

# Cluichí na gCarad

## DUBLIN-ANTRIM FRIENDSHIP GAMES 1932-2025



AONTROIM

### AMLÍNE

First Games Dublin v  
Belfast, McCrory Park  
Kevin Armstrong plays

1932

First games  
in Dublin -  
Croke Park

1933

10,000 spectators  
attend McCrory Park

1934

Games played  
in Corrigan Park

1940s

Father Flanagan  
(Boystown) attends

1946

Liam Whelan  
plays

1948

Games held in  
Harold's Cross  
Greyhound Stadium

1949

Dublin  
star Bernie  
Boothman plays

1950

Casement Park  
opened - Games  
played there

1953

Girls  
participate for  
the first time

2000

Lyndsey Davey plays  
in Casement Park

2002

Cormac  
Costello plays

2002/3

An Post stamp  
honours Liam Whelan

2008

Games were  
last event in  
Casement Park

2013

Dublin v full Antrim  
team for first time

2022

Back to  
Corrigan Park/  
McCrory Park

2023

Games in Parnell Park  
for the first time

2024

2025

Corrigan  
Park



**Préamhaithe Sa Stair -  
Réidh Don Todhchaí**



# Focal ón gCathaoirleach



It is our great pleasure to return to Corrigan Park for the annual Cluichí na gCarad, Friendship Games, an event stretching back to its inception in nearby McCrory Park in 1932.

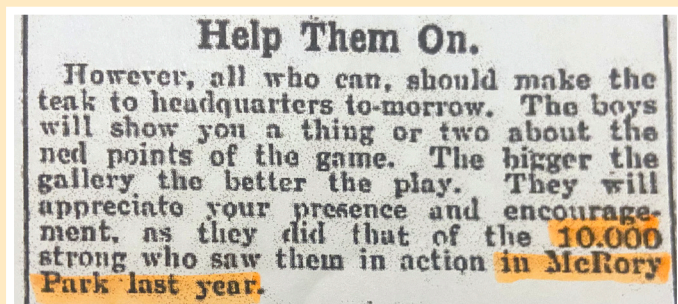
Ta fíor athas orainn a bheith i gcontae Aontroma agus gabhaimid buíochas leis an gcoiste as ocht an failte. This year we bring a new squad of 90 children all eager and ready to participate in this historic event.



This unique and iconic sporting exchange offers another opportunity to our young players to extend a sporting hand of friendship across the border.

Táimid ag súil go mór le lá iontach eile anseo i mBéal Feirste.

*James Hayden*  
Cathaoirleach



The Evening Herald on April 8th 1935 reported that 10,000 people attended the games in 1934.



Mr. Sean Og O Kelly (right) presenting (on behalf of the Gaelic League) yesterday a Perpetual Challenge Cup, for Hurling between Dublin and Belfast Primary Schools Leagues, to Mr. J. Sweeney (Chairman, Dublin Primary Schools League). Behind—Messrs. D. Kelloher, M. K. Lillis, A. Lavin and D. McCarthy.— Irish Independent Photo.

The Irish Independent, April 28th 1934

## Laoch Aontroma

Kevin Armstrong is regarded by many as the greatest ever Antrim dual star. He played for club and county from the 1940s until the 1960s. In GAA Centenary year 1984, he was named at right full-forward in the centenary team of the century, composed of players who never won an All-Ireland. In 1988, he was awarded an all-time All-Star. Kevin played in a historic game in Corrigan Park in 1943 when Antrim beat 'The Cats' to become the first Ulster team to reach an All-Ireland final.

Honours: 2 Ulster senior football championships, 8 Ulster senior hurling championships, 4 Antrim senior hurling championships, 1 Antrim senior football championships, 4 Dr. Mc Kenna Cup medals, 4 Railway Cups.



**Left:** Alan Brogan with his father, Bernard, when he played v Belfast in Croke Park



**Below:** Cormac Costello in action v Belfast in 2004



# STAMP OF APPROVAL FOR CUMANN BOY

On February 6th, 1958, a jet carrying the Manchester United football squad crashed on an icy runway in Munich, claiming 23 victims including 8 of the club's best players. Among them was 22 year old Liam 'Billy' Whelan, from the working class area of Cabra in North Dublin. Although only 22, Liam had made a huge impression on the game. He scored 52 goals in 96 appearances for the club. He scored in an FA Cup final in front of 100,000 people in Wembley Stadium. One of the greatest English players, Bobby Charlton, who survived the crash, was a huge admirer of Whelan as man and as a player.



While in St. Peter's NS, in Phibsboro, Liam was a star on Cumann na mBunscol winning teams including Corn Johnston, Mooney and O'Brien in 1948. He was also selected on the Dublin Cumann na mBunscol team to travel to Belfast for the annual friendly exchange that began in 1932. Former Cumann Chairman, Mossie O'Connor, who taught in the school remembers teachers talk of Whelan's immense talent and his demeanour as a lovely boy in the school.

In what was an amazing tribute to this great player, and a signal honour for his family, a stamp, featuring Liam, beside the Munich memorial clock in Old Trafford, was issued by An Post on the 50th. anniversary of the tragedy in 2008. Cumann na mBunscol is proud that

this wonderful soccer superstar, from a great Cabra family, shared his talent with us while a pupil in St. Peter's NS in the 1940s.

# FRIENDSHIPS STILL GROWING STRONG

## Many famous names have travelled on the Belfast Express



**EARLY start.** Connolly Station. The green flag. For the Belfast Express.

David Gough was on board. Colm O'Rourke rates his refereeing highly.

Boxing champ, Hughie Russell, was waiting for the Dubs. He won bronze at the 1980 Moscow Olympics. He earned the Lonsdale belt.

He bought his first-ever camera at the Moscow Olympics. Now he's an award-winning photographer. And he was well prepared to capture another slice of history as the Dubs arrived.

It was the annual Cumann na mBunscol Dublin-Belfast Friendship games. They have been going since 1934.

Many famous names have taken part over the years. Including Antrim duo, Kevin Armstrong and Gearóid Adams. Gearóid played and



**LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON:** (l-r) Seán Homan, Jamie Brogan, and Sam Curran in Belfast and inset (l-r) their respective fathers Darren, Alan and Paul

managed Antrim. He's the son of Gerry.

Back in 1948, Liam Whelan travelled to Belfast. He played hurling with St

Peter's of Phibsboro, behind Dalymount Park. Liam would later play there for Ireland. And for Manchester United, a Busby Babe.

In more recent times, representing the Dubs in Belfast were the likes of Peadar Carton senior, Shane Ryan, Shane Supple and Cormac Costello.

The games are hosted by Dublin and Belfast on alternate years. "The Dublin leg of the partnership was traditionally played in Croke Park," explains Jerry Grogan. "Alan Brogan and Cormac Costello played in Croke Park.

### YOUNGEST

"Cormac was the youngest ever player, aged 9, in third class. He was well able to compete, and he showed the quality that he would later bring to the big stage."

This year's trip created more memories. Dublin had tears in hurling, camogie, girls' and boys' football.

"We all had a very memorable day in Belfast," added Jerry. "We were greeted by the Lord Mayor, Councillor, Seán Finucane, and there was a lovely meal.

"A bus tour was organised. It passed Casement Park where the Friendship Games were always played. The doors are closed now, but, hopefully, will re-open for future trips.

"Incidentally, the last games to be played in Casement Park were the Belfast-Dublin Friendship Games in 2015."

The Dubs didn't lack pedigree on this occasion. Among those that travelled were Jamie Brogan, son of Alan. Seán Homan, son of Darren, and Sam Curran, son of the celebrated Paul, man-of-the-match in the 1995 All-Ireland final.





## Dublin Schoolboys Take Revenge

YOUNG BELFAST PUT UP  
FINE DISPLAYS

F—Dublin ..... 7-3    Belfast ..... 2-1  
H—Dublin ..... 9-5    Belfast ..... 5-1

The return challenge games in hurling and football between the Dublin and Belfast Primary Schools, provided a big attraction at Croke Park yesterday. In winning both events the home-sters set off the reverses they sustained in the initial meeting at Belfast last year.

Dublin won the football by 7-3 to 2-1, and the hurling by 9-5 to 5-1. Dublin led at the interval in each game by a similar score 3-2 to 2-0.

### Clever Footballers.

Dublin's football victory was chiefly due to their strength at midfield, where the Marino player, McAnn (brother of the Dublin player) and Hanratty (School Sports champion), stood out. Egan (St. Canice's) was most dangerous in attack, while Gleeson (St. Gabriel's) was prominent in defence.

Connolly (back), Cunningham (forward), Devlin and Watterson were always in the limelight for the losers.

Delaney (pt.) took the lead for Dublin, and Keogh added a goal. Egan then found the Belfast net. With Dublin dominant at midfield, Hanratty, from far out, had a goal and a point.

An eleven points deficit did not daunt the visitors, and with Watterson and Cunningham combining well, Bell goaled five minutes from the interval. This score enlivened Belfast, and Cunningham netted close on half time, when Dublin led 3-2 to 2-0.

Irish Independent, June 30th, 1933

## Cluichí na gCarad 2025

### Camógaíocht

Connie Hulsman Quinn  
Ciara Mullins  
Emily Brennan  
Lara Geoghegan  
Ellie Elukanlo  
Niamh Byrne  
Holly Finnerty  
Ruby Ní Shearraigh  
Freya Spelman  
Millie Gargan  
Sophie Hunt  
Saoirse Baier  
Robyn Garner  
Anna McDermott  
Ruby Mitchell  
Amelia Dunne  
Evie Kettle  
Ella Hughes

#### Múinteoir

Denise Mullins

#### Cúntóirí

Niamh Mullins  
Fína O'Connor

### Peil - Cailíní

Sophie Smith  
Ruby Foley  
Abigail Crowley  
Aoife Buckley  
Amelia Daly  
Annie Rafferty  
Fay O'Brien  
Lily Reilly  
Isla Kane  
Eve Kelleher  
Maria Slevin  
Jenna Byrne  
Darcy Barry  
Roisin Lowry  
Tess O'Halloran  
Lily-Mae O'Neill  
Amelia Pollard  
Evelyn Reilly

#### Múinteoirí

James Beirne  
Eimear Kearney

### Iomáint

Oran O'Connor  
Ronan Lynch  
Tom Rockford  
Eoin McPartlan  
Seán Redmond  
Luke McMahon  
Rory Micks  
Daire Horgan  
Daniel Carey  
Noah Murray  
Kyle Brady  
Kevin Ward  
Eduardo Halpenny  
Josh Dillon  
Ultan Ó Móráin  
Seán Rynne  
Darragh Ryan

#### Múinteoirí

Kevin Kealy  
John Curran

### Peil - Buachaillí

Tommy Brennan  
Zachary Sheerin  
Kyle Ó Currbaí  
Harry Kiernan  
Leo Gilmartin  
James Hammel  
Oscar Mac Gabhann  
Tom Early  
Rafa Nagle  
Sam Colville  
Fionn Ó Ceallaigh  
Matthew Mulvey  
Patrick Collins  
Billy Sheehan  
Casey Hayden  
Theo O'Hanlon  
Noah O'Donnell  
Oscar Moran

#### Múinteoirí

Pádraig Ó Conchubhair  
Diarmaid Eagney

### Liathróid Láimhe

Fred Mackin, Alfie McCarron,  
Eoin O'Brien, Finlay Miller, Molly Hoey,  
Maya Przybylik, Shivonne Ogundipe,  
Mae O'Gorman **Manager:** Conor McElduff  
**Comhairleach:** Edna Timoney

Games' coordinator Cian Lynch

Photographs Mark and Rita Monahan