

Callan C.B.S. - The Dunnamaggin Connection

From the time Rev. Robert O'Keeffe from Dunnamaggin laid the foundation stone for Callan C.B.S. in 1868, players from the parish had contributed enormously to the success of hurling at the college. In the early years success was scarce this despite producing both fine football and hurling teams. The breakthrough nearly came in the 1940's with Davie Walsh as their most prominent player, but they failed to jump the final hurdle. Inspired on by centenary year and the arrival of Mick McHugh, the Rice Cup, the most prestigious trophy in CBS hurling was won in 1968 with Pat Butler, Kells, Richard Mackey, Rogerstown, Johnny Nolan, Ballytobin, and James Hughes, Dunnamaggin, to the fore. This was a major breakthrough for the school and they went on to capture the U-17 Leinster Kyne Cup the same year. Pat Butler, Kells, and Willie Hughes, Dunnamaggin, were members of this team. In 1971 the earlier under age success was followed by winning the Senior Leinster Colleges "B" title against an Ogie Moran led Gormanstown team. As there was no All-Ireland "B" championship at the time Callan C.B.S. progressed into the semi-final of the "A" championship where they came up against the mighty St. Kieran's in the semi-final. The Callan boys put up a brave show but were beaten in the end. Pat Butler, Kells, Jimmy Dunne, Kells, John Nolan, Ballytobin, James Hughes, Dunnamaggin, and Richie Mackey, Rogerstown, were members of this team. The 1972 team again captured the Leinster Colleges "B" Leinster Final with the same players on board. They again qualified for the Leinster "A" championship semi-final in which they beat Gormanstown and qualified again to meet a very strong St. Kieran's in the final. At this time Colleges hurling was 13 a-side and the speedier St. Kieran's forwards won the day and went on to win the All-Ireland.

The school was starved of success for a good number of years before winning the Leinster U.14 "B" in 1981. Pat Moylan was part of this team. This was followed by U.16 Leinster "B" success in 1982. The Senior team captured the Leinster Colleges "B" title also in 1982 but failed to win the Final, beaten by Cashel C.B.S. Having won the Leinster "B" title again in 1983 they fell again at the final hurdle to Nenagh C.B.S. Pat Moylan was the only representative from the parish. The Rice Cup was captured for the first time in 18 years in 1986. Brian Mackey, Rogerstown, Michael Moran, Baurascoobe, and James Moylan, Caherleske, were on this team.

The year 1991 brought a first for the school when the All Ireland Colleges Senior "B" title was captured. This great success included Jim and Tom Hickey, Dunamaggin, Paul Kearney, Kilmoganny and Denis Lahart, Goodwingsgarden, Kells. Callan C.B.S. contested the "A" Colleges championship in 1992. In the Leinster Semi-Final against St. Peter's College, Wexford, they found themselves 11 points in arrears but put in a tremendous effort to clinch victory. They went on to contest their first "A" Leinster title for 20 years against St. Kieran's. Having got off to a great start with a Mick O'Neill goal after 20 seconds, they were beaten by a superior St. Kieran's team.

The Callan Team was well served by Tom Hickey, Dunamaggin, Paul Cahill, Kilmoganny, Paul Kearney, Kilmoganny, Mick O'Neill, Dunamaggin, Adrian Moran, Dunamaggin and Alan Mackey, Rogerstown.

Having suffered a one point defeat in the final of the Rice Cup in 1992 a special effort was made in 1993. Having accounted for Cashel C.B.S and Nenagh C.B.S., they were pitted against Thurles C.B.S. in the final. In dreadful conditions and led on by Capt. John Hickey they came through

on a scoreline of 2 -1 to 1-2. Included on the panel were William Kearney, Kilmoganny, Ramie Cahill, Kilmoganny, John Hickey, Dunamaggin, and Niall McCormack, Goodwinsgarden, Kells.

On the 150th anniversary of the death of Edmund Rice, appropriately, the Rice Cup was again captured in 1994. In the final Callan beat Templemore C.B.S. on the scoreline 0-8 to 1-1. This team was captained by Noel Hickey and included Niall McCormack, Goodwinsgarden, Kells.

In 1994 the senior team put in a very big effort to win the "B" championship to be eligible for the "A" championship in 1995. After all the hard work the team won out Leinster beating Roscrea in the final. They easily disposed of St. Jarlath's in the semi-final and came up against a fancied Templemore side in the final. The team never got going on the day and were beaten 3-8 to 0-8. Dunamaggin was represented by Michael O'Neill (Capt), Anthony McCormack, Tom McCormack, Andrew Hickey, John Hickey, Noel Lahart, Ramie Cahill and William Kearney. In 1996 a very fancied U-16 team won the U-16 championship with a hard fought win over Colaiste Eoin 2-10 to 2-4. Niall McCormack was sound in goal. Noel Hickey was centre back with Colin Herity in midfield and Canice Hickey corner forward. History was also made this year when the first ever football championship, the Leinster U-16 Roinn D, was captured by the same team.

In 1997 Callan CBS became the first ever winners of a new competition the Dalton Cup which was specifically designed for 5th years and under in Christian Brothers schools. They defeated Kilkenny C.B.S. in the final. They also had further success with the big ball winning the Leinster Senior Football (Roinn D) crown. This was only the second time ever a Kilkenny school had won a senior football crown. Callan had a runaway victory over St. Finian's 2-13 to 1-4 in the final. Figuring prominently on this team were Matthew Enright, Noel Hickey, John Hickey and Niall McCormack. The Rice Cup was captured for the 5th time in 1997 with David Herity our sole representative. The year 1998 will forever be remembered by those associated with Callan C.B.S. This is the year the Seniors won their first ever Leinster Colleges "A" Final. Having beaten St. Kieran's, Kilkenny C.B.S. and St. Brendan's Birr, in a league format they came up against Dublin Colleges in the semi-final, where they were stretched to the limit. Their self belief kept them going to win through. St. Kieran's College had got back in despite losing twice in earlier rounds and were waiting in the Leinster Final.

This was played before a Kilkenny v Wexford National Hurling League game in an electric atmosphere. A Colin Herity (Capt) point and a lucky goal got Callan off to the best possible start and they led 1-6 to 0-5 at half time. Callan dug deep in the second half and a brave save by young David Herity denied St. Kieran's, and Callan won on a scoreline 1-10 to 0-9. This was a truly heroic team performance and was followed by scenes of jubilation among the Callan supporters. Colin Herity's "Look at the smiley heads of ya" speech was warm and humorous and will be remembered for a long time together with his great hurling display. The job was not completed yet and the kingpins of Munster Colleges hurling St. Flannan's, were the opponents in the semi-final in Thurles. The Callan boys seemed to lack belief in themselves early on but as the game wore on were gaining in confidence. They fought with ferocity to the finish and St. Flannan's were relieved to run out winners by 1-8 to 1-6. What a pity the boys did not start as they finished. The heroes representing Callan in this historic campaign were Colin Herity (Capt), David Herity, Noel Hickey, Canice Hickey and Niall McCormack.

Jimmy Dunne