

PRO Report to the County Board – Bealtaine 2021

Bealtaine 24, 2021

1 Introduction

There has been a notable uplift in PRO activity over the last month with the return to inter-county action and this is likely to increase further in June.

2 Web Site and other Social Media

During the last couple of months there have been no major changes to the structure of the DonegalGAA.ie website, only updates and a small number of alterations. These have included the updating of club webpages to include new officer boards; updating of 2020 admin documents under the admin and wellness tabs to their 2021 equivalents; the constant updating of club notes on about a dozen club sites; and a new approach of changing the picture on the landing (front) page on a regular basis depending on what the current priority for promotion is (previously the landing page advertised both the house draw and Donegal GAATV while today it is a promotion for the upcoming game against Armagh). There are some plans for additions to the website over the coming months which may, or may not, come to fruition:

- It is hoped to add profile pictures and biographies for our hurling squad. Such profiles have been in place for quite a while for our footballers but not the hurlers. The profile pics have been taken (by Geraldine Diver) and the biography information has been forwarded to me by Marty McGrath. This is a major piece of data inputting and I have not found the time yet to do it but hope to have it in place in advance of the Nickey Rackard. The football squad for 2021 has also yet to be updated;
- New tabs were added last year for wellness and for culture and I am thinking of adding one for children's affairs. There is one for "Juveniles" which covers both fixtures/games/etc but also safety issues. I will discuss with Daireen and Aidan Spence the feasibility of separating the two as they are quite different spheres;
- The "Coaching" has had few additions, and considerably fewer news items, compared to last year when this tab was initially set-up. There are a couple of reasons for this: Aaron has not wanted to publicise the Cúl Camps as many clubs are reserving limited places for their own members and the new Academy/Coaching set-up is generally doing its own publicity;
- The fixtures and results section – always the most popular – is yet to be populated as the fixtures are not yet set-out but this will be happening imminently.

Of the 90 news items/weblogs since the turn of the year (mostly in the last two months) most related to the senior county squad:

- Senior County squads – there were 20 postings related to our adult county teams;
- Fifteen on health and wellness, mostly Covid related;
- Hurling – there were 12 postings on hurling, all regarding inter-county games;
- Twelve relating to administration matters;
- Coaching-related matters was the subject of twelve news items including Ulster and Donegal coaching webinars and Cúl Camp
- Five news items related to Cultúr agus Teanga;
- There were 5 items covering youth activities;
- A further nine related to a miscellany of matters.

All news items were promoted to a wider audience through our Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram accounts. While the latter two have a smaller audience they have grown substantially in the last two years. LinkedIn crossed the 1,000 connections threshold this month, having started 2020 at under 400 and 2021 had under 700. Our photographer Geraldine Diver looks after Instagram and has grown the number of followers from 300 in 2019 to just under 7,000 at the beginning of the year to nearly 9,700 at present. Twitter and Facebook followers both seem to have plateau'd at a high level although this may reflect the lack of activity as a result of Covid – for example there were 77 postings in May 2019

compared to 90 from Jan to Amy 2020. Both have actually fallen very slightly since the end of 2020. There are currently 54,500 Twitter, and 31,800 Facebook, followers.

2 Broadcasting and Streaming

All of Donegal's games in the Allianz League are being broadcast by either Eirsport or RTE, as will our forthcoming championship games. However, our hurling games are neither broadcast nor available on GAAGO so the home games against Roscommon and Mayo were streamed with commentary provided by Highland Radio. Virtual programmes were produced for both games.

Numbers subscribing are relatively low – just over 200 - and very little additional revenues was generated by adverts and sponsorship. In addition, our platform provider has changed from SVP to 247 and while it costs slightly more the service (to date) is more reliable and there are no customer issues with missing passwords. If they continue to prove reliable they provide a much cheaper option than BeoSport for large audience games.

Looking to the rest of the year with limited crowds likely to be back, hopefully, by the time championship rolls around the potential to generate revenue from streaming is likely to fall. Our next game is probably the Nickey Rackard first round game with Mayo in Letterkenny. Finance committee member Sinead Breen has come on board to help sell adverts and sponsorship and so we will make a concerted effort to improve revenue from this source for that game. We have also developed a new video concept which will make it easier to attract advertisers without burdening them with the need to provide a 30-60 second video. The big target is the postponed 2020 Senior Club final, possible in early August but hopefully not until later if Donegal do well in the Ulster and All-Ireland Championships.

Thanks to the hardworking members of the Stream Team – Bradas O'Donnell, Joe Brennan and Ciaran O'Donnell and to Oisin Kelly in Highland Radio for commentary – for all their help. Damien Carr continues to help with tweeting for intercounty football games, using the TV as his source

3 Miscellaneous

Our first and only press briefing of the year was held live in Convoy with Declan Bonner and Paul Brennan in early May. The occasion also enabled the re-launch of the “Hydration Partnership” with Global Hydrate. Earlier, in April the new partnership with McGinley Motors.

Virtual programmes have been produced for Donegal's three home inter-county games in hurling and football. These have been provided free for download on our website. Adverts were only for our main sponsors kn-circet, Abbey Hotel and O'Neills and for “streaming” sponsors/advertisers. Traditionally, a range of other county squad sponsors get advertising space in “hardcopy” programmes. This is not a key issue at present but with the likelihood of additional partners coming on board through the initiatives of the new Fundraising Committee the frequency and size of advertisements for different partners/sponsors will need to be looked at in advance of the 2022 league season. We have developed a new “space” within the programme for advertising – namely on the team sheet page – the most frequently viewed page in our virtual programmes (see below).



The yellow and green swirl background evident in the jpeg above is a relatively recent development. It is one we are continually using now for much of the imagery accompanying our weblogs/news items. It is a blank canvas at the moment but does have the potential to incorporate branding/advertising. As of yet I have not had the time to develop this. Its debut in fact was as a vehicle to allow us to highlight our League sponsors last year (see below). The other “standard backgrounds” used last year highlighted Michael Murphy Sports as our club championship partners. Both of these “additional” modes of advertising were not in existence when sponsorship arrangements were agreed at the beginning of 2020.



Documents continue to be uploaded to the shared One Drive Folders for Club PROs using a @gaa.ie address. Seven documents have been uploaded in the last month including four on child safety. Documents are re-assigned to different folders at the end of each month. I also share a One Drive Folder with Club Secretaries to which documents are also uploaded. This PRO report will be added when completed.

Finally, Aidan Spence has taken a step closer to filling the role of IT officer for the County and is now monitoring the email address itofficer.donegal@gaa.ie and the corresponding One Drive folder for County IT officers.

Míle buíochas,

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