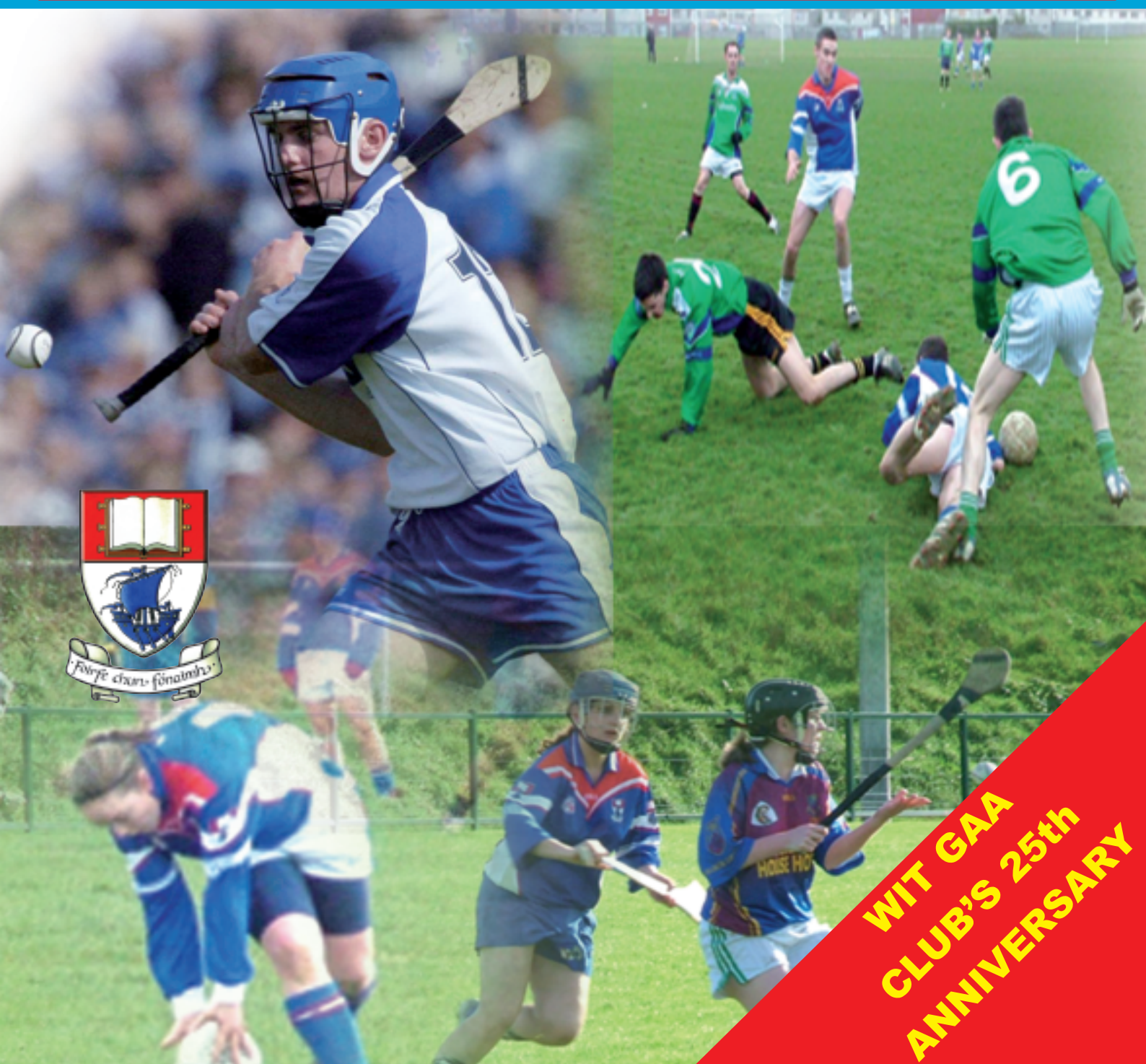




The Magazine of Waterford Institute of Technology GAA Club

Vol 13. September 2006



**WIT GAA
CLUB'S 25th
ANNIVERSARY**

**Message from
Úachtarán CLG
–
Nioclás Ó Braonáin**

**– WIT –
Fitzgibbon Cup
& League
Champions**

**– Special Features –
Football
Hurling
Camogie**

**Articles
&
Features**

WIT GAA CLUB

Roll of Honour 1982-2006

1982-1983	Division 3 Hurling League	1994-1995	Fitzgibbon Cup
1983-1984	Division 2 Hurling League		Division 2B (Intermediate) Football League
1984-1985	Division 3 Football League		Freshers Camogie League
	Freshers Football League	1995-1996	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League
1985-1986	Division 1 Hurling League		Division 2 Football League
1986-1987	Division 1 Hurling League		Handball Ladies Singles Open
	Hurling Championship	1996-1997	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League
	Division 3 Hurling League		Ashbourne Shield
	Freshers Football League		Division 1 Ladies Football League
	Munster Freshers Football Championship		Division 1 Hurling League
1987-1988	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League	1997-1998	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League
	Ladies Football Championship		Division 1 Hurling League
	Munster Freshers Hurling Championship		Division 1 Camogie League
	Fitzgibbon Plate Hurling		Division 3 Hurling League
1988-1989	Division 1B (Intermediate) Hurling League	1998-1999	Fitzgibbon Cup
	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League		Ashbourne Cup
	Munster Freshers Hurling Championship		Division 1 Camogie League
	Freshers Camogie League		Division 1 Ladies Football League
	Division 1 Ladies Football League		Division 1 Freshers Ladies Football Championship
1989-1990	Purcell Cup Camogie Championship		O'Connor Cup Plate – Ladies Football
	Division 2B (Intermediate) Football League	1999-2000	Fitzgibbon Cup
	Division 2B (Intermediate) Hurling League		Division 1 Hurling League
1990-1991	Purcell Shield Camogie Championship		Division 1 Freshers Hurling League
	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League	2000-2001	Ashbourne Cup
	Division 2 Football Trench Shield	2001-2002	Division 1 Hurling League
1991-1992	Division 1 Camogie League		Division 1 Freshers Ladies Football Shield
	Purcell Cup Camogie Championship	2003-2003	Fitzgibbon Cup
	Division 1 hurling League		Division 1 Freshers Hurling
	Fitzgibbon Cup		Division 2 Freshers Hurling
1992-1993	Division 1 Camogie League		Division 3 Ladies Football
	Purcell Cup Camogie Championship	2003-2004	Fitzgibbon Cup
	Freshers Football League		Intermediate Hurling
	Handball League and Championship		Division 2 Freshers Hurling
1993-1994	Division 1 Freshers Hurling League	2004-2005	Intermediate Hurling
	Munster Freshers Hurling Championship		Fresher Camogie
	Ashbourne Shield	2005-2006	Fitzgibbon Cup
			Division 1 Hurling League
			Freshers Camogie Shield



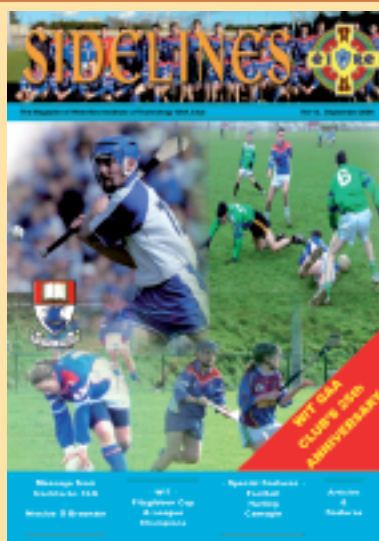
Fíche cúig bliain ag fás

Ar son gach éinne I gCumann Lúthchleas Gael Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Phort Láirge, ba mhaith liom fáilte a chur romaibh go léir chuig an 25ú eagrán Sidelines.

On behalf of all involved in the WIT GAA Club I would like to welcome you to our special edition of Sidelines 2006. It is now 25 years since the GAA was founded in 1981 and we have specially selected articles of interest for your enjoyment. The WIT GAA club has grown from strength to strength since its inception in 1981. We have had tremendous successes at all levels in Camogie, Ladies Football, Hurling and Men's Football and are proud of our tradition of GAA activity both on and off the pitch. I would like to pay tribute to all those who have participated and contributed so significantly over the last twenty five years and in particular I would like to thank the College authorities for their support in terms of funding and resources that they have provided.

Tá súil agam to mbainfidh sibh sult agus taitneamh as.

Damien Young
GAA Development Officer



Cover features Fitzgibbon Cup winners, 2005-06 and action from ladies' and men's football, camogie and hurling.

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A message from Úachtarán CLG Nioclás Ó Braonáin



The G.A.A. season is well underway but sadly for some counties their chances of success in 2006 have already disappeared.

Up to the middle of June, both the hurling and football championships have been disappointing with a few notable exceptions. Many people have pointed to the format of the two major championships as the reason for some of the poor fare on offer, and while this may be part of the problem, it is all too easy to suggest that a format change is the only solution.

Over the next few months, two review groups will take an in dept look at the Hurling & Football Championships plus the National Leagues to see how they can be made more competitive. Proposals will be ready for a special G.A.A. Congress on the 14th October but they will be publicised well before that date to allow counties consider what is on offer. I have asked both review groups to consider all options at the outset, but one key element is to see how we can give more time to counties to play their club competitions.

Over the past few months as I commenced my role as Uachtarán, the difficulties faced by clubs particularly relating to the availability of their inter-county players is a major bone of contention. I am extremely annoyed that many counties simply stop internal championship competitions at a number of levels just to accommodate the wishes of a county team manager. This is unacceptable and will not be allowed to continue. Club championships must be played during the summer time of the year in tandem with inter-county championships. Counties failing to deliver such a programme to their clubs are seriously abdicating their responsibilities. I appreciate that in

some instances a series of games in the Qualifier Series can have some impact on club fixtures, but I have heard plenty of examples where the club championship programme has been put on hold until the county senior team has ended its involvement in the championship.

Right from the outset of my Presidency the issue of Player Welfare was right at the top of my agenda. To date we have met with the GPA on two occasions and I would describe our discussions as business like. Further meetings are planned and we are now pretty well aware of the issues which the GPA sees as a priority for them. I made a very strong issue at Congress of saying that pay for play was not on my agenda, as was my very strong view that amateurism remains a core principle of our Association. I am satisfied that my views strongly reflect those of the wider G.A.A. public and as I travel the length and breadth of the country people are not slow to voice agreement with what I had to say at Congress. I proposed at Congress that Cumann Lúthchleas Gael appoint a Player Welfare Manager and I am confident that an appointment will be made by the beginning of September. This person will have a key role addressing various player welfare matters across our entire Association, which will benefit players at both club and inter-county levels.

Over the summer months there was lots of excitement in every county as the new Cúl VHI Summer Camps took place. As expected over 80,000 children to participate in the first year of the camps and a wide and varied programme of activities were undertaken. I have no doubt that many new G.A.A. stars will commence a long career at the Summer Camps in July and August.

I am conscious that this short article is for WIT and I must firstly congratulate the college on its great success in the recent Fitzgibbon Cup. Having represented Coiste Bainistí on Comhairle Árd Oideachais for the past three years I am well aware of all the

activities in Third Levels Colleges in both Ireland and throughout Britain. Our games have never enjoyed such a high profile and we are indebted to all the officials and players in every Third Level College for their efforts to both play and promote Gaelic Games. It is gratifying too that College Authorities throughout Ireland appreciate the status and profile which Gaelic Games brings to their College. My replacement on Comhairle Árd Oideachais for the next three years will be Albert Fallon of Longford and he has an excellent knowledge of the G.A.A. scene in Third Level Colleges. I would like to acknowledge the part played by Eugene McKenna of WIT as the Third Level College's representative on Central Council for many years. Eugene stepped down from that role at the recent Congress. I appointed Eugene to the new G.A.A. Audit Committee and his deep knowledge of many areas of our Association will be invaluable as he commences this new role.

The appointment of Paudie Butler as the new Hurling Development Manager has been welcomed far and wide. Paudie will commence his new role in a couple of weeks and he is already working on a number of initiatives to help improve hurling in many counties. This process will not deliver short term results, but setting a solid foundation in place will be crucial. Significant funds are being input by both the G.A.A. and the Government and there will close monitoring of every initiative to ensure it is delivering value for money.

The role of Uachtarán has not thrown up any big surprises for me so far. I have travelled to many counties already and I am indebted for the courtesy and respect with which I was greeted. I was not quite ready for the esteem with which the Uachtarán is held throughout the country. It is a great reflection on our Association and what it means to so many people in Ireland and indeed much further afield.

Nioclás Ó Braonáin

Úachtarán - Cumann Lúthchleas Gael.

Portrait of Maurice Davin (Co-founder of the GAA) presented to WIT GAA Club

The life and achievements of Maurice Davin - co-founder and first President of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) - has been recalled at a reception in Waterford Institute of Technology where members of the Davin family presented a framed portrait of the Carrick-on-Suir man to the Institute on the 10th of April this year. A number of high profile GAA representatives attended this presentation including former presidents, Pat Fanning (1970-73) and Paddy Buggy (1982-85) and current president Nicky Brennan.



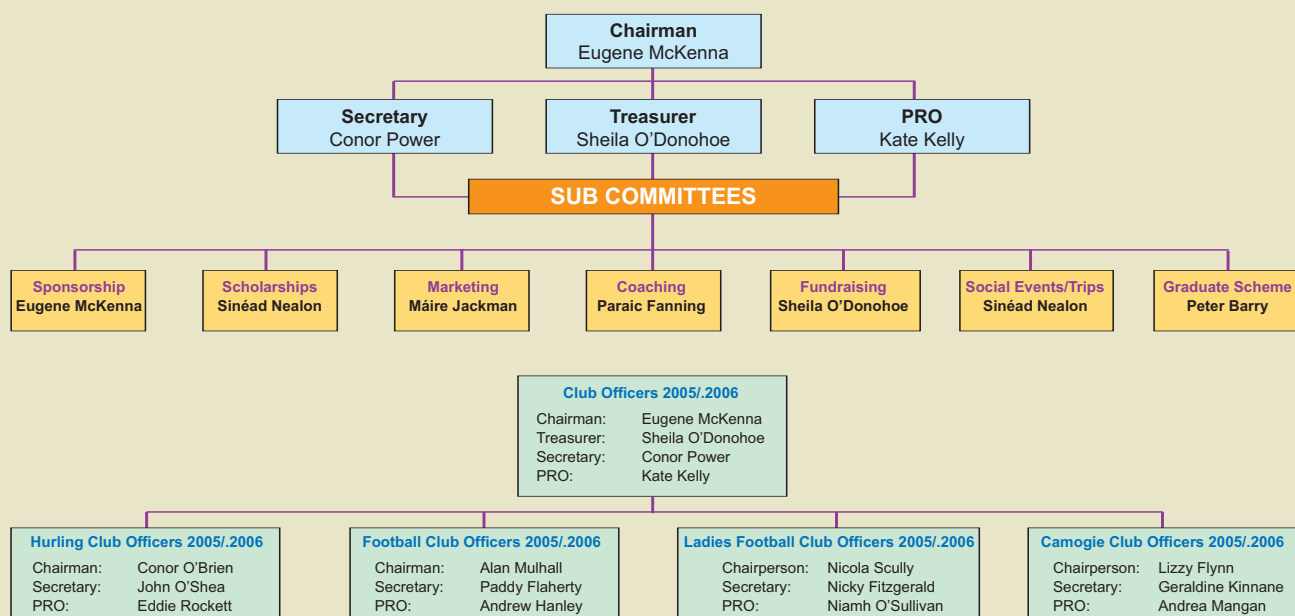
*Back row) Owen Davin, Pat Walsh, John Davin, Jane Davin, Richard Walsh
Front Row) Nickey Brennan, Pat Fanning, Paddy Buggy*

Maurice Davin was an outstanding athlete who won international fame in the 1870s and who was actively campaigning for a body to control Irish athletics from 1877.

He gave his support to Cusack's campaign from the summer of 1884, presided at the foundation-meeting in Thurles and became the GAA's first president and the only president to have two terms and to resign twice. Not actively

involved after 1889, but many major games (including 1904 hurling final) were played on his farm.

WIT GAA CLUB STRUCTURE 2005/2006



Fitzgibbon and League Champions

By Colm Bonnar



Back L to R: PJ Delaney, C O'Brien, D Hctor, M McKeogh, R McLoughney, G Nolan, J Milne, C Phelan, G Mahon, A Kirwan, W Ryan, K Rossiter, M Walsh, A Cullinane, P Hartley, C Parlon, M Heffernan, N Gleeson, Front L to R: L Lawlor, K Lanigan, C O'Brien, R Jacob, H Maloney, P Brennan, E Reid, B Dowling, K Moran, K Brady, K Gahan, S Fox, E Redmond

League preparations for this year's unique double.

With many club championships in full sway in late October 2005, WIT could only round up 16 players for its first Div 1 league outing – a trip to CIT. WIT were well beaten on the score 4-16 to 4-6. The following week WIT played LIT in Dunhill and recorded their first victory on the score of 1-11 to 1-9. Training started in November 2005 for all senior WIT players with two weekly sessions under the watchful eye of Shay Fitzpatrick. On the 10th November WIT travelled to Cork again to take on UCC and gained what turned out to be a very valuable point. The score finished 1-10 to 0-13. In the final league game, played in Mount Sion, WIT beat UL on a scoreline of 10 points to 5. After some initial doubt, with UCC and WIT on 5 points apiece on the points table, score difference was used to separate the teams and WIT qualified for the league semi final by virtue of a score difference of 1 point over UCC. CIT qualified as top team in our section and beat UCG in their semi final. WIT received a walk over from DIT. The following Wednesday – 7th Dec, WIT travelled to Dungarvan to play CIT in the league final. Unfortunately the game was cancelled due to the waterlogged pitch, and fixed for after Christmas. However, when both clubs were pulled out of the hat for the quarter final of the Fitzgibbon, it was agreed to play the final after the Fitzgibbon campaign ended.

Fitzgibbon Cup Championship Preparations

Attention was now switched to the Fitzgibbon Cup Campaign and WIT had 20 of the 2005 panel available that lost to UL in the semi final, while another 15 members, made up of promising first/second years, were added to the training panel. These players greatly strengthened the panel and they pushed hard for places, not only on the panel but on the starting team as well. A training

programme and match dates were drawn up for after Christmas preparations but with the new modularisation and exam system it was difficult initially to get players together. However, when exams finished in late January, WIT started training in earnest with challenge games against James Stephens, UCC, and the Waterford and Wexford senior hurling teams. The extended run in the Waterford Crystal Senior Hurling Cup in which WIT reached the final gave WIT good competitive games against Kerry, UL and the Limerick seniors. These games brought the team together, helped build up a good team spirit and gave the WIT panel that vital competitive edge that's needed so early for the Fitzgibbon campaign. The Fitzgibbon Cup draw took place in February and could not have been tougher, as WIT were drawn against CIT who were building their reputation as an excellent hurling team with many quality players. These sides last met in the 2003 Fitzgibbon Final when an experienced WIT side beat a young emerging CIT side.

WIT pushed all the way by Cork IT.

Although the eight-point winning margin was a comfortable one at the finish, WIT were pushed all the way by Cork IT. CIT played with a strong breeze and led 1-5 to 0-6 by half time. However, the lead looked less than adequate given the strength of the wind, and so it proved. WIT were level within four minutes of the restart with super points from Eoin Reid and Brian Dowling, and while CIT went back in front, the respite was temporary. Reid and Jacob edged WIT back in front and it was a lead WIT never again surrendered. CIT's brave resistance eventually crumbled when man of the match Rory Jacob superbly clipped a ground delivery to the net in the 50th minute, and three minutes later the final nail in their coffin was hammered home by Cathal Parlon, when he notched his side's second goal. There was no way back

for CIT. Final score 2-14 to 1-9. Scorers: WIT: R. Jacob (1-4); B. Dowling (0-5, 0-3 frees); C. Parlon (1-0); E. Reid (0-2); C. O'Brien, A. Cullinane, G. Mahon (0-1)

Late WIT points in extra time snatch victory from Galway's grasp

Waterford IT 0-24 NUI Galway (aet) 1-19

WIT secured a thrilling victory over NUI Galway in the second semi-final of the Fitzgibbon Cup at UCC's Mardyke. Points from Rory Jacob and substitute Ray McLoughney late in the second half of extra time proved to be the difference. NUIG were full value for their 0-6 to 0-3 lead after 15 minutes, but WIT finished the half strongly and the sides were level on 0-9 apiece at the break. The sides were still tied at 0-12 each by the end of the third quarter and the inevitable extra time was called for NUIG hit over the equalising point. In the first period of extra time Jacob scored three of WIT's four points to lead 0-19 to 0-17 at the break. NUIG looked to have sealed victory when they scored the games only goal seconds into the second half of extra time, and when they added a point, Galway looked to have broken the WIT challenge. However the experienced WIT outfit, who were contesting their seventh semi-final in a row, stormed back into the game with four unanswered points to win the game by 2 points.

Scorers: WIT: R Jacob 0-8 (0-4 frees, 0-1 65); B Dowling 0-5 (0-3 frees); W Ryan, E Reid 0-4 each; R McLoughney 0-2; W Walsh 0-1.



Brian Dowling and Hugh Moloney delighted with their prize

WIT Fitzgibbon Cup glory

Waterford IT 4-13 UCD 0-8

WIT kept their best performance till last when they inflicted a crushing defeat on UCD in the 2006 Datapac Fitzgibbon Cup final. UCD had beaten the favourites UCC the day before in a titanic struggle and a classic final was anticipated. Unfortunately, it never happened. WIT were immensely powerful and ruthlessly efficient right from the start and the signs looked ominous for the Dublin students after 10 minutes when WIT led 1-3 to 0-1 playing into the strong wind. With their overwhelming control in defence and midfield, razor sharp in attack where three-goal hero Willie Ryan and Rory Jacob were brilliant, WIT were full value for their 17-point winning margin.

Hurling with tremendous passion and skill, WIT, through Willie Ryan, struck for two first half goals which helped them to an interval lead of 2-6 to 0-4.

There was no let up in the intensity of the WIT challenge and they effectively killed the game as a contest with a third goal, scored by Eoin Reid, seconds after the resumption.

Apart from the three goals Willie Ryan scored, this year's Fitzgibbon was a personal triumph for Rory Jacob, and apart from winning his third medal, he finished with 1-19 to his credit over three games. WIT had many heroes, with Eoin Reid winning the 'man of the match' award. Joint captains Hugh Maloney and Brian Dowling, both of whom were winning their third medal, couldn't hide their delight at the victory as their colleges careers come to an end.

Scorers: WIT: W. Ryan 3-0; E. Reid 1-4; R. Jacob 0-6 (0-4 frees); A. Cullinane 0-2; C. Phelan 0-1. UCD: A. Smith 0-5 (frees); PJ Nolan 0-2; J. McCarthy 0-1.

WIT complete league and championship double

Waterford IT 1-18 Cork IT 1-10

Things began brightly for Cork, and playing with the aid of a strong wind, they made all the running in the first quarter, and eased into an unflattering three-point lead inside 12 minutes. But the game's most defining moment came four minutes before the interval, when hesitancy in CIT full back line presented a gift-wrapped goal opportunity for Reid. Cork IT were facing an uphill battle once they conceded this goal in the 26th minute at a bitterly cold Ballygunner in Waterford.

Cork retired two points adrift at the break, 1-7 to 0-8, having enjoyed a marked territorial advantage. But it was going to be all uphill on the turnover.

In a rampant spell between the 38th and 48th minutes WIT rifled over half a dozen magnificent points, to open up a near unassailable 1-14 to 0-8 lead, and Cork's goal, in the final minute, came to late to mount a challenge.

Scorers: Waterford IT: N. Gleeson 0-6 (0-5f); E. Reid 1-2; C. O'Brien, D. Hctor 0-3 each; C. Parlon, A. Cullinane, K. Brady, G. Nolan 0-1 each.

Special achievement

WIT had eight players who won three Fitzgibbon Cup medals over a four year period from 2003 to 2006. These are Philip Brennan, Hugh Maloney, Keith Rossiter, Brian Dowling, Rory Jacob, Adrian Cullinane, Conor Phelan and Michael Walsh.



Fundraising night at Kilcohan Park greyhound track. (l to r): M. Walsh, J.J. Delaney, D. Murray, M. Jacob, P. Curran, O'Moran.

WIT Ladies Football

by Lizzy Kent

The ladies football league commenced in October, and saw WIT competing in both Division 1 and 3. The Division 1 team began their league campaign with a home game in Waterford Crystal against a formidable UCC team. After a fine performance the WIT ladies ran out victorious on a score line of 2-11 to 3-01.

Their next game was against the mighty NUIG whose team contained a host of impressive intercounty stars most notably Claire Egan and Cora Staunton from Mayo. Unfortunately NUIG got the upper hand mid way through the first half and try as they might the ladies were unable to match them on the day, where they ran out convincing winners.

Next saw the arrival of the 2004 O' Connor cup winners UL. Ballygunner was the venue for this much anticipated encounter. However the game itself did not live up to its pre match billing. This without question was WIT's most disappointing performance of the year. UL were deserving winners on the day on a score line of 0-5 to 2-12.



Lisa McGrath

After this defeat a lot of questions were asked of the girls, training was stepped up and the expectations levels were raised. Their league campaign finished on a high with an impressive win over CIT. Following on from that they received a walk over from Tralee IT, which left them in a three-way tie to join NUIG in the League final. UCC, UL and WIT were in joint second place with only one team eligible to go through. It was decided that results between the three teams would be taken into account and unfortunately for WIT the heavy defeat at the hands of UL cost them dearly.

However, news of the ineligibility of a number of NUIG players saw them being disqualified from the league semi-final stage. This entitled WIT to the automatic qualification place. Sligo IT were their opponents in the semi-final and at late notice they decided not to participate in the competition granting WIT a place in the League final against UCD. (This game is still outstanding and will hopefully be completed in September 2006.)

The Div 3 team have had a very successful league campaign, however they just missed out on a place in the league semi-final finishing runners up to UCC in the group stages. The year started off on the wrong foot with a disappointing defeat to UCC on a score line of 1-03 to 2-6. Things improved dramatically after this with impressive wins over Tipperary Institute of Technology and Cork Institute of Technology. Their final league game of the year was Limerick IT; the result in this game would decide which team would finish second and third in the group. After an exciting game WIT ran out worthy winners on a score line of 5-6 to 3-6.

Valuable lessons were learnt from both league campaigns, it gave all players some very competitive matches, as well as allowing them to see the standard that is required to be competitive at this level. The younger players gained valuable experience and the return of some of the teams more senior players augured well for the coming O' Connor Cup campaign.

O'Connor Cup Report

The O' Connor Cup draw took place in January and saw WIT pitted against a much fancied University of Ulster Jordanstown in the qualifier, who had high aspirations of success in the competition.

Ballymore in county Westmeath was the location for this much-anticipated clash. WIT started brightly with their midfield getting on top early on. UUJ battled back and registered a number of scores before Claire Conlon turned the game on its head with a superb flick past the UUJ keeper. Shortly afterwards UUJ broke through but WIT goalie Nicola Scully dived full length to make a terrific save and keep Jordanstown out. UUJ pointed 3 further points to put their noses in front, WIT's reply was immediate: full forward Steph O' Hallahan showing the way by adding another point and when Claire Conlon added a further point from a free it left both teams level at the break, WIT 1-3 UUJ 6 pts. With the management's words of encouragement still ringing in WIT's ears, the team resumed the second half in a far more positive frame of mind and started to really express themselves on the field of play. Mary Claire Kelly was dominating at centre half back and provided the platform for WIT's attack. The weather conditions were deteriorating rapidly and the snow began to fall, this did not put off a determined WIT outfit and only served to inspire corner back Rachel Wall to further heights as she continued to drive WIT forward. Ann Marie Walsh, Steph O' Hallahan and another Conlon free further extended Waterford's lead before Stacey Cannon, who was having a magnificent game at half forward, broke through UUJ's defence to fire a superb shot into the top corner of the net. O' Hallahan & Conlon continued their scoring spree. With Waterford dominating in all areas of the field by now, white pitch, Cannon tapped over WIT's final point to leave WIT victorious on a final score line of 2-9 to 7 points.

The victory against UUJ set up a mouth-watering quarter final with defending O'Connor cup Champions UCD. UCD's sports complex in Belfield was the location for what was expected to be an enthralling contest.

This however did not turn out to be the case with UCD taking control of the game from the first minute; a spirited second half display was the highlight for WIT on a day when everything that could go wrong unfortunately did go wrong!

A lot of positives can be taken from this years campaign, there was fantastic commitment from all players and this effort was rewarded with an unbelievable win against UUJ and an appearance in the League final. Hopefully next year WIT with an ever improving panel of players can go one step further by building on this years success and challenging for O' Connor Cup 2007.



Back Row L-R: Pauline Gallagher, Aishling O' Donnell, Lisa Dunne, Amy Dunphy, Nicky Fitzgerald, Claire Conlon, Stephaine Hallahan, Niamh O' Sullivan, Michelle Doyle, Sinead McTiernan, Stacey Cannon, Marie-Claire Walsh, Aishling Barrett, Carol Breen. Front Row L-R: Mags McEvoy, Laura Murphy, Niamh Briggs, Annmarie Walsh, Nicola Scully, Edel Kennedy, Evelyn O' Brien, Lisa McGrath, Rachel Wall.

Fiche Cúig Bliain ag Fás - Growth of the GAA in WIT

An exclusive interview with Eugene McKenna, WIT GAA Club founder and Chairman

Eugene McKenna originally from Co. Monaghan, arrived in Waterford in 1979. He commenced his employment in the then WRTC as a lecturer in Mechanical Engineering. He always had a very active and passionate interest in the GAA and established the GAA club in 1981. He was also the driver behind the employment of the first ever full-time coach within the GAA, better known as the Colm Bonnar scheme. The WIT GAA club has grown from strength over the last twenty five years and this is due in no small part to the contribution of a dedicated team of people led by Eugene McKenna. Eugene is now CEO of Campus Services at WIT who are responsible for the delivery of all student services on campus. This includes Catering, Retail, Accommodation, Sports Facilities etc. He was the founder and developer of the WITCard which is now considered one of the leading campus cards worldwide.



In an exclusive interview with Eugene McKenna for Sidelines our reporter captures the essence of some of the issues faced by WIT GAA over the last twenty-five years.

1. How did the GAA start?

Back in 1981 the college fielded a team, but only played one home game and conceded walkovers in all other games. After this Michael O'Halloran and I attended a meeting in Croke Park to seek permission to re-enter the higher education league. The Club had previously been disqualified from competing in the Higher Education games for not fulfilling their fixtures in the previous years.

2. What were the steps taken in the progress of the GAA?

After the meeting in Croke Park, WIT was allowed to enter a Division 3 team in the HE Division 3 league in Hurling. The first match was against St.Pats (Thurles) this was played in Thurles on a Wednesday afternoon (I remember it well) there was little preparation for this game. However, Michael O'Halloran and myself realised that there was great potential in this college team. There were young up and coming stars of the future such as Ray Heffernan, Shane Ahearne and David 'Stoney' Burke all of whom had starred for their county team at minor level that year. WIT won the match by 5 points and continued that year in there winning ways, undefeated and won the final against the Army Apprentice School, Naas.

1983/4 the first college football team was started and they also entered the Division 3 league. In 1984 the college organised a centenary year competition for hurling, football and camogie and it was then the first WIT camogie team took to the field. Joe Alcock, a lecturer of WIT took responsibility for the camogie team.

We always had ambition to reach Division one and the ultimate in all codes Fitzgibbon, Sigerson, Ashbourne and O'Connor Cup

3. What are the key changes between 1981 & 2006?

The development of an overall club was a continual process however the employment of a Development officer was a key change. WIT set up a plan for employment of WIT GAA Development officer for looking after WIT GAA and also development of the GAA in the area. The Former college chaplain Fr. Pat Fitzgerald contributed enormously to the framework of the proposal. Bringing in a full-time GAA official at that time was a major step and WIT received continuous support from the then Secretary of the Munster Council, Donie Nealon along with the Chairperson, Michael O'Connor (RIP), this was crucial in the establishment of the new structure.

4. What were the specific things that contributed to its success?

The appointment of Colm Bonnar who was a student of WIT in the late 80's, as the first WIT GAA development officer, played a key role in years to come. The involvement of more staff in the club all played an important part along with good club administration, a foundation was established and each year that was built upon. The players involvement both on and off the pitch has also been a major contributor to the success of WIT GAA club. This is evident in our roll of honour where it shows that we have won one major competition since 1982

5. What were the difficulties encountered in the early days?

The lack of staff involvement in the club was a key issue; however we were fortunate at the time to receive support from many outside personnel including Michael Kinsella (Wexford) Frankie Walsh (Mount Sion) among others.

6. What do you think was the greatest moment for the GAA in 25 years?

Without doubt winning our first Fitzgibbon in 1992, this was a major breakthrough and WIT were the first IT College to achieve this feat. Since this breakthrough WIT have won seven Fitzgibbon titles in fourteen years and have become a major force in the competition.

7. What do you think was the most disappointing moment for WIT in the last 25 years?

The lowest and worst moments in the clubs history was when one young player had a serious eye injury in the early 90's at a match in Kildare. Another was a car accident involving one of our club officers. Losing is not the most disappointing aspect at all.

8. What was your funniest memory of the WIT GAA over the years?

Some of these I couldn't put down on paper.

Ray Heffernan playing with one arm when WIT hadn't 15 players and to make up numbers Ray played with one arm broken.

9. What future progress would you like to see for the GAA in WIT?

One of the key areas that we would like to see progress is in achieving the same success in the football as have been done in the Hurling. It is also important to progress the development of our club.

WIT Fresher 1 Hurlers recapture the All-Ireland title after a 3 year gap.

by John O'Shea

WIT Fresher one hurlers recaptured the All-Ireland title after a gap of three years. It all began back in September when trials were held up in the Crystal with over 80 people present. This showed the depth of talent available to the college, which gave the management great expectations for the year. After the trials a panel of 27 was picked. Our first game in November was against CIT. WIT ran out winners by 4-16 to 1-6. Our next game was against UCC in Waterford Crystal on November 21st. It was UCC who shot out of the blocks and raced into a 1-4 to 0-3 lead after 15 minutes. They went in at the break 1-7 to 0-5 up. Harsh words at the break seemed to have the desired effect as WIT stepped it up a gear and put their stamp on the game and won 1-15 to 1-8 at the finish.

Our next game was against LIT. The game was fixed for Piltown on December 12th. Again we started very sluggish in this game and despite missing a penalty early on we found ourselves 0-9 to 0-3 down at half time. We threw everything at them in the second half and even though WIT smashed home a late goal it was not enough. LIT won 14 points to 1-9.

We finished our league campaign with an away game against UL. This was played during the first week of the Christmas holidays. Numerous injuries at this stage in the panel seemed to galvanise the team and from the start we tore into UL going 1-5 to 2 points up after 15 minutes. However UL found their feet and out scored us 3 points to 1 in the last ten minutes of the half to only leave 2 points in it at half time. UL started the second half brighter with two points from frees, however WIT hit back with two points WIT edged a point clear before UL struck 2-2 in a blistering five-minute spell. However the lads didn't give up and brought it back to within a point but time ran out and UL won 2-9 to 1-11. It was a disappointing end to our league campaign, which started off so brightly. We knew we had a lot of work to do if we were to reach our goal of winning the All-Ireland.

After Christmas we hit the training field running knowing that we would have to be on top of our game to progress. Thankfully our injuries had cleared up as due to the two defeats before Christmas we were drawn against NUIG away. We set out for the long road to Galway at 8 am on the 8th of February. This was to be the turning point of the year. We got off to the perfect start when Ray McLoughney buried a 21 yard free after just 2 minutes. Scores were few and far between in the opening 15 minutes with NUIG registering just two points and Ray hitting a point. WIT began to get on top and with points from Fintan O'Leary, Ronan Good and corner back Ritchie MacCarthy went in at half-time 1-4 to 4 points up playing against both the wind and the slight hill. In the second half we played our best hurling of the year and got the perfect start with O'Leary bagging 1-1 in the first 5 minutes. This was followed up with three additional points before NUIG got their only point of the game. We ran out winners 2-13 to 0-5. This was partly down to Ger Mahon's display at Centre Back. He was everywhere that day and cleared the world of ball. This was a great result for us, not only for the margin of victory but it gave the lads the belief. However we still had to face a heavily fancied UCD team in the semi-final.

The semi-final was fixed for the 20th of March. While the 2-12 to 1-4 scoreline suggests that we won well, the lads hadn't it as easy as the score read. The game started off at a lightning pace and was only a few minutes old when Ger Mahon pointed from a free 65 yards from goal. This was followed up by another free before UCD got on the score sheet shortly after. Scores were hard to come by and the hurling was hard and tough before another point and a well taken goal left WIT up by 1-6 to 0-1 at half time. Even though UCD scored a goal it was a mere consolation and WIT were through to their 2nd final in a row. The platform for this victory was the performance of the half back line of James Ryan, Ger Mahon and Shane Kelly and the moving of Tom Maloney to a roving role in the second half. Not only were the lads through to the final but LIT were to be the opponents again. Preparations were stepped up in training with everybody on the panel giving it there all. The final was fixed for April 10th in Fermoy.

As we approached Fermoy the management could sense how focused the lads were for this game. We burst out of the blocks hitting over a free inside the first minute, this was shortly followed up with a lovely score from Kevin Bolger from an acute angle. We were winning all the battles around the field early on and it was important that we made the advantage count. Shortly after we scored our third point, we won a free around 30 yards from the goal. Ray stepped up and took a chance by going for goal which he rifled into the corner. However straight from the puck out LIT went up field and won a 21 yard free and buried it into the net. From here LIT began to find their feet and were punishing any free we conceded. Just after the LIT full forward landed a massive free from inside his own half, WIT struck back with their second goal of the game and a point immediately after. We went in at half time with an advantageous scoreline 2-8 to 1-4. we scored another three points but LIT came back at us and in a ten minute period out scored us 5 points to one. Fintan was introduced with ten minutes to go and it had the desired effect. We began winning more balls in the half forward line and this was shown when we scored two consecutive points to leave us six up with ten minutes to go. LIT won another 21 yard free, we knew they had to go for it and Colm O'Sullivan made a super save and the ball was cleared down the line. Two further consecutive points for WIT left us seven up with four minutes to play and in the final minute Fintan buried the ball to net to finish the game off. WIT had regained the Fresher All-Ireland after a 3 year absence. Captain Ger Mahon received the cup from Liam Griffin and delivered a fantastic speech.



Back row L to R : Pat Hartley, Ronan Good, Alan Driver, Kevin Bolger, William Murphy, Damien Heffernan, Fintan O'Leary, Stephen Hallessey, Rory Griffin, Tom Maloney, Richie MacCarthy, Ger Mahon.

Front row L to R: Gearoid Power, James Ryan, Kieran Reade, Martin Purcell, Mark Stafford, Stephen Spillane, Michael Kearney, Sean Wall, Pat Kelly, Colm O'Sullivan.

Fresher Blitz 2005

FRESHER CAMOGIE



Back L to R: Susan Keane, Ursula Jacob, Sharon Young, Carol Nolan, Rosie Kenneally, Pauline Cunningham, Helena Jacob, Andrea Mangan, Front L to R: Deirdre Dunne, Roisin Heylin, Doireann Ní Mhuiri, Keava Fennelly, Ann-Marie Drohan.

Shield Final: WIT 6-11 NUIG 1-3

The annual fresher camogie tournament was held in Cork IT on Saturday November 5th and a strong WIT squad travelled with the dream of retaining the title won in dramatic circumstances last year. Nine eager and determined players travelled with manager Helena Jacob and on arrival were greeted with the news that they would face UCD in the first game. Unfortunately for WIT, the game didn't go their way and a number of goal chances were spurned. However Carol Nolan, Dee Dunne and Pauline Cunningham all stood out in a strong WIT line-up. A narrow defeat meant that the girls would now have to compete in the shield competition where they faced Maynooth. A much-improved performance resulted in a comfortable victory with the team firing over some great scores including defender Doireann Ní Mhuiri. The game ended 9-5 to 1-0 in favour of WIT. UL were our next opponents and as expected the Limerick side provided a much sterner test. Rosie Kenneally had to be at her best in goals during the early exchanges to keep UL at bay but soon the outfield players picked up and with our defence and midfield pairing now on top our forwards got the scores to ensure victory on a scoreline of 2-7 to 1-3. Keava Fennelly impressed for the Waterford outfit with some excellent scores. After a well-deserved break WIT faced UCC in the semi-final, which had all the ingredients of a classic. Both sides were determined for success and a chance to compete in the final. WIT found themselves under extreme pressure throughout the game but the teams superior stick work and fitness not to mention outstanding displays from Dee Dunne and Roisin Heylin meant that WIT led at the final whistle 3-4 to 1-3. Our opponents in the final were a tough NUIG side. The girls were well up for the challenge and from the throw in gave it everything and quickly established a significant lead. Superb scores from Keava Fennelly, Anne-Marie Drohan and Sharon Young ensured that WIT would be crowned champions. Final score 6-11 to 1-3. So a thoroughly enjoyable and ultimately successful day for the WIT panel and management resulted. The girls worked really hard and showed tremendous commitment, as did the management of Helena Jacob, Andrea Mangan, Ursula Jacob and Susan Keane.



Dee Dunne

Panel; Rosie Kenneally (Tipperary), Doireann Ní Mhuiri (Cork), Carol Nolan (Kildare), Dee Dunne (Tipperary) Roisin Heylin (Waterford), Pauline Cunningham (Waterford) Anne-Marie Drohan (Waterford) Sharon Young (Tipperary) Keava Fennelly (Kilkenny)

Player Profile

Name:	Tishy OHalloran
Course:	BA (Hons) Degree in Legal with Business Studies
Influences in your career:	Underage Coaches, my brothers Tim & Noel
High point of your sporting career to date:	Captaining Tipperary Junior team to win the All-Ireland and playing senior county championship.
Third level college-sporting honours:	Reaching Ashbourne semi-final
Other achievements if any:	3 Senior All-Ireland medals and 1 Junior All-Ireland medal
Other sports played:	Rugby and hoping to try my hand at a bit of tennis and golf
Players you admire:	Eoin Kelly for his ability along with Henry Shefflin, Ronan Curran, I think he's an outstanding centre back
Most memorable game for WIT:	Ashbourne semi-final in 2005, WIT were hosting it that year. Unfortunately we lost it.
What impresses you most about the WIT GAA club:	The connection between the different GAA Codes. Each are treated equally. Also the friendship that you make through the GAA club. The craic is mighty.
Best sporting event/match witnessed:	Munster winning the Heineken Cup Final
Ambitions in life:	Hopefully to marry a gorgeous fella, obviously loaded so I can concentrate on the finer points in life
Favourite music/film:	Song: In relation to college was the Saw Doctors "To win just once" Film: Shawshank Redemption
Who would be your ideal Date?	Alan Quinlan, Munster player because he's hot. Brad Pitt to show him Angelina Jolie isn't all that! Hector for the solid craic.





WIT GAA

Looking back over 25 glorious years



Sigerson Football action v. UUJ, 2001



Ashbourne Cup Champions 2001



1995/96 Division 2 Football Champions - winning promotion to Sigerson Cup competition



Sheila and Colm with Ashbourne Cup, 1999



Div. 3 Hurling, 1983



*Kate Kelly (right)
Ashbourne Final, 1999*



*Andy Moloney with
Fitzgibbon Cup, 1999*



*Going to Fitzgibbon Cup
in Cork in 1997*



Fitzgibbon Cup Champions Celebrate, 2000



Intermediate, Fitzgibbon Cup and Fresher Champions, 2004



Fitzgibbon Cup Champions, 2003



Wexford Manager, Liam Griffin brings the McCarthy Cup to WIT in 1996



WRTC Senior Football 1995-1996



Colm Bonnar lifts Fitzgibbon Cup, 1995



Pairaic Fanning lifts first WIT Fitzgibbon Cup title in 1992



Launch of "Sidelines" Magazine, 1987



Billy Rowsome, Colm Bonnar and Eugene McKenna, 1986-1987



First WIT Ashbourne Cup Champions, 1999

Sigerson Football 2005/2006

By Alan Mulhall

The enthusiasm of the players was evident as the numbers attending training were very high and the spine of a good team was slowly assembling. The effort that was put in during this period deserves a special mention as it is so hard to train hard when there is no trainer in command.

The first league game had arrived on us all of a sudden and still with no manager we travelled down to a strong C.I.T team who were harbouring high hopes of winning a Sigerson this year. The first half was hard fought and maybe it was a lack of belief that saw us behind by the minimum of margins, but unfortunately in the second half it was C.I.T's superior organisation that beat us well in the end. A great effort was put in by all but we were just beaten by a better team on the day.

In the next week or so a manager was appointed. Liam Dowdall, a local man with great interest, knowledge and very committed to any job he undertakes and this deserves a special mention as it was not as easy for Liam to make matches and training sessions as he is not employed in the college.

The first game that Liam took charge of was against a strong U.C.C. team in the league who were as always, very confident travelling to play us. I don't know whether it was a willingness to impress our new manager or just a willingness to send a confident U.C.C. team home packing, but there was a huge effort put in and we were well on top until the last few minutes when U.C.C. got a few points that narrowly gave them a 2 point victory. They may have come away with the win but we came away with a more valuable lesson, that we had a good strong team this year with plenty of fighting spirit and heart. This was to stay with us through the rest of the campaign.

Our next league outing came against a full strength U.L. team. We were down a few regulars and it was our fighting spirit and intelligent play that dragged us through this game, along with an excellent all round tackling display from corner forward right back to the goalkeeper. We didn't give them an inch and drove on hard every time and eventually ground out a convincing win with the score taking of P.J. Banville being the major contribution to the score board. We were on the right track now and oozing with confidence but as always it was the Christmas break that stalled our momentum.

After Christmas we needed some very tough sessions to get us back to where we were and Liam duly provided us with plenty of high intensity training. With Christmas out of our system it

was the McGrath Cup that was our next outing against a strong Limerick Senior County team. We were beaten well by a fitter, stronger and better football team, but we realised that these boys are training together for years and we tried to take as much positives from the game as possible. We went down to Limerick very under strength due to the amount of players playing in the O'Byrne Cup. This meant we were missing our Leinster senior footballers. This is something that has to be addressed if colleges are going to continue to compete in these cups.

Our last league game before Sigerson was against Tralee I.T who were fighting for their division 1 status. This was a very tough and physical game that we should have won if we had taken our opportunities but unfortunately we didn't and the game ended in a draw. Although we didn't win we believed we were ready for the championship against a fancied Garda team littered with county players. Looking back at the league we realised that if we had of beaten Tralee I.T. we would have gone into the quarter finals of the league. This showed us that we weren't far off the top teams.

The championship was upon us and we were almost at full strength. The game was a very close one and hard fought right to the end. The Garda team were big and physical and had some very stylish footballers but we never gave up and it was score for score throughout the first half, with us down by 2 at the interval. The second half started poorly for us and the opposition opened up a lead of 5 points but we chipped away at the lead and eventually got it back to 3 points with only two minutes to go we were awarded a penalty and P.J. stepped up to take it but unfortunately narrowly put it wide. The game was over and once again we were on the receiving end of a narrow defeat. This was very disappointing as the Guards went on to be narrowly defeated by only 2 points by eventual winners D.C.U.

At this stage I would like to mention all the players for their effort during the year and also for their effort in fundraising. Special praise also goes to Patrick O'Flatherty and Eddie Rockett who worked hard throughout the year to ensure the smooth running of the club. On behalf of the players I would like to thank Liam for all his work and I'm sure given more time he would have had more success. Also from the players a word of thanks goes to Michael O'Sullivan who was selector with Liam for the year.



Conor Phelan makes a dramatic return

By Damien Lawlor *"Irish Independent"*

WHEN they talk about the bravest hurlers around; names like Ollie Baker, DJ Carey, Niall McCarthy and Declan Ryan immediately spring to mind.

But Waterford IT student and Kilkenny hurler Conor Phelan is surely the most courageous of them all. Phelan was advised to quit the game just over a year ago because of a heart condition. The diagnosis came totally out of the blue after the Kilkenny squad attended a screening session. With the untimely death of Cormac McAnallen still in everyone's minds, medics were concerned that Phelan would endanger himself by continuing to play hurling, the game that he loved so much. Just a few months previous to his diagnosis, Kilkenny had lost Noel Hickey to a viral infection and it seemed extraordinary that the squad would now lose a second influential player, an up and coming star.

Since joining the WIT GAA Club in 2003, Conor was an extremely active member and achieved something that not many do by playing Fresher and Fitzgibbon hurling in his first year, he ended up winning both in his debut season at the college. The following year, he won the competition again but not long after, news broke that he was forced to quit the game due to this unprecedented heart condition. After medical advice, he spent a few months in the hands of experts but the general consensus was that he would not be able to play top level hurling again.

"Noel Hickey had a problem with his heart earlier in the year and the county board decided it would be wise for the whole panel to have a medical check-up. I thought nothing of it at the time," Conor explained.

"I was called into a room and told that there was a problem with one of the valves in my heart and it seemed like a bad dream at first. I went up to the Mater Private in Dublin and some of the top cardiologists in the country examined me and gave me the bad news. They weren't looking for this problem or anything," he said.

"But I was told to take things handy until I had further tests. I wanted to explore every avenue to get this right. I didn't want to be on the line at matches for the rest of my life."

"Apparently intense physical exercise would put too much strain on my heart and make the leak in the valve worse. The hardest thing to take is that I couldn't feel one symptom of it at all, and feel perfectly fine," he added. "It's a disaster and that's being honest. Sport is what I love to do and to have that taken away from me at this stage in my life, well it was very hard to take," he declared.

Phelan had just begun to make a real name for himself. A member of the Clara club, he came on as a substitute for Kilkenny in their 2003 All-Ireland SHC final win over Cork, and also won successive All-Ireland Under-21 medals in 2003 and 2004. It seemed like the rug was being pulled from under his feet – just as he was about to start his journey around the great Irish sporting landscape. Rocked by the news, he sought a second opinion at the Harley Street specialist clinic last January.

"The chances of things changing were slim, but I had to explore every avenue," he said. "The consequences were so serious that I wanted to get a second opinion to put my mind completely at rest."

There was a chink of light for the brilliant young player. After monitoring the problem for a while, he was unexpectedly given the all clear to play the game he loved again, although it wasn't recommended that he play intercounty hurling again, only club. "It wasn't a brilliant diagnosis," he said, "but it was something," the 22 year old added. "The news could have been better but at least I can have a career."

And seeing light at the end of the tunnel, he soon rejoined the WIT Fitzgibbon Cup squad earlier this year and was of huge benefit to the team which went on to win the competition again this season. This ensured a prestigious third medal with the college as well as a Division One League title this year also.

What a remarkable comeback from a remarkable man!

Brian Dowling and Conor Phelan



Spórt agus Spraioi le Coláisti comes to WIT

Back in June of last year when the Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael were successful in their submission to the Irish Sports Council for funding to hold a fun initiative targeted at 1st and 2nd year secondary school girls little did we know that we would have as many as 307 girls come and taste their first experience of WIT GAA Club!. WIT was one of the four third level colleges chosen to run these events and hence the name 'Spórt agus Spraioi le Coláisti' for the project. The other colleges were UCD, NUI Maynooth and Limerick IT. Work then got underway then in October under the guidance of the recently appointed team of National Development Co-ordinator, Lynn Kelly and two Regional Development Co-ordinators, Mary O Connor and Caroline Murray. Local committees were set up in each location whose task was to invite local secondary schools to come and participate in what promised to be a fun day for all consisting of a skills session and a



series of matches on a seven a side basis. On February 9th WIT held a launch for their event with Mr John Treacy, Chief Executive of the Irish Sports Council as the guest of honour. This well known former Olympic medal winner (and Fellow of WIT) reiterated the importance of increasing female participation to the Irish Sports Council. He added that he was confident that the

programme would be a success due to the drive and visionary outlook within WIT. Professor Kieran Byrne extended a warm welcome to the guests and remarked how the college was committed to building bridges through sport. Other distinguished guests at the launch included Miriam O' Callaghan, Uachtarán Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael and Sile De Bhalis, Ardstuirthoir of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael. The scheduled date for the blitz was March 29th but alas this had to be cancelled due to the very wet weather. However the revised date of April 26th was blessed with wonderful sunshine and no major reduction in the number of participating schools from the original date.

Waterford Crystal playing fields was this venue for this event and provided the much needed space for 307 girls from 15 secondary schools across Waterford county, Kilkenny and south Wexford. Participants had come from 50 camogie clubs across the three counties and approximately 10% had never played camogie before. Each school was met by a co-ordinator who outlined the schedule for the day which was based on having games from 10-11.30am for those in Groups A, B, C and D-the latter having been graded in advance based on their participation in schools competitions and club experience also. A skill session ran concurrently over this same time frame for those in Groups E, F and G-this consisted of five different skills which the groups alternated between. Shortly after 10am the 16 teams in groups A, B, C and D commenced playing 7 a side games based on 12 minutes a side with 3 rolling substitutes. Each team had 3 games in this session after which they had a short break and then they had their skills session for 90 minutes. Soon after 11.45am the 15 teams in groups E, F and G commenced their matches giving them a chance to put into practice some of their newly acquired skills. Six finals then were played across the grades at 1.40pm after which the co-ordinators accompanied the schools down to the Dome restaurant for lunch. The tired but excited young faces were delighted when each received a Certificate of Participation and a medal at this point. Not surprisingly the games were cited as the best part of the day while losing and 'going home' were

cited as dislikes. Comments from the teachers were very favourable citing the matches and format as being most enjoyable and some adding 'we felt we learned a lot'. This day would not have been such a success without the wonderful help of the club members from across the four codes and their work in co-ordinating schools, coaching, refereeing, co-ordinating pitches and results and organising the certificates of participation and medals and evaluation forms was truly excellent. A special word of thanks to WIT's catering team for looking after everyone very well on the day.



A huge thanks to the Irish Sports Council who provided the funding for this event and to the two local Sports Partnerships' for their support especially their co-ordinators Rosarie Kealy (Waterford) and Nicola Keeshan (Kilkenny). Special thanks to the teachers and team mentors which included Margaret O'Keefe, Eleanor Walsh, Naoimi Flynn, Tina Walsh, John Barrett, John Brennan, Cait Ni He, Ashling Gannon, Deirdre Coonan, Brendan Williams, Valerie O'Neill, Emily Pickering, Amy O'Shea, Eoin Mc Cormack, Brendan O'Dwyer and All Ireland medal holders Angela Downey and Noelle O'Driscoll. Thanks also to Eamonn Browne and Morgan Conroy, Chair and Vice Chair of Munster Council, to the 2 Local GPOs Eoin Breathnach and Pat Carroll and to Waterford and Kilkenny County Boards for their support. As part of the



follow up process two coaching courses and for Code of Ethics training are being organised by the two local Sports Partnerships.

Finally, a special mention to the local organising committee of Colm Bonnar, Damien Young, Jackie O Connor, Aoife Lane, Kate Kelly and Conor Power and for the assistance also of Gerry O Connell and Maire Jackman.

Participating schools:

Colaise Cois Suire, Mooncoin, Castlecomer Community College, Loreto Kilkenny, Scoil Airgeail, Ballyhale, St Brigid's Callan, Grennan Colege, Abbey Community College, Ard Scoil Dungarvan, Blackwater College, Mercy Waterford, St Paul's Community College, St Declan's Community College, Kilmacthomas, St Mary's New Ross, Ramsgrange Secondary School and Greenhills Secondary School Carrick-on-Suir.



P.J. Banville - Wexford's Bright Prospect

By Alan Aherne "Wexford County Board PRO"

Can you imagine the sheer joy of scoring a goal against the Dubs before 82,072 supporters in a sun-scorched Croke Park? That was the happy experience savoured by W.I.T. student P.J. Banville last year when he heralded his arrival on the inter-county Senior football scene with a string of superb performances in the purple and gold.

The talented Horeswood clubman was only 19 years old when he lined out at right corner-forward for Wexford against Paul Caffrey's Dublin in the provincial semi-final on June 19th. And one minute into the second-half he succeeded in temporarily silencing the Hill when he finished expertly to the net at the Canal End to leave the underdogs in the driving seat.

Sadly, Wexford couldn't sustain their tremendous effort, and the dream of a Leinster final appearance died as Dublin pulled through by 1-17 to 2-10. However, that was certainly no fault of Banville who finished as his side's top scorer with 1-2 from play.

His Senior inter-county debut had arrived three months earlier in St. Patrick's Park, Newcastle, Co. Down, initially as a temporary replacement for Niall Murphy in an Allianz League game. He was introduced again at a later stage for John Hegarty and contributed a point in a 2-13 to 1-13 victory.

Banville made a further two substitute's appearances against Galway and Laois, having attracted the attention of the Senior selectors when he contributed 2-1 in Wexford's Leinster Under-21 championship loss to Westmeath in early March. And while he didn't feature in the memorable league semi-final win against Tyrone and subsequent loss to Armagh, he had the distinction of making his first Senior start in a championship tie - the quarter-final against Carlow in Croke Park on June 5th.

The ever-accurate Banville teamed up effectively with Matty Forde in the full-forward line and scored a goal in a 3-12 to 2-10 success, leaving him high on confidence for that subsequent clash with Dublin.

And while the championship campaign ended on a low note with a loss to Monaghan in the qualifiers in Clones, P.J. did get one more outing at headquarters before the year was over. That came in the Tommy Murphy Cup final on September 4th when a W.I.T. past pupil, Declan Browne, inspired Tipperary to a 3-10 to 0-15 win over Wexford, with Banville contributing a point from right corner-forward. However, 2005 was destined to end on

an unbelievable high for the Campile resident and former Under-21 and Eircom League soccer player with Waterford United. His club, Horeswood, had been regarded as underachievers in adult football despite capturing a string of under-age titles down through the years. That tag was well and truly buried in Wexford Park on October 16th though when they beat fellow New Ross District team, Adamstown, by 0-14 to 1-8 to claim a first-ever county Senior championship crown.

Banville posed a constant threat from left corner-forward, with his colleagues pumping fast balls into his area which resulted in three crucial points. Having already won Under-12 football, Rackard League hurling, Under-14 football Féile, Under-16 hurling and football, Minor football and Under-21 football medals, this was the crowning glory.

Banville had the distinction of playing in the first competitive Senior football game of 2006 in the entire country - a 1-10 to 1-7 O'Byrne Cup win over Wicklow under the Craanford floodlights on January 5th. He picked off a point on Paul Bealin's first night in charge, and struck a similar tally in the quarter-final loss to Dublin.

Banville was introduced as a substitute in the first three Allianz League games, scoring two goals against Down back at the scene of his debut in the coastal town of Newcastle.

His first start came on March 12th when he picked off a point in a narrow win over Meath, but that was the high point of the campaign. His goal against Galway wasn't enough to prevent relegation, so Wexford approached the championship more in hope than confidence. While they started on a bright note with another victory over the Royals, there was heartbreak on their third successive Leinster semi-final appearance when Offaly prevailed by four points.

Alas, they had an all-too brief run in the qualifiers, with a win over Monaghan in Clones followed by a championship exit against Fermanagh in Enniskillen. Banville has played 22 competitive Senior games with Wexford at this stage, scoring 5-9 in the process, while he was man of the match recently when he notched 1-4 from play for Horeswood in a club championship win over Sarsfields.

One of the brightest prospects to don the purple and gold for many years, watch out for P.J. Banville's name whenever the Wexford footballers are playing - we haven't heard the last of him yet!

PJ Banville pictured during Wexford's Leinster championship win over Meath last May

Oh, the Memories By Conor Power, Club Secretary.

Over the years the name has changed, the colour of the jersey has changed and the players have come and gone but one factor that remains steadfast is the role of the GAA Club in the life of students at WIT. A club founded 25 years ago from humble beginnings, with small playing numbers. The club now boasts over 700 members, 22 competing teams and a lot of success stories.

Of those 25 years I have been involved for 11, trained various teams from freshers hurling and football to Fitzgibbon hurling, Ashbourne Camogie and this year O'Connor Cup ladies football. They haven't all been successful but they have certainly been enjoyable and on occasion very amusing! This is a great club, one that encourages participation, nurtures talent and looks after its member like no other. When I received a hurling scholarship to the then WRTC in September 1995, little did I think that I would still be actively involved. As part of my conditions on receiving the scholarship I had to carry out four hours work a week in the GAA Office. It was a great experience, seeing how a GAA club is run on a daily basis, the problems that you must face, learning the rules of the association, an insight that is hard to come by. The man who guided me in those early days was the now legendary Paraic 'Patsy' Fanning, a Mt Sion and Waterford man to the core. He quickly instilled a pride in me for the club that lasts today, he was passionate about all the teams but most importantly he was genuinely concerned about all players' welfare. I think for me that's what stood out then and is still true today; this club cares about its members. In that first year my role was primarily a playing one and of course washing the jerseys! It was a great year, captaining a Freshers All-Ireland Hurling winning team, learning from great men like, Peter Barry, Fergal McCormack, Michael Hubbard, Enda Everard (more about him later) and my class mate Ken McGrath. As the years passed I became more involved in coaching teams, Freshers Hurling and Football were my first venture. We were fortunate that in 1997 the freshers hurlers included players of the calibre of Eamon Corcoran, Andy Moloney, Fergus Flynn, Leigh O'Brien, Shane McClearn, Cathal Murray, Chris 'Hopper' McGrath but to name a few. Victory over UCC in the final was sweet, our then major rivals. In 1998 another hugely talented bunch of hurlers re claimed the Freshers crown, led by our captain Willie Maher, they included Henry Shefflin, Michael Kavanagh, Derek Lyng, Podge Delaney. It was a great victory in the sense that because of the players we had anything less would have been a disaster but also because it was the first time we achieved three in a row at that level.

In my final year, studying and playing was all I had time for and of course the odd spot of socialising. 1999 is a year I will never forget, not because I graduated but for me and my teammates because we finally achieved our dream which was capturing the Fitzgibbon Cup. What a final, what a weekend, what a week! Everard singing red is the rose in the showers, Eric Flynn firing the cup into a field around Freshford when we had a pitstop (not something I advocate). The week is memorable, some of the stories will probably never be printed and maybe that's a good thing, they were special times among a special group of players who had a very unique bond. It was a great team, stars all over the field we even had future All-Ireland medallists and All-Stars on the sideline. Coached by two great hurling men in Donie Nealon and Paraic Fanning, their passion was unreal. Our captain Andy Moloney a fantastic leader even though he got carried away with his speech 'A great f.....g Team!' He loves to be reminded of it even now. It was also unique as my sister Jenny won an Ashbourne Camogie medal, a massive achievement and the first time the girls did it, in WIT. It gave us a great lift too. They deserved nothing less as their efforts were immense, great for the likes of Sinead Nealon, Ciara Scallan, Brigid Mullaly, stalwarts of the team and the club.

That summer like many students I headed for the States, when I came back I was fortunate to get the job of GAA Development Officer in WIT. Big shoes to fill, a daunting task but I was determined not to let my mentor Patsy down and the club for that matter. It had been good to me, I owed everyone a lot and now it was time to repay it. I spent three years in the job. The first year was a dream start,

Fitzgibbon, League and Freshers hurling titles were annexed, O'Connor Cup Football final was reached, Ashbourne Semi was lost by a point. The next two years were certainly leaner but we still won titles, like the Ashbourne in 2001 when we were seven points down with not long to go. A great bunch of girls (lunatics!) trained by my old room mate Shane McClearn (even bigger lunatic!!). I don't think either Shane or Colm Bonnar will ever forget the celebrations. Let's just say they now prefer to buy designer labels!

2003 and 2004 brought further Fitzgibbon triumphs. It was great to be involved, super hurlers, extremely dedicated and motivated. They had a great loyalty to each other and us. Trained by Colm Bonnar, he brought a great sense of humour to proceedings and liked his tunes too. The annual training SESSION in Tramore has been entered under legendary status in the clubs annals. In fact the trip back through Mullinhaone in 2003 with the cup will be fondly remembered, Brian Lynch certainly made a 'Splash' or was it 'Flash'! Lads like Ollie Moran came back to further their studies and subsequently claimed Fitz titles, we had great captains as well in Paul Curran and the first Kilkenny man to lift the cup JJ Delaney.

So to this year, newly elected Secretary of the club, a massive honour. Time to take a break from the coaching I thought. Well I was wrong; the ever persuasive Lizzy Kent coerced me into giving the Ladies Football a helping hand. It was the first time I had been involved with the girls since 2000. Is this going to be a huge mistake? I should have said no, thank god I didn't. A better bunch of players or girls you couldn't hope to meet. Dedicated, very loyal and great craic. Some times I wondered were they a Social club with a football problem. There were great victories like UJJ in the snow and some bad defeats but there was never a bad word and they represented themselves and the Institute with great distinction. The Fitzgibbon lads did it again, Champions for 2006 and why wouldn't they be. A great bunch of players led by what only can be described as a dream team. Three former WIT Fitzgibbon Cup winning captains, Paraic Fanning (1992), Colm Bonnar (1995) and Andy Moloney (1999 & 2000). If you didn't take their advice, I don't know who you would listen to. Hopefully both the ladies and men's footballers will get their just rewards very soon. They train just as hard as their hurling counterparts but luck on occasion hasn't dealt them a great hand.

To the future, well this club will be here in another 25 years. Will I be secretary? Probably not. One thing is for sure this club will be bigger and better; it has always been driven, always aimed to set new standards. Eugene McKenna was the founder, he had a dream and it was realised but he won't stand still. The other officers too, Sinead Nealon, Sheila O'Donohoe they will continue to strive for excellence, that's their way. It's a good way. However current and prospective students should realise that this is your club, the club needs you and you should be very proud to be a member. To wear the jersey is an honour. The club always needs coaches, put yourself forward it's a great experience. You won't get paid for it but that's not what it's about. The GAA was founded and developed on volunteerism. It's what this club has been founded on to. There is no money that can buy what you get out of being involved. Trust me I should know, I'm still learning and enjoying every minute. Wherever I will be in 25 years I will always be a WIT supporter, that's just the way it is. Friends you make in your time here will become friends for life, the memories will live long. It's not something you will think of right now but in 10 years time you will and then you will realise just how special this club is and why it is so successful.



WIT Fitzgibbon Cup Champions, 1999, who defeted UCC in the final

Fresher Football

by Brian Queeney

The Fresher's enjoyed a mixed year with some excellent performances at times. Trials commenced on 22nd September with almost 80 players attending.

The Fresher 1's began their campaign against UL in Limerick in mid October and were defeated by 6 points. It was the players first game together and they were unlucky to lose by 6 points. Two weeks later in Waterford Crystal both Fresher 1 and 2 teams were in action against CIT. The Fresher 2's emerged victorious by 4 points in an excellent encounter while the 1's drew in an exiting match which saw them come back from four points down at the half time mark.

On 29 November the Fresher 1 team travelled to Cork and defeated Tralee IT in a one sided game by 4.14 to 0.7. On 12th December the Fresher 1's went goal mad against UCC, winning by 5.6 to 1.6, which qualified them in joint second place with UL and CIT topping the group. The Fresher 2's also qualified for the All Ireland series. The preliminary rounds for both teams were in early February, with the Fresher 1's winning again, defeating Athlone IT well. The Fresher 2's lost to a strong NUIG side

and went into the shield competition but lost out in a gutsy display against Sligo IT. Barry Hearn, James McGrath and Brian O' Hara were consistent performers for the 2's.

The Fresher 1's took on a favored UJJ side in Dublin in the All Ireland Quarter final on 1st March. WIT took the lead after half time and looked set for a shock victory but for a strong fight back from UJJ who went on to win by 6 points. Overall though it was a great year for both teams.

Panels: *E Doran, P Kavanagh, J McGrath, C Sweeney, R Quaine, A Slattery, K Mahon, K Higgins, C O'Connor, J Creighton, C Rea, D Heffernan, M Donoghue, F O'Leary, R McCarthy, W Fallon, J Ryan, P Nolan, P Grace, S Duffy, D Mathews, B Hearn, J O'Donnell, G Murphy, M Finlay, B Boland, PJ Banville, S Whelan, S Geraghty, B Hanlon, K Harte, P Broughan, P Austin, M Mulcahy, J Byrne, P Keirns, B O'Hara, I O'Byrne, R Brosnan, B Moore, P Thornton, D O'Callaghan, JB Murphy.*

Management: *B Queeney, T McCabe, B Murphy, M Dunne, J O' Shea*



Freshers' 2 Hurling

by Paul Maher "Redser"

The Fresher 2 hurlers began their campaign away to CIT in October. With the players still unfamiliar with their team-mates, we trailed by 7 points at half time. The second half was completely dominated by WIT and goals from Alan Driver and Damien Heffernan ensured WIT began the year with a win. Best for WIT on the day were Richie McCarthy, Darragh Coughlan, Pat Kelly and Alan Driver.

Next up was a home game against a favoured Mary I team, however WIT hurled well from the start and only for conceding two late goals would have won by more than the 4 point winning margin.

Another home game against UCC saw WIT play their best hurling of the year with all 20 players used hurling brilliantly and the winning margin of 13 points did not flatter WIT as they dominated from start to finish. At this stage we were confident this team could go on and win an All Ireland, however little did we know how things would change.

We played LIT in poor conditions in late November. In a low scoring game, our forwards never got going and only for some heroic defending we could have suffered defeat. However we hung on for a draw which ensured we progressed to the knockout stages. All six backs played well in this game with Ronan Good the only forward playing to potential.

We played UL away in December but with the players knowing qualification was already ensured they played poorly and suffered their first defeat of the year. Ultimately this was to be the turning point of the year because as well as losing the match, we also lost home advantage for the All Ireland Quarter Final.

The panel trained hard for the six weeks after Christmas as they awaited their quarterfinal opponents. Unfortunately the game was fixed for the week of the mid-term break, which meant a number of players were unavailable due to work commitments. We travelled to Dublin to play UJJ with just 15 players. Each player gave 100% but the physically stronger UJJ team got the breaks and two goals just before half-time proved the difference, however WIT never gave up and battled to the end. The UJJ defence held firm and our journey was to end here at the quarter final stage.

Eddie and myself would like to thank each player for the commitment they gave throughout the year and wish them all the best in their hurling careers in the future.

The Fresher 2 hurling panel for 05/06 was:

Pat O'Sullivan, Andy Lonergan, Conor Cafferkey, Micheal Hayes, Nigel Brennan, Richie Kearns, Micheal Tyrell, Micheal Kearney, Mark Stafford, Declan Berry, John Doran, Willie Murphy, Micheal O'Keefe, Alan Driver, Martin Purcell, Pat Kelly, Stephan Molloy, Darragh Coughlan, Brian Watkins, Ronan Good, Tomas Hassett, Alan Morrissey, Diarmuid Cullen, Richie McCarthy, Sean O'Donohoe, Brian Staunton.

GAA Scholarship Recipients 2005/2006

The GAA Club at WIT each year makes a significant contribution to the awarding of scholarships in all four sports – Hurling, Camogie, Mens Football and Ladies Football. These scholarships are open to all members of the club from freshers to senior players. Successful applications are based on a player's involvement within their chosen sport to date, either as a player, coach or administrator. The scholarship package includes the following - Financial Package, which is paid in three

instalments each year. This is generally at Christmas, Easter and on successful completion of your end of year exams. Educational assistance and grinds are also included if scholarship students require any assistance with any part of their course. In return you are required to do a minimum of four hours work per week for the club – this generally includes administration, fundraising or coaching. This year the club awarded 6 scholarships and the recipients were;



**Michael Walsh
(Waterford)**

Michael was awarded the dual scholarship award. He plays both Sigerson and Fitzgibbon for the college club. He has won 3 Fitzgibbon Cups with WIT and was a vital part of this year's panel, playing at mid-field. He is a member of the Waterford Senior Hurling panel and generally plays mid-field or centre forward for them. Michael recently completed his MA in Business & Finance.



Alan Mulhall (Offaly)

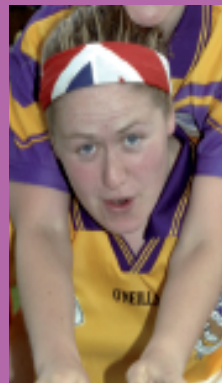
Alan also received a Football Scholarship this year. He plays his club football with Walsh Island and is a member of the Offaly senior football panel. Alan has played in four Sigerson Cup competitions and has been a valuable member of the football club over the past number of years. He captained the WIT football team this year. Alan completed the BA in Recreation & Leisure Management this year.



Ger Mahon (Galway)

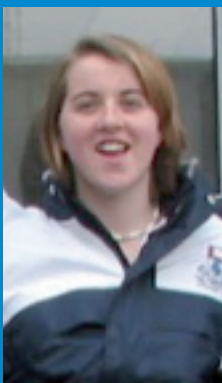
Ger received the Hurling Scholarship this year. He won a Fitzgibbon Cup and Freshers All-Ireland with the club. He was a vital member of the Fitzgibbon cup team playing a huge contribution at wing back in the semi-final and final. Ger plays his club hurling with Kinvara and has been on all underage Galway teams, winning minor and U/21 All-Irelands. He is also a member of the Galway Senior panel.

Ger is studying Construction Economics.



Nicola Scully (Wexford)

Nicola received the Ladies Football award this year. She plays in goals for the WIT O'Connor Cup team, was a member of the Ashbourne Cup team and is a very active member of the club. Nicola plays her club football for Geraldine O'Hanrahans. Nicola just completed her BA in Corporate Administration. She is currently Vice President of the Students Union at WIT.



**Geraldine Kinane
(Tipperary)**

Geraldine was awarded the Camogie scholarship. She plays her club camogie for Drom-Inch and is a member of the Tipperary Senior Camogie Team. She is the holder of two senior All-Ireland medals and plays corner forward for Tipperary. Geraldine also has one Ashbourne medal with WIT and trained the freshers camogie team to All-Ireland honours last year. Geraldine completed the BA in Recreation & Leisure Management this year.



**Eddie Rockett
(Waterford)**

Eddie was awarded a Football Scholarship this year. He plays his club football with Portlaw and is a member of the Waterford Senior Football panel. Eddie played on the Sigerson Cup team for the past three years who have been very unlucky not to make the breakthrough to the weekend Sigerson Cup competition.

Eddie is studying Architectural Technology.

A day in the life of a GAA Development Officer

By Jackie O'Connor

They say behind every successful GAA club there is a hard working development officer and the line definitely speaks for itself when it comes to Waterford Institute of Technology GAA club. Since the positions establishment in 1987, making it the first appointment of a full time GAA development officer both the profile of the position and certainly the club has gone from strength to strength. The club has seen six development officers come through its doors, all bringing their own creativity, knowledge and experience to the position thus adding to the fundamental success of the club.

As a development officer, one can pride themselves on seeing the clubs development over the years, coming from one team competing in Division 3 in 1987 to 18 teams in 2006 donning the blue, white and red colours of WIT in third level competition. Today our hurling, men's football, ladies football and camogie all compete at the top level of their respective competitions and of course have tasted both success and disappointment down through the years. Unfortunately as life everything cannot always be rosy and it can be said that many people fall into the trap of judging the club on its success rather than the hundreds of students who compete annually for the college whether it be fighting for a division one or three title. The great thing about the club is that you might not be the best player but that is irrelevant as the club caters for all capabilities and relishes in the satisfaction of facilitating all students who wish to compete for the college.

With the role of a development officer many aspects of management come into play. Few people fail to understand the organisation and development that goes on behind the scenes in a GAA club. It's not just about teams taking to the pitch and playing matches but the overall package, the management, the organisation, the training, and the fundraising all under the watchful eye of a development officer. The season starts off in early September and it can be best described as hectic but enjoyable. All the fresh faced, young and innocent, impressionable fresher (possibly for a few weeks anyway!) walk into the unknown nervously, staying in close proximity to their doting parents who are abandoned after a brief interval where they break free and are left to their own devices. The club have hundreds of students signing up in the first few weeks with the majority wishing to further their sporting capabilities and more to make new and lasting friendships.

The year can be very demanding to say the least not alone are there matches and

teams to organise but meetings have to be attended also in order to discuss the fixtures and general structures at Munster and National level. At club level our annual general meeting takes place yearly where an officer/student is appointed for each club, some willingly take on the role but some have to be given a little push, as an extra bit of work students tend to be scared of. The yearly duties would include administration work, helping in the training of teams and organising fundraising and social events. It's funny when it comes to organising the social events the students seem to revel in the preparation and there is no problem getting large numbers to attend. Overall these officers are essential to the club as without them the workload would be immense and the club would not run as smoothly and efficiently.

Our major senior competitions begin in January with huge focus put on the Fitzgibbon, Sigerson, O'Connor and Ashbourne Cup competitions. The preparation of each team is essential. The training and practice matches that have been arranged for each team throughout the year is to the forefront of each teams success. As they say it's not all play and no work as the player's not alone train and play but they are expected to fund raise for their gear, their travel and the food expenses they receive throughout the year. This is an essential element of the club and one feels this leads to players valuing the club more as things that are easily received are not appreciated as much.

Unfortunately over the course of the year some teams fail to reap the rewards but that is all part and parcel of third level competitions. However a future contributory factor to success is the entering of our footballers in the McGrath Cup, which is an intercounty competition held in January and the entering of our hurlers in the new Waterford Crystal tournament. These competitions will prove invaluable to the further development of each club and over a long term basis could be the key to their success.

Further development of each club is the introduction of our Scholarship Awards scheme. The club strongly believes that a scholarship should not alone benefit a student financially but also enrich them academically. Each year a number of awards are given to worthy candidates who apply for such scholarships. Each candidate goes through an interviewing process and is judged not alone on their sporting capabilities but also their involvement in their home club. The best candidates are then picked from a strong contingent to which they take up different

roles in the GAA club. The roles could be of an administration or coaching capacity and overall they are the role models of the club and lead by example. The club also helps with the development of its member's organising coaching courses for students throughout the year. In 2005- 2006 we had over 100 students completing a foundation level GAA course and a total of 30 on a Level 1 GAA course. We anticipate in the 2006 - 2007 academic year this number will rise substantially as we gain more members to the club.

Alas the season comes to a close in late April with teams either relishing in a victory or pondering over another year lost. The work for a development officer however is never done and there is plenty more work still to do. Sidelines our yearly publication gets underway with meetings held on a regular basis to see if we can develop and improve it from the previous years. Our publication caters for our existing, Alumni and prospective students wishing to come to the college with a blend of both humour and factual articles to please everyone's tastes. The Sidelines magazine is not alone the only work that is undertaken for the summer. Over the last three years the club has established a Summer School of hurling. Clubs and underage county development squads attend the college for expert coaching during the months of July and August. There has been a huge positive response from both the clubs and the players when they observe the professional approach that is given to each club. Ultimately the hurling school it is a key marketing tool for the future and further education of these young hurlers.

Overall GAA club is best described as a club away from home. The club is instrumental in assisting every student in every way possible. Whether is be students struggling to come to grips with subjects and arranging grinds for them, students with injuries sustained from matches/training providing them with professional physio care or those students who come to the GAA office as it provides them with an outlet to relax from the daily grind of college. Overall each of the development officers would like to think that they have contributed in their own small way to the students' development over the course of their study in the college. Therefore as a club we can pride ourselves in not alone the success of respective teams, the work carried out behind the scenes but the development of each GAA student, which comes through the doors, ultimately leading to the WIT GAA club being a true ambassador for third level clubs in Ireland.

Ashbourne 2006

by Damien Young

The search for Ashbourne cup glory all started out last September. The panel had it's first meeting, where we set our plan for the year. The league was approaching fast and it was time to get down to training.

League

A week after the Freshers winning the shield final we played the Garda college in a practice game, this proved to be a very worthwhile exercise as we found out a lot about the players capabilities. On the 9th of October we travelled to Dublin to take on UUJ in the 1st round of the league. In what was a tight battle we managed to come out winning in the end by 5 points, WIT 3.09 to UUJ 1.10. UCD brought a strong panel to Ballygunner for the 2nd round of the league. This was one of the games of the year, the scores remained very close all the way through, UCD were leading by 3 points with only a few minutes remaining, our girls stayed with it and fought it out to the very end, we got a goal with time nearly up which left the sides level, UCD won a free and converted it to put them ahead, time ran out on us and we lost by a point.



Back L to R: C Meagher, R Heylin, M Corcoran, D Dunne, A Mangan, R Kenneally, L Murphy, K Fennelly, A Fitzpatrick, M Maloney, C Nolan, T O'Halloran, G Kinane. Front L to R: L Murphy, K Atkinson, L Milea, N Flanagan, D Ní Mhuiri, N Scully, S Keane, U Jacob, F Dowling, G Brennan, P Cunningham, K Corkery, L Flynn.

Our final match in the league was against Mary I in Limerick. We travelled to Patrickswell where we found a thick fog, which only descended minutes before we arrived. After a number of phone calls we managed to play the game in Ahane. The game was very one sided with WIT having all the play. We ran out comfortable winners by 5.11 to 6 points. Unfortunately this was the end of our league campaign as we missed out on score difference to qualify for the league final.

Ashbourne

Christmas holidays came and then exams, we only trained once a week during this period. However once the exams were finished it was full steam ahead for the Ashbourne quarter final, our opponents were CIT. We played an extremely competitive challenge game against UCC in the build up to the CIT game. This was a fantastic game, which saw WIT beating UCC by two points. Training was going extremely well and this proved the case when the game against CIT came round.

CIT got off to a good start when Galway star Brenda Hanney fired over a fine point. Minutes later the Waterford girls took the lead when a good delivery by Keava Fennelly found Ursula Jacob who powered her way past the CIT back line and blasted the ball past the keeper. This score settled the WIT side and they soon found their rhythm. The girls produced some great passages of play

especially in defence where Tishy O'Halloran, Carol Nolan and Doireann Ni Mhuiri were in superb form. Points from Dee Dunne and Ursula Jacob extended WIT's lead while CIT hit back with points from Deirdre Delaney. In the 20th minute Noreen Flanagan won possession on the left wing passed the ball to Deirdre Dunne who scored an inspirational goal with a great strike that gave the keeper no chance. Further pointed frees from Ursula Jacob left the half time score 2-7 to 3 points in WIT's favour.

The second half began at a lively pace with Aoife Fitzpatrick and Keava Fenneley dominating in midfield and Tishy O' Halloran giving a fantastic display at centre back. Two Points in quick succession from Ger Kinane increased Waterford's lead but CIT refused to lie down and had three points of their own. The game was put beyond doubt with 15 minutes to go when a long range free from Ursula Jacob looked to be heading over the bar but dipped under for a goal. Points from Ursula Jacob Ger Kinane and Dee Dunne finished the scoring and WIT ran out winners on a score line of 3-12 to 8 points. The team and management were very happy with this win however we were aware of the challenges that lay ahead. Our opponents for the semi final were UCD.

Preparations started immediately for the Ashbourne, which was hosted in UL. The team trained hard and left no stone unturned for the final two weeks. We played the Garda College in our final challenge which was a competitive game, and what we needed before going into the weekend competition. We travelled to Limerick on Friday night, the mood was good in the camp and everybody was really looking forward to the game.

Following a brief puck a round on Saturday morning the team looked all set. The game started at a furious pace with UCD dominating the early scoring. We were finding it difficult to break down their defence with scores hard to come by. The score at half time was UCD 6 points WIT 2 points both coming from Ursula Jacob. We made a terrific start in the second half with a goal from Ursula Jacob. However UCD replied with a goal of their own, which was a killer blow to us. With ten minutes to go the score read UCD 1.06 to WIT 1.04, we had a great chance of reducing the deficit,

Gerldine Kinane did everything right, soloing past the defender and shooting into the corner, the goalkeeper turned her back to the ball and it managed to hit her. Both sides added points to leave the final score UCD 1.09 WIT 1.05. The girls were heart broken, another year, another Ashbourne Cup has slipped by.

At the Ashbourne banquet at the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, Rosie Kenneally was awarded an Ashbourne All Stars award for her display in goals. Rosie was excellent throughout the season for both the Fresher and Ashbourne teams.

The entire panel put in a huge effort and I'd like to thank them for that, thanks also to Helena Jacob and James Meagher (Sheff) for all their work and expert advice. Here's to next year.

Ashbourne panel:

Lizzy Flynn (capt), Rosanna Kenneally, Carol Nolan, Fiona Dowling, Grainne Brennan, Tishy O'Halloran, Doireann Ní Mhuiri, Aofie Fitzpatrick, Keava Fennelly, Susan Keane, Liz Murphy, Noreen Flanagan, Ursula Jacob, Geraldine Kinane, Deirdre Dunne, Katherine Corkery, Pauline Cunningham, Maeve Maloney, Roisin Heylin, Karen Atkinson, Nicola Scully, Lisa Milea, Laura Murphy, Catherine Meagher, Andrea Mangan.



Player Profile: Mags McEvoy (Ladies Football)

They say in sport that the mark of a truly great player is one who can make the most difficult of situations appear relatively easy. That is something that can without question be said of Margeurite (Mags) McEvoy from Laois. Mags a second year Recreation and Leisure student captained this years O'Connor cup team to reach the league final and the O'Connor cup quarterfinal.

Her most outstanding game of this years campaign came in the snowstorms in Ballymore, Co. Longford where a much-fancied University College Jordanstown came up against WIT in the O'Connor Cup qualifier. In sub zero conditions Mags fantastic reading of play and controlled distribution played a major factor in WIT coming out victorious.

Mags is no stranger to the big occasion having won a Senior All Ireland title and a National League Div 2 title with her native Laois back in 2001 when she was just out of nappies! A National League Div 1 title followed in 2003. That same year she won a Leinster Minor title and another Leinster Minor title followed in 2004. After her great achievements in 2004 she received the further accolade of being named Laois Ladies Footballer of the year. Finally this year having just returned to the game following serious knee surgery she starred at corner back to win another Suzuki National league Div 2 title. So needless to say the trophy cabinet is far from empty!!

Not only a great leader on the field she is also to the forefront when it comes to organising off the fields events. 'Team bonding sessions' were as apparent as team training sessions and often saw better crowds during her tenure as captain.

Here's hoping 2006/2007 can see some college success added to her ever-expanding medal collection and hopefully a few more memories thrown in along the way for good measure!

WIT's Consistent Fitzgibbon Cup Record since 1992 Break-through

Since WIT's historic Fitzgibbon Cup breakthrough in 1992 when they beat UL, WIT is now becoming one of the most consistent teams in Fitzgibbon. Over this 15-year period WIT contested 10 finals, 14 semi finals and won 7 titles. In 1994, WIT were beaten in the Final by UL after extra time, but contested the final again in 1995 when WIT beat UCC, UL and UCD to win the Cup for the second time. WIT lost another final in 1998 to UCC, but came back strongly in 1999 and 2000 to beat UCC and UCD to win its first ever back to back titles. A heartbreaking defeat to UCC in the 2001 semi final stopped the dream of 3 in a row titles. WIT contested the final again in 2002 only to be beaten by UL. However in 2003 and 2004 WIT again won back-to-back titles beating CIT and UCC only to be beaten in 2005 when going for 3 in a row. However WIT came back strongly to win their seventh Fitzgibbon Cup title in 2006, beating UCD in final.

Over this period WIT also won the Higher Education Div 1 hurling league title on 6 occasions and in the process winning the double twice in 2000 and 2006. The league victories were in 1991-92, 1996-97, 1997-98, 1999-2000, 2001-02 and 2005-06. The backbone of this conveyer-belt of talent comes from the impressive form shown by the WIT Fresher Hurling teams who have contested 12 finals winning 8 of these over these same years.

Fitzgibbon Cup, Division 1 League and Fresher Hurling Statistics since 1992

YEAR	FITZGIBBON POSITION	VERSUS	FRESHERS POSITION
1991			Fresher Champions
1992	Fitzgibbon Final - Champions	UL	
1993	Fitzgibbon Semi-final	UCC	
1994	Fitzgibbon Final	UL	Fresher Champions
1995	Fitzgibbon Final - Champions	UCD	Fresher Finalists
1996	Fitzgibbon Quarter-final	Garda	Fresher Champions
1997	Fitzgibbon Semi-final	Garda	Fresher Champions
	League Winners		
1998	Fitzgibbon Final	UCC	Fresher Champions
	League Winners		
1999	Fitzgibbon Final - Champions	UCC	
2000	Fitzgibbon Final - Champions	UCC	Fresher Champions
	League Winners		
2001	Fitzgibbon Semi-final	UCC	
2002	Fitzgibbon Final	UL	Fresher Finalists
	League Winners		
	Fresher Hurling Finalists		
2003	Fitzgibbon Final Champions	CIT	Fresher Champions
2004	Fitzgibbon Final Champions	UCC	
2005	Fitzgibbon Semi-final	UL	Fresher Finalists
2006	Fitzgibbon Final Champions	UCD	Fresher Champions
	League Winners		

WIT GAA CLUB HOLIDAY TRIPS

