

Origins of Beagh Hurling

The earliest account of a hurling match was a 17-aside between Beagh and Kilbeacanty played at Kilbeacanty in 1870. Michael Cusack was an interested spectator.

The Beagh team on that historic day was R. Roseingrave, Rev. Fr. O'Doherty, M. Reilly, J. Reilly, P. Reynolds, P. Brady, D. Walsh, M. Regan, J. McMahon, M. Noone, M. Halloran, J. Mahon, B. Murray, F. Geoghegan, M. Roseingrave, W. Roseingrave, M. Shaughnessy, T. Bell.

Michael Cusack and the GAA

Cusack, the founder of the GAA (born in Carron, Co. Clare) was appointed principal teacher in Lough Cutra National School in 1866, a post which he held until 1871.

In the autumn of 1884, Michael Cusack founded the GAA with Dr. Croke as its first patron and Thurles as its birthplace. Cusack's endeavours to nurture hurling resulted in a hurling tournament at Tubber in 1885 (won by Kilchreest) and an inter-county game in Dublin in 1886 between South Galway and North Tipperary. North Tipperary won but the sliotar made for the match was made by Ned Treston (Gort), it became the standard for hurling matches and remains so to the present day.

Early County Competition

1887 found Beagh contesting the first County Semi-Final against the victorious Meelick-Eyrecourt team.

Hurling in the County at this time was on the decline. Emigration and evictions were rampant as many hurling clubs were disbanded. Among those who did not encourage the fostering of Gaelic Games was Lord Gough, the manager of Lough Cutra School at the time.

The 1920 Senior Team

The Beagh "Senior" team were led by their captain and full back, Pat Loughnane with other players including Pat Mannion, Bucky Mannion, Michael Nilan, Tom Regan, Michael Ruane, Michael Forde, Pat Burke and Harry Loughnane.

In 1920 the Black and Tans brutally murdered Pat and Harry Loughnane. The team members were devastated and there was a danger that the Beagh team would disappear completely. The combination of politics and emigration meant that Beagh could no longer field a "Senior" team. In honour of the Loughnane brothers, three Beagh men endeavored to keep the club active, namely Tom Collins, Paddy Kelly, and Tom Moloney. They attended a meeting in Gort, hosted by Mattie McGrath (Kilmacduagh) and Joe Stanford (Gort), to put in place plans for the revival of the competitions.

Juvenile Championship Successes

In 1928, Beagh's Juvenile team won the County Championship beating Killimor. Beagh's young hurlers also won the schools championship, beating Kilbeacanty on June 2nd, 1928.

Beagh won the South Board "Juvenile" Hurling Championship in 1933 and again in 1934. The best hurlers at this time were K. Shaughnessy, J. Shaughnessy, P. Kearney, J. Kearney and P. Wellis.

In 1937 Beagh won the South Board "Juvenile" Hurling Championship but were beaten at county level.

Junior Championship Years

In 1940, 1944, and 1946, Beagh won the South Board "Junior" Hurling Championship but were beaten at county level.

In the early 1950s emigration was still a major problem forcing some Beagh players to play with other clubs.

County Junior Success in 1958

By the late 1950s Beagh could again field a "Junior" team and won the South Board Championship in 1957. After rigorous training in Mike Murray's field Beagh won the County Junior Championship in 1958 beating Cosan.

The panel of players were Tom Mahon, Michael Spelman, Paddy Linnane, Sean Loughrey, Mickey McMahon, Brendan Burke, Tommy Fahy, Mick Hehir, Stephen Killeen, Oliver Dolan, Joe Gantley, Paddy Jordan, Tommy Burke, Albert Moylan, Douglas Whelan.

The 1960s

In the 1960s the club went into decline and returned to junior grade again.

In amalgamation with Kilbeacanty, Beagh reached the Senior County Championship quarter-final against Mullagh in 1966.

School and County Achievements

John Moylan captained the Gort Vocational School Senior team to All-Ireland success in 1978 and played with the Galway Minor team while Peter Casserly and Albert Moylan won Senior Connacht Colleges medals with Our Lady's College, Gort in the same year.

The 1978 County Junior Championship

In 1978 the Beagh Junior team beat Kilconieron by 3-6 to 0-3 at Loughrea to win the County Junior Championship with the following panel of players:

Joe Keehan, Peter Casserly, Billy O'Reilly, PJ Loughrey, John Moylan, Johnny Joyce, Tom Halloran, Billy Fogarty, Gerry Kelly, Donal Moylan, Noel Gantley, Vincent Keehan, Gerry Forde, Albert Moylan, Noel Halloran, Michael Deely, Martin Deely, Vincent Deely, Pat Deely (Captain), Finbarr Gantley, Michael Whelan, Paddy Noone, Liam Halloran. One of the 1958 team, Douglas Whelan, was a selector. Beagh were promoted to intermediate level in 1979 and won the County Intermediate League defeating Killimor. Finbarr Gantley played in the 1979 All-Ireland in which Galway were defeated by Kilkenny while Albert Moylan played on the Galway Minor team.

1979 also saw the launch of the Beagh field committee, set up with the task of developing a hurling pitch for the club.

The 1980s

The 80's are regarded as the most successful period in the clubs history to date. Finbarr Gantley won an All-Ireland Senior Medal with Galway in 1980, while Albert Moylan and Peter Casserly starred in the County Minor team. Billy O'Reilly won a Fitzgibbon cup medal with UCG.

Then in 1980 for the first time in sixty years Beagh achieved Senior Hurling status again by winning the County Intermediate title. Captained by John Moylan they defeated Mullagh by 4-13 to 3-11 at Ballinasloe with Finbarr Gantley voted man of the match. The team was Billy Reilly, Liam Halloran, Tom Halloran, Gus Forde, Gerry Kelly, Peter Casserly, John Moylan, Michael Deely, Joe Keehan, Albert Moylan, Noel Halloran, Finbarr Gantley, Pat Deeley, Niall Keating, Paddy Noone. Subs: Martin Deeley, Michael Whelan, Tom Page, Vincent Keehan, Noel Gantley, Pat McDermott, Johnny Joyce.

Also in 1980 Beagh won the County Minor title defeating Craughwell at Loughrea by 3-7 to 0-5 with the following team: John Mahon, Gerard Rochford, Donal Keane, Michael Niland, Ray Hanrahan, Peter Casserly, Michael Killeen, John Keehan, Gerard Healy, Albert Moylan, Gearoid Keating, Sean Keane, John Fahy, Pat Fogarty, Michael Quinn. Subs: Gerry Forde, Paddy Fahy, Martin Killeen.

In their first year at Senior level (1981) Beagh reached the quarter-final of the Senior Championship but were defeated by Kiltormer. In the same year Finbarr Gantley remained a regular with Galway and John Moylan played on the County under 21 team.

The Beagh Senior team recorded victories over distinguished opponents in the early 80's including Turloughmore, Kinvara, Kilbeacanty, Tommie Larkins, Liam Mellows, Oranmore and St. Thomas' and again reached the quarter-final stages of the Senior County Championship in 1983, 1984 and 1985.

Sean Keane and Martin Killeen played with the victorious Galway Minors of 1983. Peter Casserly captained the Galway Under 21 team to All-Ireland success in the same year and Albert Moylan, who played at midfield, was voted Under 21 hurler of the year in Galway. John Moylan was a member of the Galway Senior panel in 1984-1985.

Beagh Hurling Club History

Trained by Joe Killeen, Lough Cutra School won the 9-a-side B competition in 1985 and the 9-a-side A competition in 1986 with the following panel: M. Casey, B. O'Brien, T. Loughrey, D. Diviney, C. Diviney, V. McMahon, R. McNevin, N. McGuane, E. O'Loughlin, P. Reynolds, M. Mahon, A. Walsh, D. Tuohey, M. Hehir, P. Diviney and G. Reynolds. Lurga School qualified for three successive finals in '86, '87 and '88. In 1987 Beagh won the U14 C title beating Tommie Larkins by 5-7 to 0-4.

During the late 80's emigration and retirements caused a fall in the Senior team's fortunes and Beagh returned to Intermediate Grade in 1989.

The 1990s

In 1990 the success of Beagh young hurlers continued when they won the Under 14 and Under 16 C County Championship. Also in 1990 Albert Moylan (now based in England) won a London Senior Championship medal with St. Gabriel's and an All-Ireland Senior 'B' medal with London.

In 1991 Pat Diviney played on the Galway minor team who lost in the semi-final stages to Tipperary.

1993 saw the Beagh U21 team make their third successive appearance in the U21 B County final. They defeated Kinvara at Ballindereen by 1-11 to 0-11 taking this title for the first time with the following panel: Stephen Killeen, Gerry Burke, Raymond Fogarty, Declan Diviney, Pat Reynolds, Eoin O'Loughlin, Pat Diviney, Finbarr Gantley (Junior), David McAllen, Niall McGuane, Kieran Diviney, Mark Casserly, Rory Gantley, Liam Gantley. Manager Joe Killeen, Trainer Noel Halloran.

Captained by John Moylan, the Beagh Intermediate team reached the County Championship final of 1993. In the same year Pat Diviney won a Fitzgibbon cup medal with University of Limerick.

In 1994 Finbarr Gantley (Junior) and Rory Gantley starred in the Minor All-Ireland final won by Galway. In the same year Lough Cutra School won the 9-a-side

Beagh Intermediate team won the Intermediate league title in 1998 beating Leitrim-Kilnadeemna in the final at Athenry.

In 1998 Beagh won the Under 21 C Championship and U16 Championship.

The 2000s

In 2000 Beagh Under 21's made it to the county final but were unfortunate to be beaten on the day by Mountbellow-Moylough.

Beagh won the Intermediate County championship in 2002 again returning to the Senior ranks.