



Ballyholland Harps GAC

Newsletter

April 2006



It's that time of year again

April is a great month. Lenten pledges can be left behind, the evenings get longer and the sun finally remembers how to shine. But, much more importantly than all that, the leagues get underway again. The senior footballers, captained by Damian McCrink (right), host Downpatrick in their opener on Easter Monday. The u-16s play Glenn at home the next night, the u-14s are away to Bosco a couple of days later, and the reserves the following Sunday at home to Drumgath (23rd).

The camogie u-12s get in on the act away to Kilcoo on the 22nd, before their seniors travel to Drumaness on the 27th. The first competitive action this season though involves the minor footballers, so come on over to Fr Lynch Park this Wednesday evening when they face the auld enemy, Newry Shamrocks.

Social scene

Saturday night entertainment during April:

Sat 8th April – Blue Magic

Sat 15th April – Champagne

Sat 22nd April - The Baron

Sat 29th April – Patsy Demon and Country Breeze

There will also be entertainment in the Club after a number of senior football home league matches this season. First up is after the Easter Monday match, a folk night with Boglands and Blackthorns crew - Peter, Aidan and Collie.

Keep an eye out for posters and in the local press for future after-match events.

New minibus

Even if it's still unsure which is worthier of the bigger celebration - getting a new minibus, or just getting rid of the old one – the deal has been done now, and well done to Cathal McGovern for taking the time and effort to sort it all out. So make sure you smile and wave from now on whenever you see a white Transit van on the roads.

Standing on the horizon

Led by the tireless trio of Brendan O'Hare, Philly Murtagh and Joe Hughes, a huge amount of progress has taken place with the spectators' stand over the past few months (well, when we managed to keep Joe quiet anyway). Every Saturday morning during that time (and quite a few evenings) has been given up by a team of dedicated, and occasionally even skilled, club members – and the whole community owes them a debt of gratitude for their efforts. The foundations and retaining walls have been poured, and the structural steelwork is next. So all things going well, it should be done and dusted by the time you get your next newsletter, and - seeing as he'll doubtlessly be suspended by that stage - provide Kevin Loughran somewhere nice and warm from which to watch his charges play.

Texas Hold 'Em in Ballyholland

Put 30th April into your diary, the day when the Harps hold a Texas Hold 'Em night for the first time. Starting at 8.30pm, it's only £10 in, and everyone is very welcome.

Counting with the County

Ronan Murtagh and Paul Murphy have both played important roles in Down's recent resurgence as a force to be reckoned with in county circles. Although plagued by injury problems, 'Bad Boy' Ronan has made something of a name for himself as an impact sub, turning a number of games in Down's favour on his introduction. Meanwhile 'Murf' has pushed himself firmly into Paddy O'Rourke's plans with a series of lungbursting displays from wing-back.

With any luck, both will feature strongly in the Championship against Cavan in May (and hopefully long beyond that too), so best of luck to them, and to Down, for the upcoming campaign.

2005 prize winners

With a turnout well into triple figures, the club's annual dinner dance, held on 10th March, proved to be a very successful event this year. 2005 wasn't the club's most successful year on the pitch, but there was still a list of very deserving winners of the individual awards.

Camogie:

Player of the Year - Helen McAteer.

Players' Player of the Year - Helen McAteer.

Personality of the Year - Louise Carr.

Football:

Players' Player of the Year - Damian McCrink.

Sportsman of the Year - Kieran Murphy.

Most Promising Player - Paddy McAnulty.

Reserve Player of the Year - Paddy McAteer.

Minor Player of the Year - Joseph Murphy.

Club Awards:

Clubman of the Year - Michael-John Keenan and Kevin Loughran.

Clubwoman of the Year - Siobhan Keenan.

Hall of Fame - Seán O'Hare.

Senior football

The five game Ulster League campaign ultimately ended up with just the one success, which was a Paddy McAnulty inspired victory over Mullaghbawn. But once again these outings against top flight opposition proved to be a very useful exercise in teambuilding and for blooding young players. Minors like Joe Murphy, Anton Haughey and Tony Havern gained some vital first team experience, while more experienced players like Colman Smith and Ronan Murphy got the chance to blow off a few cobwebs.

With the real business of the Down football leagues now only a fortnight away, training is now reaching a new intensity – although the weather has played havoc with friendly fixture plans.

Downpatrick provide the first opposition of the season at home on Easter Monday, and although the Hoops are not quite the force they once were, we would have had to look quite hard to find a more difficult way to open a Division II season.

But with well over 30 players having turned out for pre-season training so far (Mattie has even turned up once or twice), Shane, Ronan and Kevin should hopefully have a large, strong squad to pick from throughout the season.

The second game of the season is the long away trip to Carryduff the following Friday (21st April). There is no let-up to the pace in the early season, and after Saul arrive in Ballyholland three days later on Monday (24th), the 1st May and the 5th of May see games against Ballymartin away and Saval at home, respectively.

Lastly, best wishes to last season's captain, Glen Elmore, who suffered a bad knee injury in an Ulster League game. Witnesses to the incident reckon it was the kind of injury that finishes a career. But Glen is certainly no quitter, so don't be surprised to see him back in the yellow jersey before too long.

Club Ballyholland off to a flying start

The club's latest, and perhaps most important fundraising venture, *Club Ballyholland*, was launched on Friday 10th March at the annual presentation night.

Chairman Seán McAteer took the honour of being the first person to sign up, and he explained to all those in attendance that *Club Ballyholland* would be the cornerstone of the club's future development plans, while all its members would enjoy a series of benefits for being involved...and with almost immediate effect, a very healthy membership sprung up!

Inaugural members

John Barry, Gerard Brady, Eugene Campbell, Rosie Carroll, Paschal Hughes, Michael-John Keenan, Denis Larkin, Brendan Loughran, Kevin Loughran, Adrian McAteer, Aidan McAteer, Colm McAteer, John McAteer, Marian McAteer, Paul McAteer, Sean McAteer, Patrick McCourt, Eamon McElroy, Eileen McElroy, Mark McElroy, Cathal McGovern, Michael McGovern, Ronan McGovern, Anthony McNamee, Cathy Mulholland, Noreen Mulholland, Sean Mulholland, Shane Mulholland, Paul Murphy, Stephen Murphy, Philip Murtagh, Brendan O'Hare, Eamon O'Hare, Noel O'Hare, Sean O'Hare, Cyril O'Reilly, Caroline Poland, Robbie Quinn, Cathal Rushe, Andy Russell, Robbie Russell, Paddy Savage, Mattie Shields, Colie Smith.

Due to some difficulty with correlating membership forms arriving from different sources, a few of our *Club Ballyholland* members have been omitted from the above list. Sincerest apologies to anyone whose name has been omitted - their names will be published in the next edition.

If you would like to join *Club Ballyholland*, or would like some more details on what it's all about, do not hesitate to contact Paddy Savage on 07799867830 or Mickey-John Keenan on 02830823750. It is as simple as filling in a form and remember, it's all about building a future for **your** club.

Juvenile football

With a central core of senior squad players at their disposal, the minor team management of Colm McAteer and Duane Kieran are hoping for a successful year ahead – and a recent victory over Carrickcruppen in a friendly match points in that direction too. With three games in three weeks (Shamrocks home 5th April, Ballymartin away 12th April, Tullylish home 19th April), it'll not be too long before they know a lot more about how they stand.

Although a young side, the under-16 managers Mickey Kearney, Paddy Havern and Tommy Kane can call on a host of the championship winning under-14s of last year, and as a result they are expecting to make a good attempt at gaining sectional honours. Their pre-season plans have been badly hit by the weather, but a good win over Silverbridge showed the team to be in good fettle, with older players like Thomas Kane and Sean McManus blending well with the likes of Robbie White, Conor Madden and Adam McAteer.

At under-14 level, Cyril, John, Sean and Mark are also very hopeful of a good year ahead. They have lost quite a few players since last season and have landed in a tough section, but pre-season victories over the Point and Carrickcruppen would suggest that players such as Conrad Loughran, Ruari Kearney and Rory Keenan are growing into genuine leaders, and that among others, younger players like Jarlath McAteer, Niall McKeivitt and John Davis could make names for themselves this season.

With the inception of the new GAA-wide *Go Games* scheme at u-12 level and below, the younger teams and their managers have been experimenting with a mix of the new-style games and the traditional game. The u-10 management would like to thank Damien Tinnelly and Cathal McGovern for their kind sponsorship of balls and equipment for the year. Training continues every Sunday morning at 11am, and players should bring indoor shoes in case of rain.

Camogie

Congratulations to Karen Tinnelly and Elaine Finnegan who recently received individual player awards at the annual Down Camogie Dinner Dance.

Good luck also to the four Ballyholland players currently training with the down under-13 squad for the annual community games in May. They are Colleen Murtagh, Cliona Murtagh, Lauren Watterson and Sinead Mc Garry.

With the new season only around the corner, camogie training is now in full flight for all age groups. New players are always very welcome, so please come along if you are interested.

Training times are:

Under-12 - Saturdays at 11am

Under-14 - Mondays at 5pm

Under-16 - Tuesdays at 6pm

Under-18 - Sundays 10am

Seniors - Mondays & Wednesdays at 6.30pm

The camogie club committee would especially like to thank Dan O'Hare Truck and Trailer Limited for their recent sponsorship of underage tracksuit tops.

Lotto News

Congratulations to Phylis Mackey who scooped the lotto jackpot of £1,700 on the 25th of March. Her winning numbers of 5, 9, 11, 13 would have caused a few heartaches too, with eight different people winning the £10 bonus that night for matching three numbers.

The latest draw took place on 1st of April and the winning numbers were 3, 15, 21, 24 and although there were once again 8 bonus winners, the jackpot prize was not claimed.

Next week's jackpot is now £1,050 and tickets for this draw can be bought from the shop, the club or from any committee member.

On the web

The juvenile football sections and camogie sections have recently been given a full makeover, and now include current fixtures, results, league tables, news, sponsors and player lists, and this information will be kept up to date as the season progresses.

Logon to www.ballyholland.org for all the latest Ballyholland news and events.

This edition was brought to you by...

Many thanks to the sponsors of the April 2006 edition:



For independent mortgage advice, contact Colman Smith of the Easy Mortgage Shop on his work number 0284175366 or mobile 07793024771.

Phone Anthony McNamee on 07968255763 if you would like to sponsor a future edition of the *Ballyholland Harps GAC Newsletter*.

Your club, get involved

The seemingly perennial quest to get bar staff to cover the social club continues. If you can help out (absolutely no experience is necessary), and are willing to give up just one night every two months for your club, please see Damien Dixon or Mickey-John Keenan as soon as you can.

Also, don't forget that the social club is available for hire (cost = £nothing) for private parties, weddings and other functions. Call the club on 028302 66985 if you are interested.

Email anthony@ballyholland.org if you have any information for the next newsletter.