Oranmore Maree GAA One Club Founded 1967

Adult Hurling Report 2024

First and foremost I want to thank all the volunteers that have given so generously of their time to the Adult Hurling club this year. Special thanks to our players, managers, mentors and coaches, we very are very fortunate to have such a dedicated group supporting all our teams from Minor right up to Senior. As the 2024 season closes the preparations for the 2025 season are already kicking into gear with some exciting announcements to come in the next few weeks.

A special word of thanks to our outgoing Senior Hurling manger **Ronan Heffernan**. Three years ago Ronan stepped into the breach and took on the huge responsibility of Managing the Senior Hurling team and running the strength and condition program. We have seen great strides with group in that period, the highlight being topping the group and reaching the quarter final stage in 23/24. Ronan left no stone unturned and was dedicated to a fault to the success of the Senior Team. After a slow start this season, to his great credit Ronan and the backroom got the train back on the tracks and the team came out firing in the last two group games. We beat Ardrahan comfortably only to cruelly lose out to a last minute goal to Sarsfields leading to in the end a straightforward win in the regulation playoff.

Many thanks Ronan, best wishes and every success in your future endeavours from all involved in Adult Hurling

Our outgoing Hurling Committee members put in a very hardworking year with a big focus on fundraising and revitalising the longstanding Jersey draw to great success. Big thank you also to all the players that helped out and tried their hand at at modelling for photoshoots.





Thanks you our executive Seamus Eignor, Des Hanniffy & Seán Greene for all their assistance and continued support. Thanks to the Maree Community Development and Oranmore Parks committee for the use of all the facilities.

Huge thank you to all our sponsors who have supported us faithfully all season.





Our on field activity this year produced some highs and lows, but overall we are confident that we are all moving in the right direction.

Our Minor Team under the direction of Adrian Furey (see report below) had a great year ending with a tight loss to Athenry in the Final. Congratulation to Adrian and all his mentor for bring this group along so expertly and producing a great crop of future senior stars.

Our U20 Team under the direction of Dermot Lohan had a good year ending with an agonising loss on penalties to Turloughmore, the eventual county champions at the semi-final stage. I am sure Dermot and all involved will feel like this is one that got away, dominating the semi-final for long periods and just getting pipped at the post. But again great improvements in the player group with many already involved at senior level and more rolling off the production line next year.

Our Junior teams Managed by Kieran Blake and his backroom had a mixed year. Battling to overcome a number of challenges in getting training slots and all personnel on the field at crucial times of the year meant it was a bit of a rollercoaster year. Overall we have introduced the next group of young hurler to their first taste of Adult hurling and this experience will stand them in good stead for the years ahead.

Many thanks to all the community for your support and coming to games, wearing the sky blue and making noise in support of all our teams. We look forward to your continued support next year.

Adult Hurling Committee
Leo Quinlan, Dermot Lohan, Kieran Blake, Enda Costello, Seán Holland, Niall Burke and David Hanniffy

Senior Hurling

Our league campaign started in with narrow defeats against Ardrahan at home and Cappataggle and Sarsfields away leaving us in a difficult posi<on and in danger of being relegated. However, the squad rallied well and went on to secure Division 1 status by defea<ng St. Thomas's and Loughrea at home. It was important that we maintained our place in Division 1 for next year.

League Results

- Oranmore Maree 0-11 - Ardrahan 1-11
- Cappataggle 3-19 - Oranmore Maree 2-20
- Sarsfields 0-22 – Oranmore Maree 0-17
- Oranmore Maree 0-23 – St. Thomas 1-13
- Oranmore Maree 0-21 – Loughrea 0-19

A series of challenge games were then played with teams from Clare, Offaly, Dublin and Tipperary aSer the league in prepara<on for championship. In the championship we were drawn in Group 4 with Castlegar, Ardrahan and Sarsfields. A very poor performance against Castlegar the first day out made qualifica<on difficult but the group got back on track with a win against Ardrahan. In the final group game, we were within 30 seconds of qualifying but a late goal denied us the victory and with other results in the group we were in the relegation battle – a place where no one wanted to be.

A good performance against Gort especially in the 2nd half helped us to get the vital win and secure our Senior A status. Ul<mately the championship year was a disappointment to everyone involved as we fell short of our own targets and ambitions. Battling relegation was not where the group envisaged they would be at the start of the year but there were performances throughout the year that would give encouragement that the group is capable of much beWer and brighter things.

Championship Results

- Oranmore Maree 2-14 – Castlegar 2-30
- Oranmore Maree 0-21 – Ardrahan 0-15
- Oranmore Maree 1-18 – Sarsfields 1-19
- Oranmore Maree 3-25 – Gort 0-14

Minor Hurling

Our Minor hurlers had a very successful year reaching the County Final of the A grade for the fourth year in a row. While coming up short at the final hurdle in a very high quality final, the players acquitted themselves very well and have a lot to be proud of.

The Management team used a total of 26 players throughout the year with fourteen "of the age" - one of the highest playing numbers in recent years.

The year began with the newly created Minor league - this was quite disappointing as we registered one win over a very poor Rahoon Newcastle side before heavy defeats to Carnmore and Turloughmore.

For the championship, we only had the players two weeks ahead of the first game. Given that this group had only played A1 grade (winning the County Final in 2023), this was very difficult. The team played five group games and registered four wins and a draw and thereby topped their group. Wins over Ardrahan, Turloughmore, Sarsfields and Clarinbridge as well as a draw with Craughwell were recorded. A really great result given the team had just been promoted from A1 and had not played these teams in previous years.

In the quarter final, a strong win over Loughrea 3-14 to 1-11 was followed by a semi final win over tournament favourites Kilconierion 1-11 to 2-11.

In the final there is no doubt the team played very well and were unfortunate not to get over the line. However the management team felt a lot of good work was done and the players really enjoyed their hurling journey.

It's also important to acknowledge the incredible support from parents, sponsors, the club exec, pitch committees etc. Everything was of a very high standard.

Junior Hurling

In 2024 we entered one Junior team in the league and 2 in the championship (in Junior A & Junior C grades).

The league consisted of a group of 4 with the top team going through to a semi final. We were drawn in a Group with Athenry, Liam Mellows and Castlegar. Throughout the league the priority was to give everyone game time and an opportunity to show what they could deliver. As U20 league and Senior league were taking place at the same time we made a conscious decision to moderate the workload on players. The first game was on the 24th of March away to Athenry. We won our 3 group games so progressed to a semi final away to Barna. Another win followed there and we were through to a league final against Sarsfields in Duggan Park. For various reasons we were deprived of a lot of players for the final and were well beaten by a strong Sarsfields team.

Our Junior A team had 5 games in a 6 team group in the championship. We played poorly in a loss to Ardrahan away in the first game. We followed that up with a very good performance and win against St Thomas' at home. St Thomas' actually went on to top the group. We then lost to Mellows in another poor performance. A narrow defeat to Breathnachs followed next before

finally putting in a really spirited performance to get a draw away to Tommy Larkins with a significantly depleted squad due to injuries, holidays and lads unavailable due to having played senior at that stage. This draw maintained our Junior A status but meant we didn't progress any further in the competition. Overall this was a very disappointing outcome given the resources and talent available in this squad. Getting our 2nd team up a level is more than realistic and I would argue imperative to future proof the success of adult hurling in the club but it needs to be prioritised not at the expense of senior hurling but in conjunction with senior hurling.

Our Junior C team (up a grade from Junior D the previous year) had a mixed year too. The vision for the team was to give a whole host of hunger lads who have graduated from successful minor squads over the last few years a pathway into adult hurling alongside some more mature and seasoned campaigners who still had the ability and desire to represent the club. To a certain extent this was achieved but with plenty of scope for further improvement. Really disappointingly we couldn't field a team for the first round away to Athenry. We also got 2 walkovers from Kinvara and Ahascragh Fohenagh which was also disappointing as we wanted competitive games more than the points. We did play Tommy Larkins and Kilconeiron where we had 2 narrow losses but we played excellently in both and were unlucky not to win one of them against 2 good teams particularly Kilconeiron who fielded a number of players who later played senior for them. The 4 points gained got us through to a quarter final where again we were unable to field a team. Overall though there were some real positives to take from the year but plenty more to build on.

In the early part of the year all players trained with the seniors. In May we started up a second training slot with mixed results. Some evenings we had good numbers but others were very poor particularly when you consider that over 70 players played adult hurling this year and less than half were training with seniors. A big thanks to Ronan Heffernan and the Senior Management team for their support and assistance during the year.

Lastly a massive thanks to all those who helped in so many ways with junior hurling throughout 2024 particularly Dermot Lohan, Enda Costello, Tony Long, Gerry Burke, Pat Malone, Cyril Connole, Gearoid Hanniffy & Leo Quinlan.

Kieran Blake