyone. Youth officer Rory has developed coaching on Fridays nights in the primary hall and deserves great praise for this initiative.

f) Coaching

Thanks to all those people who volunteered to take underage teams. Over the past couple of seasons a large number of members have gained the coaching qualifications and done child protection courses. We are now in the position that almost 100% of our coaches are qualified.

Culture

(Scor and language)

Thanks to the efforts of our cultural officer Martin Campbell we competed in several events in both Scor na Oig and Scor Sinsear and reached semi finals in both. Hopefully we can go further in senior scor in early 2010 with good preparation. A very successful concert was held in the Tavern on the evening of the La na gClub on 10 May and most of the entertainers were from the local area. On the Irish language aspect we erected a welcome sign on the pavilion and some door signs inside. However this area needs more development if we are to care for our native language.

LADIES (REPORT ATTACHED)

La na gClub

I cannot let this 125 year anniversary of the GAA go past without reference to the La na gClub on 10th May. We had a great day of celebration at Mullaghmoyle Park with all ages of football (girls, boys and veterans) side shows, music and Coalisland Silver Band leading a parade. Thanks to all my fellow committee members for their prior planning and work on the day and night – it was a great community spirit.

Thanks

There are a wide variety of people who have played their part in the successful running of our club this year and who deserve our sincere thanks.

- My hard working and dedicated fellow committee members (we had almost 100% attendance for every meeting).
- The Sports Lottery sub-committee for their long hours which brought about our great news in October.
- People who provide food after training and for visiting teams.
- People who wash jerseys for the various teams.
- Our referees Marty Devlin and Stephen Campbell (mens) and Gerard Devlin (ladies). Well done to Stephen on gaining his referee qualification and good luck in your future games.
- Our head groundsman – Terry Coyle and his assistants for preparing the pitch for games in a difficult season, weather wise.

Forgive me if I have left anyone out, you are all appreciated.

Conclusion

As we look forward to the 2010 season and the development of our new playing field lets all work together, players, committee and members in whatever way we can for the well being of this vibrant club.