



MIDDLE EAST GAA

E-BOOK

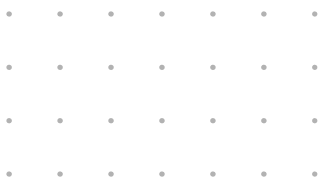
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UAE

- Abu Dhabi na Fianna GAA
- Al Ain GAA
- Al Reem Shamrocks GAA
- Dubai Celts GAA
- Éire Óg Fujairah GAA
- Jumeirah Gaels GAA
- Kerry Middle East GAA
- RAK Ropairi GAA
- Ruwais Gaels GAA
- Sharjah Gaels GAA



Bahrain

- Arabian Celts GAA

Oman

- Clann na hOMAN GAA

Kuwait

- Kuwait Harps GAA

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- Naomh Alee GAA

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CHAIRPERSON'S ADDRESS



A Chairde,

As-salamu alaykum.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the Middle East GAA eBook.

The purpose of this initiative is to provide a one stop resource, highlighting all GAA clubs across the Gulf region plus additional user groups and societies that may be of interest to potential expats.

Clubs across the region have proven to be one of the strongest social community groups in the Gulf today. With over 1,500 members, it has proved to be a source of shelter, employment and most importantly friendship. Many clubs have celebrated big milestones; from Naomh Alee in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia who recently celebrated their 26th anniversary, to Kerry Middle East who continue to grow after three successful seasons.

With a packed fixtures calendar and social scene from October to March, the GAA continues to flourish and be a home away from home. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we've postponed the start of our leagues until 2021. Consequently, this has permitted us to pivot and host webinars focusing on key topics that resonate with the community ranging from Coaching and Referee courses, Strength and Conditioning sessions, to interviews with GAA legends from home.

Finally, a word of thanks to the Irish Embassy in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, the GAA and LGFA who have played a positive and proactive role in shaping the games out here in this region. Most importantly, I'd like to express a sincere thank you to all clubs and committees across the Middle East, who continue to invest their time and effort into making the GAA abroad a truly great community.

Is mise le meas,

Stiofan O'Tuama

A MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR OF IRELAND, AIDAN CRONIN



A cháirde Gael,

Ba mhór an onóir dom gur iarradh Bord contae na Meánoitheaher Cumann Lúthchleas Gael orm an ríomhleabhar seo a a chur in aithne do Letheoirí.

Níl aon amhras faoi go beidh an leabhar ina acmhainn luachmhar do dhaoine Éireannacha atá ina gcónaí sa Meánoitheaher nó daoine atá ag smaoineamh ar aistriú go dtí an Mánoitheaher agus a bhfuil suim acu i gcuarsaí CLG.

I was honoured to be asked to introduce this e-book which I have no doubt will be an invaluable resource for Irish people living in the Middle East or who are considering moving to the region and who have an interest in the GAA.

I think that it is safe to say that, while Irish people of course enjoy playing and watching a range of sports, there is nothing quite like the GAA here in the Middle East. It is a unique and very special network of clubs and of people and this book gives a very good overview of that network and a very good insight into what it is that makes the GAA such a special organisation.

It is where people go to play the games and to socialise, to celebrate and to mourn and to laugh and to cry. And that is as true in Chicago or London or Abu Dhabi or Riyadh as it is at home.

The GAA, through the clubs, has over many generations offered Irish people living away from home a focal point, a community, a family. It is the first port of call for many new arrivals, regardless of whether they come from a GAA background or not, because they are assured of being welcomed with open arms into the GAA family. That is certainly the case here in the Middle East and the compiling of this wonderful book to is testament to the vibrancy and reach of the GAA in the region. I want to thank Middle East GAA for this initiative, for all the work they do, day-in, day-out, and for the support that they give to the Irish embassies in the region in our work. I wish them every success with this book and for the future.

Happy reading to you all,

Léamh sona daoibh go léir

Aidan Cronin

Ambasadóir na hÉireann/Ambassador of Ireland for UAE, Kuwait and Qatar.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

A MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR OF IRELAND, GERARD MCCOY



A cháirde Gael,

I would like to heartily commend the GAA in the Gulf Cooperation Council region on its e-book on the work of the association across the region. As Ambassador of Ireland to Saudi Arabia, I am especially pleased to recall that the first GAA Club in any of the GCC states was set-up in Saudi Arabia, with the creation of Naomh Alee in Riyadh in 1994.

The success of the association across the region has been remarkable over the past twenty-five years or so. GAA clubs across the region have played, and continue to play, a key role in providing a home from home, as well as a space for developing new friendships and introducing Ireland to a wider audience.

I am especially conscious of the exceptional efforts of clubs in the countries accredited from Riyadh – namely Bahrain, Oman and Saudi Arabia – in supporting local Irish communities.

A particular word of appreciation to the many front-line workers across the association, who have continued to serve their clubs and the whole community at this very challenging time. I would also like to pay tribute to the many volunteers of the Arabian Celts, Clann na hOman and Naomh Alee for all that they continue to do on behalf of the wider community.

With every good wish for the ongoing success of the GAA and all its clubs across the GCC.

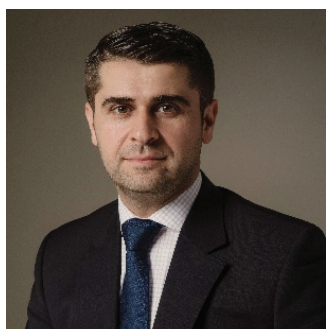
Gerard McCoy

Ambassador
(Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen)



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARAB-IRISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AICC SECRETARY GENERAL-CEO



I'd like to congratulate to the Middle East GAA in taking the initiative to document the stories and progress of the GAA community across the Gulf region.

The Arab world is a significant export market for Ireland for many years. The ease of access to the Gulf states via national airlines has created many opportunities for Ireland. Irish businesses with a high-quality product or service, who have ambitions to export to the Gulf region can succeed. By willing to invest time, effort and nurture new opportunities are on a firm pathway to success.

Over the last twenty-five years, Irish firms have established an excellent rapport and relationship with Arab firms and continue to build this reputation. According to Ernst & Young's latest report, "The Arab World – Long Term Economic Prospects & Opportunities for Ireland 2019", which was commissioned by the AICC, illustrates Irish merchandise exported to the Gulf region was valued at €1.91 billion, while services account for €3.273 billion of the total €5.18 billion exports.

I want to give a special thank you to Stephen Twomey, Chairman of the Middle East GAA, for allowing the Chamber to document our services. Our main objective at the Chamber is to serve the Irish people, from a personal or commercial capacity. My son currently plays Gaelic games in Dublin and I can see the contribution local volunteers make at club level. To see this community growing across the Gulf region is incredible. GAA is a way of life for most Irish people at home and abroad.

Is mise le meas,

Ahmed Younis

Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce
(Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Yemen)

غرفة التجارة العربية الايرلندية

Arab-Irish Chamber of Commerce

Connect with Expertise



HISTORY OF MIDDLE EAST GAA

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The Middle East Board is the youngest international County Board in the GAA, having been formally established in the 2013/14 season. Since the inaugural season, GAA in the region has grown at an exponential rate. The Board facilitates games in all codes – hurling, camogie, men's football and ladies' football.

We have a total of 15 clubs across the Gulf region, 10 of which reside in the United Arab Emirates and 1 each in Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

We have a total of 1,500 active members and an ever-growing underage section.

In 2015, the Middle East Board was responsible for the setting up and hosting of the first-ever GAA World Games which took place in Abu Dhabi. Teams from all international units worldwide competed for silverware. Three World Games tournaments have now been held, and the Middle East representative teams have been crowned champions in men's senior football on all three occasions, ladies' football on one occasion, and hurling on two occasions.

The Middle East GAA Unit is heralded as the fastest-growing unit worldwide and continues to set participation records for tournaments outside of Ireland yearly. With the continued large influx of native Irish into the Middle East, the significant uptake in the games by local and international players, and the work being done at underage levels in clubs and schools, the future of the GAA across the Middle East looks very bright indeed.



HISTORY OF MIDDLE EAST GAA

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Prior to the setting up of the league there were two dates in the GAA calendar every year; the Bahrain Games in November and the Gulf Gaelic games in Dubai in January.

In September 2010 a meeting took place in Paddy Darcy's kitchen in Dubai with James Kennedy (Bahrain), Liam McAuliffe (Oman), Barry O'Sullivan (Qatar) and Gary Tracey (Abu Dhabi) discussing a more structured approach to Gaelic Games in the region.

At the time, more teams from the Middle East were beginning to compete at the Asian Gaelic Games and we felt we needed more teams from the Middle East were beginning to compete at the Asian Gaelic Games and we felt we needed more game time to compete at a more competitive level. There were more reasons not to start a league that there was to start one, mainly logistics, cost of travel and accommodation, but in the end we all committed to having one team from each of our clans compete and the Middle East League was born.

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Since our first year of launching the Middle East League in Bahrain, it has evolved into a significant community. Year one we started with nine teams in Men's Senior Football section. In year two, we saw the launch of the Ladies Football League and in the year three we introduced a Hurling League not forgetting a ever growing underage section that continues to blossom. Today, we have over 104 teams actively engaged from ladies and mens football (Senior to Junior) combined with hurling and camogie (Senior to Junior). Tournaments are big community events, bringing everyone from across the Gulf to enjoy the games have the craic!

James Kennedy

GAA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Traditionally affiliated as part of the Asian County Board, on the 7th June 2013 at the Bonnington Hotel in Dubai, another piece of history was made with the setting up of the Middle East County Board.



HISTORY OF GAA IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Clubs from around the region gathered in a room like our founding fathers had done many years previous and the Middle East County Board was officially set up. It is now established as an autonomous, directly affiliated board of the GAA and a distant member of the rapidly growing international caucus of the Gaelic Athletic Association. The Middle East GAA Board currently consists of 15 clubs across the region:

Abu Dhabi Na Fianna, Al Reem Shamrocks, Al Ain GAA, Arabian Celts, Clann na hOman, Dubai Celts, Éire Óg Fujairah, Jumeriah Gaels, Kuwait Harps, Naomh Alee Riyadh, RAK Ropairí GAA, Ruwais Gaels GAA, Kerry Middle East GAA, Sharjah Gaels and Qatar GAA.

Although only set up in 2013, the first Middle East GAA representative team took part in the international Hurling competition held in Galway in September that year. The Middle East team was placed in Division 2 and with a 100% record of wins secured, we lifted our first piece of silverware.



HISTORY OF MIDDLE EAST GAA

However, the best was yet to come from the Middle East GAA and in March 2015, we hosted the inaugural GAA World Games in Abu Dhabi. With 28 teams competing from around the world, Middle East GAA had the great honour to be crowned the first ever GAA World Champions in Men's and Ladies' Gaelic football.



In 2016 the GAA World Games were held in Dublin as part of the 1916 Celebration and 10 teams from the region participated in the event.

The men's senior footballers retained their world titles and the men's senior hurlers won the inaugural hurling world cup.

In 2019, the men's senior footballers, hurlers and camogie teams and won their respective titles.

Not forgetting our invitations in 2014 to the Asian Gaelic Games in Kuala Lumpur. It proved to be a very successful trip where Middle East GAA won five out of eight competitions we competed in, including Men's senior hurling and football titles.





“THE ROLE OF THE GAA ABROAD”
AINE GIBNEY - GAA INTERNATIONAL OFFICER

The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) has more clubs now operating around the world than ever before with 460 units currently registered outside of Ireland. This means it is now possible to play Gaelic Games from Montreal to Massachusetts to Madrid to Maastricht to Moscow the Middle East and Melbourne.

The lure of the GAA Club abroad is varied. Of course, Gaelic Games are such an intrinsic part of the Irish identity and for many the expression of that identity is important. They are also great games and great ways to stay fit and healthy and competitive too. But without a doubt, GAA clubs abroad also provide an invaluable network of contacts and a support structure for the Irish Diaspora in creating a home from home.

No matter where the club is located, the GAA is built on a sense of community and togetherness and of supporting people. There's no shortage of tales of people with perhaps only a passing interest in the GAA while in Ireland but becoming fully immersed in it when they move abroad to study or work.

As time passes by the new phenomenon is of more and more people of diverse cultures and nationalities being introduced to and won over by the wonderful sports of Football, Hurling, Camogie and Ladies football in Ireland and abroad.

Croke Park head-quarters plays a huge role in its continued support and assistance to our GAA Clubs abroad, and by doing so International Boards are represented by their County Board Chairperson as a member of the World GAA Committee – representing the following Units: Australasia, Asia, Canada, Britain, Europe, Middle East, New York, and USAGAA.

The LGFA and the Camogie Association have also greatly assisted the International Boards over the past and the World GAA has benefitted greatly by both these organisations. Both organisations are represented on the World GAA Committee by Helen O'Rourke CEO and Sinead McNulty CEO. The four Provincial Council Chairmen are also represented on the World GAA Committee.

The current World GAA Committee Chairman appointed by the Uachtarán CLG is Niall Erskine (Donegal) and the Secretary - Aine Gibney (GAA International Officer) along with Kayleen Iwasaki (GAA Games Department).



STRATEGIC PLANNING/TWINNING PARTNERSHIPS

The phenomenal international growth of Gaelic games in the past decade can, in the first instance, be attributed to the time and energy invested by volunteers. Substantial progress and growth has been achieved through the Twinning arrangements between the Provincial Councils and the International Units responsible for governing and promoting games in Asia, Australasia, Britain, Canada, Europe, Middle East, New York, North America, and Argentina.

The twinning arrangements involve each of the four Provincial Councils in Ireland partnering with one or more of the International Units to deliver effective support systems. In planning terms, these partnerships operate as rolling strategic plans with an annual review which allows the plans for each International Unit to remain flexible while keeping a focus on the overarching Mission and Vision of the Association.

PROVINCE

INTERNATIONAL UNITS:

Munster

United States GAA (USGAA)

Ulster

Council of Britain, Canadian and Argentinian Co. Board

Leinster

European GAA, Australian GAA & Middle East GAA

Connacht

London GAA, New York GAA & the Asian County Board



THE GAA WORLD GAMES

“A CELEBRATION OF LIFE, SPORT & OUR SHARED HUMANITY THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF GAELIC GAMES”

The jewel in the crown of World GAA, the World Games is a festival for international GAA clubs which was first hosted by the Middle East GAA at the Zayed Sports Stadium, Abu Dhabi in 2015 with 25 teams taking part across two codes football and hurling.

Based on its success, the second World Games was then staged in Dublin's UCD campus in August 2016. This saw 56 teams travel to take part, with 27 teams made up entirely of players of different nationalities (from Omani to South Africa) being involved in the competition, and due to the success of the previous event, 2016 showcased all four codes hurling, football, camogie and ladies football and the finals of the various competitions were staged in Croke Park.

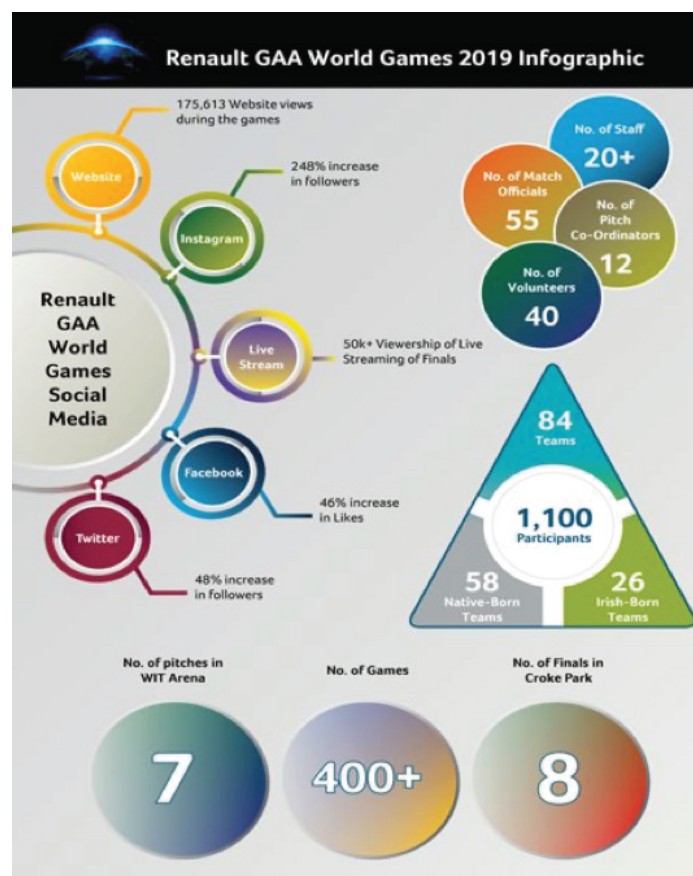
The third and most recent GAA World Games took place in the summer of 2019 at the Waterford Institute of Technology. The event hosted 84 teams representing Clubs, Counties & Countries and Regions, from all corners of the World. The event which ran over a one week period commenced with team registration on the Sunday for all teams in the picturesque Town Hall in the City Centre, followed by a team parade through the streets of Waterford – people lined the streets to welcome the teams and to celebrate the event, the parade was followed by a two-hour cultural concert which officially opened the Games.

The games commenced early on the Monday morning where 500 games were played over four days. There were 1,500 players, team officials, and coaches involved in the event and up to 5,000 visitors attending the games.

On Tuesday evening a twinning event was organised for each native-born team with a local club in Waterford. The teams were made very welcome with most clubs organising an evening of music and dance.

Thursday evening all teams were transported to Dublin and on Friday - eight exciting finals were played in Croke Park. The day ended with a celebration banquet for just over 1,100 guests.

Countries representing every continent were present at the World Games event which showcased the extent to which the passion and participation for Gaelic games has now spread far beyond our shores and we acknowledge the keepers of this flame.



INTERNATIONAL GAA YOUTH TOURNAMENTS

The past decade has seen the continuing growth in participation at underage levels as our Overseas units build on embryonic under-age structures with the assistance of Games Development Administrators and further investment from Central and Provincial levels.

Tournaments abroad such as:

- (i) Continental Youth Championships (CYC) - USA
- (ii) All Britain Competition (ABC) - UK
- (iii) Asian Youth Games



GLOBAL GAMES DEVELOPMENT FUND (GGDF) – SUPPORT FOR OUR CLUBS

The Global Games Development Fund (GGDF) is co-funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade's Emigrant Support Programme and the GAA. The Fund provides financial support specifically for projects and initiatives that increase or improve opportunities for the Irish Diaspora and other communities abroad to play Gaelic Games.

In 2019 the DFA and GAA had a total of 120 applications that were successful for funding through the initiative. The projects address a diverse range of needs both within and across International Units depending on variabilities such as location, number of players, codes, and the implementation of games/events at Adult and Underage level.

Through the provision of financial assistance, it is the aim of the Fund to support the Irish Diaspora and strengthen Irish networks and Irish identity internationally. Since 2013 through the Global Games Development Fund, the GAA and the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade have provided financial support for developmental projects and initiatives in GAA clubs and International Units across Asia, Australasia, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and South America.



UACHTÁRAN CLG – LARRY MCCARTHY (NEW YORK)



In 2019 Larry McCarthy made history to become president-elect of the GAA. Larry takes up office in early 2021 and becomes the first overseas units candidate to win the office in the Association in 136 years. Larry in his role as Chairperson of the New York County Board and who is a former member of the World GAA Committee has first-hand experience of the current developments and challenges faced by the Overseas.

MIDDLE EAST GAA

The Middle East Board now has in the region of 15 Clubs affiliated. Gaelic Games in the Middle East has been a key feature in the lives of Irish and other communities across the Gulf Region for the past 30 years. Traditionally affiliated as part of the Asia and Gulf Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) Board, the Middle East GAA in 2013 became an autonomous and the newest regional County Board in 2013.

The Middle East Board geographically covers the following states; Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel. Croke Park would like to acknowledge the support and development provided by the Middle East GAA Board in this region, led by the Chairperson Stephen Twomey and all the Board members. We would also like to recognise the contribution made by the Irish Embassy in the UAE and Saudi Arabia in their role supporting the Irish Communities.

BUÍOCHAS

The past years have seen many significant developments being undertaken in Games Development by our overseas units. Our Units abroad now play a much more important role in facilitating the integration of our emigrants into their new environments as well as providing a much-needed support network through our tapestry of club structure overseas.



We also acknowledge the massive number of volunteers who give their time willingly to support our games Nationally and Internationally.

Croke Park and the World GAA Committee continue to support the Units to develop our Games amongst the Irish Diaspora.



FORMER CHAIRPERSONS



Tadhg Flahive (2018-2020)

In 2017, Tadhg Flahive (Kerry) assumed the role of Chairperson, accompanied by Gearóid Cronin (Mayo) as Secretary on the committee and assisted by Tim Sheahan (Kerry) & Carmel O'Sullivan (2018). Stephen Twomey (Cork) assumed the role of Treasurer in 2018 with Levi McGrattan as Vice-Chairperson.



Patrick Moynagh (2015-2017)

In 2015 Patrick Moynagh (Cavan) took the position of Chairperson. He was assisted by Sean O'Sullivan (Cork) as Secretary, Patrick Kennedy (Limerick) vice Chairperson (2016) and Eugene McCluskey (2015), Treasurer was Mick Redmond (2016) (Wexford) and James Kennedy (Meath) (2015). This committee welcomed the 2016 GAA All-Star footballers to Dubai, and a successful GAA World Games campaign.



James Kennedy (2013-2015)

A native of Meath, James was the Middle East GAA Chairperson in our inaugural season (2013/14). Accompanying him as Secretary was Paddy D'Arcy (Meath), who had previously administered the Middle East sub-committee within the Asia and Gulf Board (AGB) of the GAA. Patrick Moynagh held the role of Vice-Chairperson.

Each of the Chairperson's administrations have overseen one GAA World Games event (2016 and 2019). In this period, the Middle East has hosted the GAA Football All-Stars (2016 | Middle East GAA Board, in Dubai) and GAA Hurling All-Stars (2019 | Abu Dhabi na Fianna, in Abu Dhabi)..

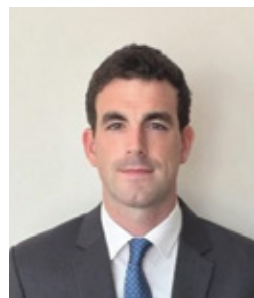
CURRENT COMMITTEE 2020/21



Stephen Twomey
Chairperson
Cork/Nemo Rangers
Dubai Celts (UAE)



Gearóid Cronin
Vice-Chairperson
Mayo/Lahardane MacHales
Al Ain GAA (UAE)



Tim Sheahan
Secretary
Kerry/Glenbeigh/Glencar GAA
Kerry Middle East (UAE)



James O'Connell
Secretary
Cork/Macroom GAA
Jumeirah Gaels (UAE)



Neil McRory
Treasurer
Monaghan/Truagh Gaels
Al Reem Shamrocks (UAE)



Sarah Forde
PRO
Wicklow/Castletown, Wexford
RAK GAA (UAE)



Alana McConalogue
Ladies Development Officer
Donegal/Buncrana CLG
Arabian Celts (BH)



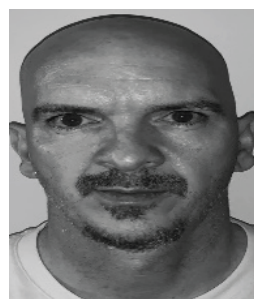
Áine Smith
Camogie Development Officer
Limerick/Granagh Ballingarry
Abu Dhabi Na Fianna (UAE)



Seán McDonnell
Coaching and Development Officer
Monaghan/Killanny
Sharjah Gaels (UAE)



Muiris O'Donncha
Irish Cultural Officer
Cork/Naomh Aban
Jumeirah Gaels (UAE)



Mick Gallagher
Juvenile Officer
Derry/Na Piersaigh CLG
Doire Trasna
Abu Dhabi Na Fianna (UAE)



Shay O'Donoghue
Hurling Development Officer
Cork/Blackrock
Sharjah Gaels (UAE)

Gaelic in the Gulf

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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Overview:

Population: 9.8m

Comprised of 7 Emirates

Currency: Dirhams (AED)

Smallest Emirate: Ajman (260sq km)

Largest Emirate: Abu Dhabi (accounts for 87% of UAE total area)

Key Fact: Home to the world's tallest building Burj Khalifa



ABU DHABI NA FIANNA



ABU DHABI NA FIANNA

Abu Dhabi Na Fianna is one of the largest and oldest clubs in the Middle East. In fact, the club will be celebrating its 25th anniversary later this year (2020).

Club Formation

The groundwork for the club was laid in 1994 by 4 Irish men who, when feeling rather homesick, would get together every Saturday in Mushriff Park to play hurling. Word soon got around and after about six months, there were enough players for a 9-a-side team. In April 1995 Na Fianna played its first ever match as a club. It was a hurling game played in Al Ain against a combined Al Ain/Northern Emirates Team.

By 1996 Na Fianna had quickly began to expand and it played its first ever competitive matches in hurling and football in Dubai at the first ever UAE championship. In 1999 Na Fianna established its first ever Ladies Team. A few short years later in 2004 the club established a junior team. Fast forward to the 2012/2013 season when the first ever Middle East League took place and Na Fianna entered 5 ladies' teams plus 4 men's teams into the competition.



CLUB FORMATION

At the end of the 2019/2020 Season Na Fianna has 2 camogie teams, 3 hurling teams, 12 ladies football teams, 8 men's football teams. A whopping 27 teams, this does not include our 30 juvenile members. The clubs home grounds are at Zayed Sport City, which has 7 full size pitches, where Na Fianna teams frequent across 4 nights a week.



HISTORY OF COMPETITION

Throughout the 1990s, Abu Dhabi was the strongest of the sides between Abu Dhabi and Dubai in the UAE GAA Championship.

However, in the early 2000, Dubai went through a winning spell for about 6-7 years. In 2011/12 that shift changed again with the Abu Dhabi Men's team stepping up and reclaimed the title for the first time in 6 years.

Abu Dhabi has since seen stiff competition between neighboring clubs Dubai and Sharjah. However at the end of the 2018/2019 season, they were championship winners across men's and ladies senior football, along with camogie and hurling.

Unfortunately, the club did not get the chance to retain their crowns for the 2019/2020 season as, for the first time in the history of the Middle East, the championship was cancelled.



OFF THE FIELD EVENTS

The club has been busy throughout the years with their off the field achievements. In 2015, the club was the home to the inaugural GAA World Games, when the club welcomed 28 teams from around the world to compete in this spectacular event.

More recently in November 2019, the club was host to the GAA Hurling All Stars. The teams competed in exhibition game along with conducting training sessions to our juvenile members.

The club has gone from strength to strength each year, our members while predominantly Irish, we are also proud to have; English, Australian, Canadian members amongst our club.

Na Fianna GAA welcomes all participants from all backgrounds as our club profile consists of young and old with a variety of nationalities. This diversity, along with the development of the Juvenile section of the club, heralds a bright future for the Abu Dhabi Na Fianna Club.



AL AIN G.A.A



AL AIN GAA

Bunaithe i 2009

CLUB FORMATION & HISTORY

Al Ain GAA club was founded in 2009 by a small number of Irish expatriates who wanted to maintain a connection to their Irish heritage through Gaelic Games. The club's affiliation with GAA in Ireland has allowed the club to grow from strength to strength. Last year, the club celebrated its tenth anniversary. The club marked the occasion with a special logo on the jerseys to remember the founding members of the club.

The first Al Ain GAA training session took place on Sunday 13th September 2009 at Al Ain Rugby Club and continued throughout the season, alternating between the Rugby Club and Choueifat school. The club played their first game at the same location when the ladies took on Abu Dhabi na Fianna in October 2009. Numbers for training increased significantly one year later when, in October 2010, the men of Al Ain took to the field.

An early version of the Al Ain GAA tournament was hosted on Friday, 5th November 2010 with the Al Ain ladies tasting tournament success in the Ladies B division. Later that season, the men took part in their first tournament in Abu Dhabi on February 18th 2011.

Football was the main sport for the intervening years, and the establishment of a Juvenile section in September 2017 was the final step. In recent years however, the small ball has made a big impact on GAA in Al Ain.

In September 2015, a Hurling team was established for the first time and in September 2019, a Camogie team was born. All teams currently compete in the Middle East GAA Leagues and Championship, with players of all levels catered for. Training takes place regularly each week from August to June, and large-scale tournaments take place at least twice per year.

On the international stage, Al Ain GAA have contributed to the success of the Middle East GAA in various competitions including the Aer Lingus/Etihad International Hurling festival in Galway in 2014 and separate iterations of the GAA World Games in 2015 and 2016. Al Ain GAA also entered a representative team into the St. Jude's All Ireland Junior Football 7's competition on the eve of the All Ireland Football final in September 2017.

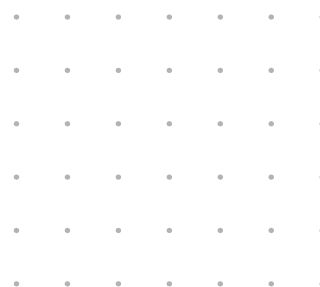


AL AIN CLUB GROUNDS

The club has a great working relationship with the Al Ain Amblers Rugby club, who allow us to train on their amazing facilities and hold our home tournaments at their grounds.

The training facilities are second to none, with five pitches available for use. The main stand and restaurant give a great view of the five fields. This is quite a sight on tournament day when there are over 1,000 players competing. The fields are kept immaculate and are available to members outside training hours. The complex offers a variety of facilities to its members, including a gym, tennis court, restaurant, bar, spa and pool.

Facilities are open for use from 6AM to 10PM for all club members. Our members enjoy these luxuries with their GAA membership, which also includes a discount on food and beverages. Many events are held here throughout the week such as boot camps, soccer training, rugby training, cricket games, quiz nights, buffets and it shows a variety of sport games. The rugby club is at the heart of the Irish community in Al Ain and you're always sure to bump into a familiar face here.



THE CLUB



Each year the club has grown from strength to strength with an increase in the number of members. In the year 2019/2020, our club had approximately 70 members. Currently the club has two male football teams and two female football teams.

The men compete in intermediate football and the second team play in the junior A division. The men's intermediate team are always competitive in their grade and are pushing hard to reach the senior ranks where they lay before.

Meanwhile, our men's junior A team had a successful year coming second in the league and winning a home tournament which was a highlight of the 2020 season. Our women compete in the senior ladies competition, while our second team plays in the junior B league. Our senior ladies have been at the top table for many seasons now, competing with the best teams in the Gulf for the top prizes in the ladies division. The ladies B footballs are a constantly strengthening team with them reaching finals and competing with a high standard of competitive football over the last few years.

The club also has a strong hurling tradition. We have a men's team that plays at an intermediate level after a league and championship double in the 2019 season.

The men's team continued their success in the 2020 season coming second in the league and winning their home tournament for the third season in a row. 2019-20 was a special season for the club as we had our first camogie team compete in the intermediate grade. The camogie team finished second in the league which was a great achievement as many players were new to the sport.

Friday 15th September 2017 marked the beginning of the first ever juvenile section for the club. The juvenile team trains regularly and often travel to various competitions in the region.

Teams at Al Ain GAA

Ladies Senior
Football

Men's
Intermediate
Football

Ladies Junior
B Football

Men's Junior
A Football

Ladies
Intermediate
Camogie

Men's
Intermediate
Hurling

AL REEM SHAMROCKS



THE CLUB

Al Reem Shamrocks is one of the newest and fastest growing GAA clubs in the Middle East having been founded in September 2017.

Codes and Progress

The club was founded in 2017 with one men's team and two women's teams who both competed at Junior level and has grown exponentially since, gaining back to back promotions and winning many tournaments along the way. In 2020, we entered three men's teams (competing at Junior and Intermediate level) and five women's teams (junior and Intermediate level) into competition.

For the 2019 season, Al Reem Shamrocks entered a Camogie and Hurling team into tournaments for the first time. Competing intensely at Intermediate level, we are really looking forward to making big strides in the coming season as well as having plenty of fun along the way..

Al Reem Shamrocks have pioneered the progress of Handball in the Region and we hosted the first ever handball tournament in the Middle East against Riyadh in December 2018. This proved to be hugely successful and lead to the wider adoption of handball across the Gulf.

What makes the club special?

Al Reem Shamrocks plays a huge part in many expats time in the UAE because we are not just a sporting club, our club provides a welcoming atmosphere to those who have left Irish shores and arrive in the UAE's capital for the first time. It also brings together people from different backgrounds and cultures, where long term friendships have been built.



THE SOCIAL SCENE

We also have a great social calendar where new members are welcomed and meet new people.



We look forward to welcoming new members to Abu Dhabi.



DUBAI CELTS G.A.A



CLUB FORMATION

Dubai has been a popular outpost for Irish expats for the past 30 years, owing to the city's ambitious vision to be a recognised global hub for business, commerce and tourism. This meant that job opportunities have been plentiful and encouraged many Gaels to up-sticks and sample life in the Pearl of the Gulf.

The club itself was founded in 1995 with very humble beginnings. The origins of the club are the result of conversations with committee members of the already-existing Dubai Irish Society and GAA enthusiasts who were missing the games they loved. The first training session attracted just six players, but in the coming months they gained invaluable support from Byrne Equipment Rental, Dubai Duty Free and the Dubai Irish Society themselves to publicise the new venture. This enabled Dubai Celts to enter a 9-a-side team in the 1995 Guinness tournament held in Bahrain, winning it outright on our maiden bow. The club's initial purpose was simply to provide a taste of home in the desert, to attract others with Irish heritage to come together and form a meaningful society. In fact, this remains at the forefront of what we still do today. Dubai Celts strives to welcome fellow Irish people to our community, especially those who wish to come or have recently arrived in the city. We aim to develop friendships, working relationships and subsequently success on the sporting field. Dubai Celts members come from a diverse array of employment backgrounds.



Historically those in the construction, finance and engineering industries were the first to make Dubai a home. Over more recent years, there has been a surge from those within the education, healthcare, tourism and marketing sectors.

Being one of the first GAA clubs in the Middle East, and indeed Asia, presented the club with both challenges and opportunities. From struggling to source the correct kit, equipment and playing surfaces to being a founding member of the Middle East County Board and having one of the largest club memberships outside of Ireland, it has been quite the journey.

Other clubs in the area started to form around the same time in the mid-90s, namely in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia, which led to regular tournaments being set up in the cooler winter months. This included the Dubai Celts Gaelic Games, which had its first staging in March 1996.



CLUB FORMATION

As the Celts grew in numbers, the 'Railway Cup' became one of the highlights of the club calendar, with both male and female players representing their home provinces to contend for a trophy and bragging rights for the season. With the increase in participation came the formation of the Juvenile section of the club in the late 1990s, with many members wishing to share the game they loved with the next generation. It is a feature of our club that has remained steadfast and has piqued the interests of children and families from many nationalities, in no small part owing to the large numbers of adult Celts players teaching in schools across the Emirate.

Over time, the main annual competition became the Asian Gaelic games, which saw clubs from across the continent competing annually, with host cities changing every year. The Dubai Celts entered both men's and women's teams that travelled to exotic locations such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Shanghai, to name a few, and challenged regularly for the main prizes. Honours included men's football winners in 2005 and 2010, ladies' football winners in 2006, 2007 and 2008, Hurling winners in 2007 and 2012 as well as Camogie in 2012 and 2015.

Increased numbers of Irish expats across the Middle-Eastern nations, led to the formation of new teams in Al Ain, Sharjah, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. This in turn, led to inaugural Gulf Gaelic Games in 2007 with 26 teams participating, which included six teams from Ireland and two from London. This helped to establish and publicise the area as a cultural/sporting stronghold outside the Emerald Isle. This period saw continued success for the Dubai Celts on a more local front and created many friendly and competitive rivalries, which are still evident on the pitch today.



The club has welcomed a large number of high-profile visitors over the years; the GAA All-Star teams in 2005 held exhibition matches at the Polo Club, then-Irish president Mary McAleese was accompanied by GAA president Sean Kelly for a state visit in 2009 and many successful football and hurling county teams including Dublin, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Tipperary and Donegal have used Dubai as a base for winter training, often inviting Celts players to partake in memorable challenge games.



This formation of the Middle-East County Board in 2013 has seen the region go from strength-to-strength in terms of team formation, participation and exposure of our games. Dubai Celts has consistently been one of the strongest teams since its inception, frequently winning tournaments and league titles in men's and ladies' football, as well as hurling and camogie. With the introduction of the GAA world games in 2016, Dubai Celts has contributed more than its fair share of players to the Middle-East squads. As a result of their successes, many of our players can now rightly call themselves World Champions.

Looking to the future, the club is in a very healthy position, it has grown significantly from its roots; with over 230 adult players across all codes (men's and ladies' football, hurling and camogie) and an ever-growing juvenile section with upwards of 120 children playing every week from vast array of nationalities. Dubai Celts is still regularly winning trophies, welcoming new members, improving health/fitness, creating romance, nurturing families, attracting new people to Gaelic Games and maintaining a sense of home away from home. Long may it continue.

Location

Dubai Celts adult teams train at the Sports Park in Dubai Sports City, on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Sports City is also the main venue for the annual Dubai GAA tournament.

Dubai Celts Juveniles train nearby, at Sunmarke School in Jumeriah Village Triangle, on Saturday mornings.

Dubai Celts also make use of the fantastic public facilities available in the city, including its stunning parks and beaches for enjoyable, fitness-based training sessions.

Current Teams

In our most recent season, 2019-2020, Dubai Celts had teams competing across the following codes:

<u>Men's football</u>	<u>Ladies Football</u>	<u>Hurling</u>	<u>Camogie</u>	<u>Juvenile</u>
Senior A	Senior A	Senior	Senior	Under 6
Senior B	Senior B	Intermediate A	Intermediate	Under 8
Intermediate	Junior A	Intermediate B		Under 10
Junior A	Junior B			Under 12
Junior B	Junior C			
	Junior D			

EVENTS

Dubai Celts hosts the Dubai Duty Free GAA festival each year, a huge tournament that kicks off the Middle East league. In 2019, it was our biggest to date; 96 teams, 1180 players including Juveniles, playing 220 fixtures across all codes, over the space of two days. This is truly a testament to just how far we have come in our 25 years of existence and the contribution the club has made to GAA in the Gulf's most populous city.

Dubai Celts organises several social events each year that help to harness the connections made amongst our members. These include; the meet and greet social that kicks off the year after the initial weeks of training, the 12 pubs of Christmas, the Dubai Celts staycation and the season-ending awards ceremonies. These occasions, alongside more informal nights out and general carry-on that ensues after each tournament that is held across the region, means 'the craic' is never far away.



A special event worthy its own mention is the Rachel Kenneally tournament. This is held in memory of one of our dear players who sadly lost her battle with breast cancer, at the age of 26, in 2018.

Since then, the club has held a 6-a-side competition with mixed male and female teams, representing the 32 counties in Ireland.

The games are played in a fun, friendly and inclusive manner, echoing Rachel's outlook on life.





ÉIRE ÓG FUJAIRAH



Established in 2017, the club has gone from strength to strength having teams in both men's and ladies' football.

They were successful in landing a training session with 'Hand of God' legend Diego Maradona and he watched them train in their local training facilities.



JUMEIRAH GAELS G.A.A



CHAIRPERSONS MESSAGE

Our club members, both active and social, have been on a crest of a wave since taking the huge step in establishing the club 5 years ago. In that time, we have grown enormously whereby we now have over 150 active members.



The club has 4 ladies football teams, 5 men's football teams competitive 1 hurling team and 2 camogie teams, all competing within the Middle East League.

This year our Intermediate ladies team took to the field in September 2019 and won the Intermediate League, just one example of the incredible achievements our club has seen since its establishment and its persistence in starting at a social level and working its way up the ranks, across the board both on and off the pitch.

The club was formed with fun, friendship and ambition as its core values, and continues to strive based on these important aspects. These characteristics are ingrained in all Irish people, young, old, at home or abroad, so it is fitting that the club has seen such positive results in such a short time and maintained what is now one of the most popular and successful overseas GAA clubs in the Middle East.

We are an inclusive club and we welcome all nationalities no matter their level of skill or knowledge. We boast players from all around the world including the UK, America and Jordan. Our official kit has been described as “one of a kind” in the GAA community and has gained much popularity on the official O’Neill’s website over the past few years, and we hope the Jumeriah Gaels crest can be worn with pride all around the world.

Again, we would like to thank our sponsors and supporters for giving us the opportunity to grow and compete. Although this year’s League was cut short due to Covid 19, it has brought some positives in that we have come together as a club and have supported each other “at a distance” and acted as that family unit away from home whilst still managing to stay fit and have a bit of crack along the way.

Sinead Kelly
Chairperson



WHAT MAKES US SPECIAL



Jumeirah Gaels GAA Club initially established as a social team back in March 2015 in Dubai and now as we come to the end of our sixth season, the club has seen incredible growth and success within such a short period of time since its modest beginnings.

With our club growing from strength to strength and our ethos in line with promoting GAA and Irish culture within the Middle East, we look forward to developing our club even further and welcoming new members.

We hope to grow on the recent success of our camogie and hurling teams whilst securing further promotions across our ladies and men's football teams. We also

hope to establish more coaches and referees within our club and promote GAA amongst the array of different nationalities here in Dubai.

We want to create a positive outlet for our members to train and attend various sporting and social events throughout the season and act as a family away from home for all our members.

Overall, we aim to work with the other clubs across the Middle East during these unprecedented times to make sure that the right decisions are made regarding the next season and that all players across the Middle East are safe both physically and mentally.



TIMELINE AND NOTABLE STATISTICS:

March 2015: Jumeirah Gaels established

2015/2016: Sperrin Metal Middle East League Junior Champions

2016/2017: Sperrin Metal Middle East League Intermediate Football Champions and Junior Men's Runners-Up

2016/2017: Ladies Junior B and Ladies Junior C Champions

2017/2018: Intermediate Men securing promotion to join our current Senior Team



2017/2018: Junior C Ladies team promoted to the Junior B Competition

2018/2019: Intermediate Ladies Camogie team winning the League and getting promoted to the Senior League

2018/2019: Intermediate Men promoted to the Senior League for next season to join our other Senior team

2019/2020: Intermediate Ladies promoted to the Senior League for next season



THE GAELS STORY SO FAR:



March 2015: A group of Irish lads looking to play football in the Middle East, met in JLT Park for their first training session. Jumeirah Gaels was established.

2015/2016: Later that year, now firmly established, the men's team took part in their first Sperrin Metal Middle East League and would finish the season as Junior Champions, promoted from Junior football in their first year. Jumeirah Gaels Ladies team also lined out for the first time.

2016/2017: This was followed with an Intermediate title in 2016, with promotion to Senior Football. Our Juniors meanwhile finished runner's up while our Ladies teams secured both Junior B and Junior C crowns having only been formed the previous year.



2017/2018: Our Junior team manages to go one step further than the previous year, securing the title and a step up to Intermediate, while another Junior C Ladies team also secures promotion and Junior A Ladies joining the Intermediate ranks. The second half of the season sees the start of our Ladies Camogie Team.

Back-to-back promotions for our Intermediate Men's team means that we currently have two men's teams battling it out at Senior. The Intermediate Ladies Camogie Team win the Intermediate League in their first full year and are promoted to Senior. Men's Hurling Team established.

2019/2020: Intermediate Ladies Teams claim the trophy and are promoted to Senior Football, while our Men's Junior B team also sees success as League Champions.

This mercurial rise in such a short time has been down to the hard work of coaches, board members and volunteers who have worked tirelessly not only to promote Gaelic games in the Middle East, but also provide a sense of community and family so that home doesn't seem so far away.

BEHIND THE SCENES THIS YEAR 2019/2020

Off the back of the Middle East Men's Football Team winning the World Games, in which we had many of our own members share in that success and the success of the World Games as a whole, we headed into our new season on a high.

Although our season was cut short this year we started pre-season training toward the end of August 2019 and we continued our training in the Sports City grounds over the year, both football and hurling/camogie. Although we train hard, as a club we like to have a good time just as much and we held many social events up until January 2020 and thereafter.



We started off with our Gaels welcome brunch in September and we welcomed members old and new. We had some fund raising nights for Cancer Awareness and the first edition of our Gaels Railway Cup kicked off before the end of the year where our mighty provinces compete against each other in a friendly internal league. The night the finals were played led to winner presentations and a Gaels Christmas Party and sing-along before everyone headed home for the festive season.

In January 2020 we launched our official Jumeirah Gaels Website and although we have entered unprecedented times we have had many initiatives such as a Zoom Gaels Quiz and our Run to the Championship for Pieta House in which nearly 2,000 pounds was raised and the Gaels collectively ran 120 kilometers in one day.

We look forward to ending our season on a high with our annual Gaels Awards night which takes place in June and virtually this year. We wish everyone a safe Summer and we look forward to returning for the new season in September.
#Gaels



RAK ROPAIRÍ G.A.A



CLUB FORMATION & BACKGROUND

RAK Ropairí GAA club was established in 2015 in Ras Al Khaimah, UAE. The club was started to provide a social and sporting outlet for the small but growing Irish population of Ras Al Khaimah. In its first season, the club entered one Ladies football team at social level with only 12 members registered with the club.

The club progressed to entering a men's team for the first time in 2017 in the Junior A grade, by which time the ladies' team had also progressed to Junior A level. 2017 also marked the establishment of the clubs' Juvenile program, drawing in children of all ages from all over the Al Hamra and Ras Al Khaimah area to participate in Gaelic Games.

The club has grown rapidly over the past few years and currently has two ladies and two men's adult teams participating in the Middle East Leagues. We hope to grow these numbers even further over the coming years.



In November of 2018, the decision was made to try and develop a more permanent home for RAK Ropairí in Al Hamra village. Up until that point, the club had been renting a small driving range area in the center of Ras Al Khaimah.

The decision to relocate to Al Hamra village, on the outskirts of Ras Al Khaimah, was taken mainly to cater for the growing Irish and expat community there and, in conjunction with Al Hamra Golf Club, two fantastic grass pitches with changing and shower facilities were developed.

Today, the club is firmly established as a sporting and social hub for the residents of Al Hamra and Ras Al Khaimah. With the generous help and support of our sponsors Brogan Group, we are bringing children and adults of all nationalities together to play Gaelic games in a safe and friendly environment.

We welcome new members to come and join us any time regardless of your experience or ability levels. The only requirement is an ability to have fun, so follow us @rakropairigaa on Instagram and Facebook to keep up to date with all the craic in RAK!



RAK ROPAIRI INAUGURAL TOURNAMENT

Friday January 17th 2020 was a historic day for RAK Ropairí GAA club as we hosted our first ever Middle East GAA league tournament. 16 teams from across the region battled it out for the Ladies and Men's Intermediate titles. RAK Ropairí ladies competed hard in all their games but unfortunately came up short on the day, Jumeriah Gaels taking the ladies competition whilst Oryx na hEireann came out on top in the men's division.

RAK Ropairí also hosted its first Juvenile tournament with over 50 children from Ras Al Khaimah and Dubai showcasing their talents. The days games were followed by a brunch and after party with music by the legendary Paddyman and a rollover trad session to be remembered.

It was a hugely successful day, but one that wouldn't have been made possible without the continued support of our club sponsor Brogan Group. The covered resting zone for the players which Brogan Group kindly erected greatly enhanced the event, allowing all players time and space to rest and get out of the sun between games.



OUR JUVENILE SECTION

RAK Ropairí GAA prides ourselves on our ever-growing juvenile programme. With over 50 children and families of all different nationalities participating in Gaelic games, the future of RAK Ropairí is in safe hands.

Through our Juvenile coaching programme we hope to further spread the message of Gaelic games and increase participation rates over the coming years. We have established a safe and fun environment for children to learn about and practice the skills of Gaelic football.

A particularly proud day for the club was when our Juvenile teams got to play at our inaugural Middle East tournament. The children thoroughly enjoyed the day which included GAA games, mini golf and bouncing castles. They also enjoyed a great day out in Dubai where some of the children were introduced to the game of hurling for the first time. Many thanks to Dubai Celts for a brilliant day out.





EVENTS FROM THE PAST YEAR

RAK Ropairí GAA kicked off the season with a successful 'Back to RAK' night in September where we welcomed new members to our club. The night consisted of live music, food, the opportunity to buy merchandise and plenty of craic.



The club were proud to get involved in the Breast Cancer Awareness month in October where our members wore pink to raise awareness and support for the campaign.

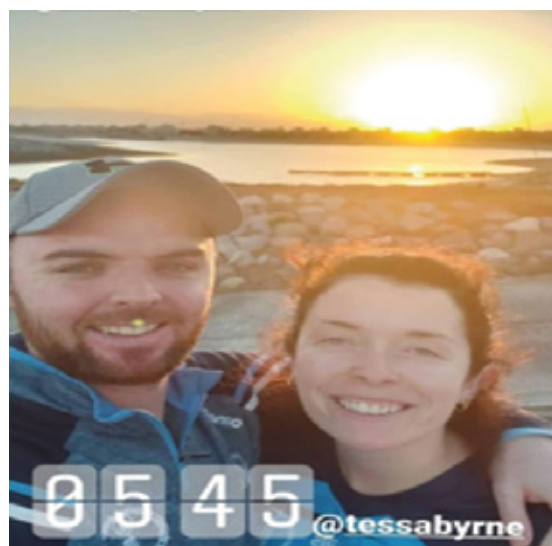
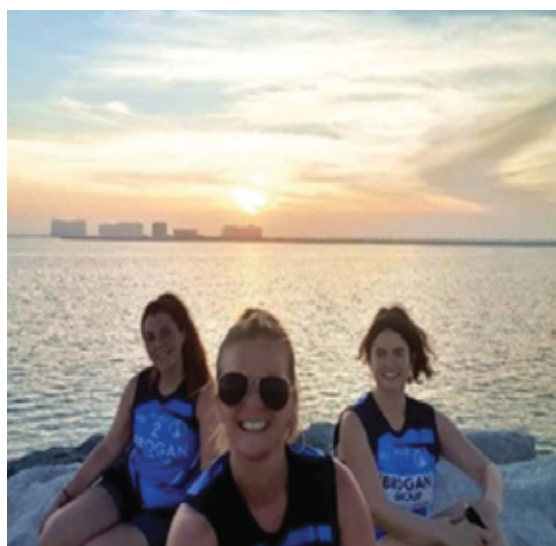


Our fancy dress Halloween Quiz Night in The Bay Sports Bar, Al Hamra Village, was also a great success with fun traditional games and prizes on the night reminding us of home.





As a result of an early finish to the season our end of year awards night was unfortunately put on hold, however RAK Ropairí GAA were happy to partake in virtual events such as our Do It for Dan quiz fundraiser and the Rise and Remember walk for Pieta House.



As the GAA season was unfortunately cut short this year, everyone at RAK Ropairí GAA are looking forward to the season and welcoming new players to our club.



RUWAIS GAELS G.A.A



ABOUT RUWAIS GAELS

Ruwais Gaels GAA was founded in 2015.

The Gaels are a very popular little GAA club for all abilities and nationalities.

The club has been running for just over five years. There have been both men and women's teams participating in the Middle East GAA tournaments over the last number of years but in the spirit of keeping the game alive our hopes and dreams are now with our ladies junior B team who are the only team representing us this year.

We are always looking to grow and support our little club and have just secured sponsorship for the year ahead which is a great achievement and addition to our club.

We are very proud of our achievements and the hard work of a lot of people connected with the club as we are from arguably the smallest and most isolated area of Abu Dhabi.

This year we just have 13 members registered.

Gaelic football isn't just a way to keep fit or somewhere to make new friends, it's a sense of community and a little piece of home which is what brings people together- Leona Kelly, Chairperson

"If Carlsberg done supporters, we'd probably have the best supporters in the world"



KERRY MIDDLE EAST G.A.A



CLUB FORMATION & BACKGROUND



Kerry Middle East GAA Club was founded in May 2018 and is the latest addition to the Middle East GAA club circuit. The club was founded by likeminded members of the GAA community in Dubai, who were previously a part of The Middle East Kerry Society (The MEKS).

In an effort to ensure we are the most welcoming club, we are one of the only GAA clubs worldwide that do not charge a membership fee. We provide all our players match jerseys for games, and members pay for individual training sessions on a "Pay as you Play" basis.

The clubs aims are as follows:

1. Welcoming and inclusive club for people of all backgrounds and skill levels.
2. Focus on the social aspect of club membership and overall enjoyment.
3. Train and play "The Kerry Way" with an emphasis on skill development and total football.
4. One night a week training with supplementary fitness sessions and challenge games on a regular basis.

The club had an excellent maiden campaign during 2018/19 season, fielding 2 men's Junior B teams and a social team in each of the four tournaments in the Middle East GAA calendar. Our A team were victorious in the Al Reem tournament and in the Championship in Abu Dhabi. Our B side picked up some early silverware in the Dubai tournament with strong showings in the other 3 events, while our Social side were victorious in the highly rated Bahrain Games tournament.



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- The club picked it up a gear in the 2019/20
- season with the A team winning both the
- men's Junior A tournaments in Bahrain
- and Al Ain, and subsequently picking up
- the league trophy as well as promotion
- to Intermediate level at the end of the
- season.

The club committee has been working tirelessly to develop the club since its inception and to get a foothold as a competitive club here in the Middle East.

Now that we have established ourselves, the next step for the club is to set up a ladies team which will compete in the league in 2020/21. This, coupled with an extremely competitive intermediate men's team looking for back to back promotions and a strong Junior B team also looking to work their way up the grades, means there is much to look forward to in the coming season for Kerry Middle East GAA.



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The successes of the club to date would not have been achieved without the substantial support of the Middle East Board, the Kerry County Board, our current sponsors Kibsons and Eire Gulf Contracting LLC, and our previous sponsors Premier Brands International.

Looking to the future, the club has ambitions for all of its teams to move up the grades, with the ultimate goal of competing at senior level in both ladies and men's football in the Middle East League.

The club is in the process of developing a 5-year plan in an effort to achieve both our on and off field goals, and to ensure a strong footing for the organization in the years ahead.

Ciarraí Abu!



SHARJAH GAELS G.A.A



CLUB FORMATION & BACKGROUND

Founded in 2012, Sharjah Gaels has become a well-established GAA club in the Northern Emirate of Sharjah. We are a club made up of 150+ expats from all parts of Ireland with a small number of members that come from the United Kingdom and in the past, we have also had the pleasure of playing alongside South African natives.

Our teams, like many other Middle East clubs, are made up of teachers. Due to the accessibility of our club we are able to cater for individuals to play with us that come from other emirates such as Ajman, Umm Al Quwain, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Dubai.

Over the course of the last eight years, the Sharjah Gaels club has gone from strength to strength and have become a dominant force in the Middle East League in football, hurling and camogie. As it stands, Sharjah Gaels proudly boasts both men and ladies football teams, along with camogie and hurling teams which compete throughout different levels of the league. This season we introduced Handball and it's been a great new addition to the club.



For many individuals within this club, Sharjah Gaels is like an adopted family and our training grounds in Sharjah Wanderers is known as our home away from home. The facilities that are provided by Sharjah Wanderers make it easy for a small club like this to continue to grow. There are two full sized grass pitches with full sized GAA goal posts and also an adjoining grass warm-up area. Most recently we have also set up a Handball league within our club in order to promote and encourage participation in this Irish sport throughout the United Arab Emirates.

Since the introduction of handball in the UAE we were fortunate enough to have the funds to set up the very first handball wall which allows us to host tournaments in conjunction with the Middle East league tournaments. As well as this, the club are also given the opportunity to make use of the astro pitch during the ever-growing training sessions that take place twice a week in preparation for the Middle East League and Championship.



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- The help that we receive from Sharjah Wanderers allow us to successfully host and run a variety of home tournaments throughout the year. These tournaments, and the after-party associated with it, have become widely popular for Irish people to attend, regardless of their interest in the GAA. This is due to the community-like atmosphere and the effort that goes into the planning of these events by both the Sharjah Wanderers employees and the Sharjah Gaels Committee.

In preparation for these home tournaments it is vital that our club is organised both on and off of the pitches. It is great to see everyone banding together to make these tournaments a success.

All members of our club are ready to help in some way during tournament days by playing live traditional music, volunteering, organising, supporting all while finding the times to play their own matches. Over the last couple of years, we have been fortunate enough to host two or three tournaments per year. Like many clubs will agree, there is nothing better than a home tournament. These tournaments help us to grow our GAA community and to showcase our Irish heritage from the other side of the world.



During this year's season 2019/2020 our club was made up of 12 teams that competed across a variety of codes and levels:

Men's football	Women's football	Hurling	Camogie
Senior's Men's Team	Senior's Women's Team	Senior's Hurling Team	Senior's Camogie Team
Intermediate Men's Team	Intermediate Women's Team	Intermediate Hurling Team	Intermediate Camogie Team
Junior B Men's Team	Junior A Women's Team		
	Junior B Women's Team		
	Junior C Women's Team		
	2 Social Women's Team		

The biggest success of this year goes to our senior ladies' football team who were crowned Middle East League winners for the first time since the beginning of the club. Our ladies junior B team were also crowned league winners this year after a very successful season. Our Men's football team were extremely competitive reaching the final stages at each tournament. It was wonderful to see our Ladies and Men's Senior teams' line up shoulder to shoulder singing the Irish National Anthem prior to their Senior Cup Final games.

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Off the back of their massive League win last season, our Senior Hurlers were phenomenal all season, ending the final tournament on a high. The intermediate hurlers also had a great season winning our home tournament back in October. The Camogie struggled to get over the line and lift a cup this season but are determined to bring some silverware home next season!



Each year we kick off the season by welcoming our new members into the club by hosting events in conjunction with our sponsors such as 'Dubliners' and 'Sharjah Wanderers Sports Club'. These events act as a reunion for our returning members as well as a chance for our new members to be eased into the madness!! Other events that are highly anticipated by all of our members include the infamous rollovers that are hosted after our home tournaments, our UAE staycation in Rixos as well as the end of year dinner dance where we celebrate the club's successes and achievements over the past year.



Our sponsors over the years have always been a massive help in supporting us and our growing club. Each year we promote and encourage all of our members to support these businesses just like they have supported us.

- • • • •
- • Finally, Sharjah Gaels would like to
- • thank the efforts of the committee,
- • managers, players, sponsors and
- • supporters for their participation over
- • the years. The club would not be where
- • it is today without every single one of its
- • members. We are looking forward to
- • what the future will bring and the many
- • new members and successes that will
- • follow.



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We would like to extend an invitation for all new players from across the northern emirates to come and join our home away from home. All levels are welcome to participate regardless of if you've never owned a pair of runners or if you're an inter-county footballer, here at Sharjah Gaels there's a team for everyone.



BAHRAIN

Overview:

Population: 1.7m

Size: 780 sq km

National Airline: Gulf Air

Currency: Bahraini Dinar (BD)

Key Event: Held the first F1 Grand Prix in the Middle East in 2014 and always a great weekend.



ARABIAN CELTS G.A.A



THE CLUB

Over the years, many different nationalities have played Gaelic Games with the Arabian Celts GAA Club.

Our club has an 'inclusive not exclusive' policy which has been warmly embraced by other nationalities from around the world. Off the pitch, the club has also gained a reputation as a warm, welcoming and enthusiastic club.

Here is a quick snapshot of our home away from home on the little island of the Kingdom of Bahrain.



CLUB HISTORY TIMELINE

2008 Merger of two clubs, the Bahrain Irish and Naomh Abdullah Dhahran Club from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia. The Bahrain-based club has epitomised all that is great about Gaelic Games in the Middle East.

2009 1st wins for the club; Bangkok - Asian Games & Arabian Celts Legends in Bahrain Games

2010 Our club was heavily involved in the setting up of the Middle East League and were delighted to be chosen to launch the first round of the inaugural Middle East League.

2011 Had the honour of launching the first Ladies Middle East League in Bahrain. Voted the All Asia Club of the Year 2011

2012 1st Arabian Celts Juvenile group was formed



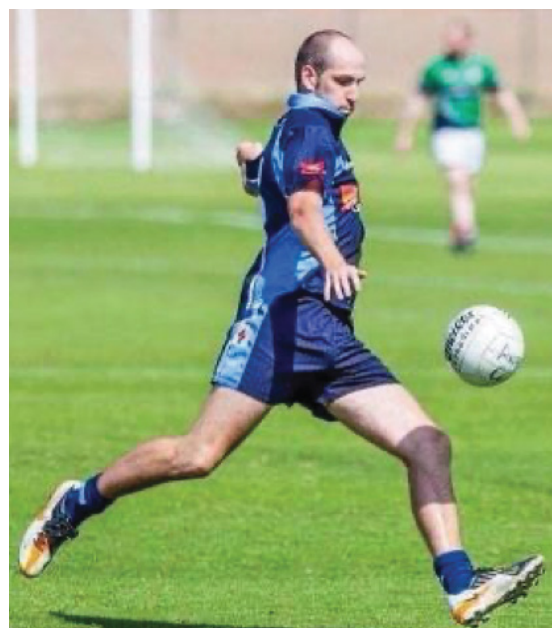
2013 Our club was key in establishing the Middle East Co. Board in June of this year. Arabian Celts club members held key positions on the newly formed Board, including James Kennedy as the first Chairperson. Members also acted as PRO, Coaching Officer and Irish Language and Culture Officer.

The club was represented with two players on the Middle East County Hurling team, winning the Div. 2 title in the first ever International Games held in Galway.

Our men won the Intermediate division of the Asian Games.

2014 Senior hurlers become the first ever Middle East Hurling Championship winners.

Our mens footballers competed strongly and won the Abu Dhabi leg of the Senior Football League. First Ladies All Star Award.



- • • • •
- • **2015** Seven members of the club played key roles in the first ever GAA World Games which was held in Abu Dhabi. The winning Middle East A Men's Football team was captained by Joe Melia of the Arabian Celts. Player of the tournament went to Arabian Celts player, Martin Scannell. Aisling Kinsella also made the first ever Ladies Middle East team.

There is a growing Juvenile section within the club and in 2015 the club held a very successful kids tournament with 250 kids from different schools participating.

2016 The second GAA World Games which was held in Dublin, was another remarkable occasion for the club with six adult footballers representing the club. The men's footballers were successful in retaining their crown.

Arabian Celts Legends won their first league tournament.

2017 Bahrain Games, the largest GAA tournament outside Ireland - 94 teams competing. Ladies' 1st League tournament win in Oman.



2018 The club celebrated its 10th anniversary after merging two clubs, the Bahrain Irish and Naomh Abdullah Dhahran Club from the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia back in 2008.

2019 The club celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Bahrain Games. The ladies made history by winning the double in intermediate football.

2020 The Ladies managed to finish top 4 in Senior after 3 tournaments before the league started to be affected by COVID-19.

Behind the scenes, the Arabian Celts have been busy off the field by getting involved in various fundraisers. A bake sale was organised in November, the Winter Shoebox Appeal and the 12 Pubs of Christmas fundraisers in December as well as the Run to Championship in May which was a huge success in particular, raising over €5,500 in 24 hours, all in aid of the Migrant Workers Protection Society here in Bahrain.

The club has always had an 'inclusive not exclusive' policy and that continues to be the case and what makes the Arabian Celts the club that it is today.

OMAN



Overview:

Population: 5.1m

Size: 309,501 sq km

National Airline: Oman Air

Currency: Omani Rial (OMR)

Key fact: Oldest independent state in the Arab world



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CLANN NA hOMAN



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HISTORY OF THE CLUB

Founded in 2003, Clann na hOman prides itself on being a multinational club that continues to go from strength to strength. The story all began with an invite to turn up at the Al Sawadi Hotel (between Muscat and Sohar) for a meeting and a kick-about. It was coordinated by Colin Butler and Terri Johar (RIP), the latter of whom served as President of both our club and the Oman Irish Society. From winning the 'New Club' trophy in our first tournament at the Bahrain Games that year, the club grew in size and stature, competing across the region in both hurling and football with a consistent degree of success.

From those early years, the variety of accents which could be heard across our teams spoke of the diversity of Clann na hOman, something which holds to the present day. As a small club, we have welcomed participants of all backgrounds, abilities and ages to enjoy our Games in a friendly, supportive social circle. Indeed, a significant portion of our history included coordinating with Muscat Magpies AFL Club in Muscat to form the Muscat Gaelic and Australian Football Club (MGAFC), with a number of Australian expatriates joining our Gaelic football teams.



The club has always taken great pride in having a very active juvenile section, where parents can bring along their kids to organized training sessions and fun activity days. Under the watchful eye of our club trainers, the skills of Gaelic football are passed onto the next generation of young people of all nationalities. It is great testament to the underage work done throughout the years by numerous people that we have seen a steady increase in the number of kids enjoying the game here in Muscat.



From participating in the 2012 Asian Gaelic Games in Malaysia, to our ladies winning the Intermediate Cup at the 2016 Dubai Irish Festival and hosting an annual round of the Middle East GAA League, there have certainly been plenty of highlights over the past seventeen years. Without question though, the camaraderie and sense of community within Clann na hOman is something which is cherished most by our players and members, both past and present.

Our club has - and continues to be - a true 'Clann'; a unique sporting and social hub for people to make lifelong friendships and memories, on and off the pitch. Clann na hOman - 'Ar aghaidh i gcónaí' - Always Moving Forward

Beir bua,
Darren Ashmore
Chathaoirleach

KUWAIT



Overview:

Population: 4.27m

Size: 17,818 sq km

National Airline: Kuwait Airways

Currency: Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)

Key fact: The Kuwaiti Dinar is the world's highest-valued currency



KUWAIT HARPS G.A.A



CLUB FORMATION



The Kuwait Harps were originally founded in 1997, but the club was disbanded in the early 2000's. The club was then reestablished in 2011 with a men's team, and in 2012, saw the addition of a women's team for the first time. Club membership is at an all-time high recently, with little over 70 members. With the membership being in favour of more women, we are able to field two teams in both the men's and women's division. Our members come from all over the world, and for a lot of the Harps players, when they come to training, it is their first time kicking a Gaelic football.

As of right now, our Men's team is in the Junior division and our women proudly compete in the Intermediates. Both teams were awarded the Plate titles in the Abu Dhabi Championships in their respective leagues. We also have a team in both the Men's and Women's Social divisions as well. The Kuwait Harps have participated in the Asian Gaelic Games in Malaysia, where the women came out with a championship title, and the World Games in Ireland.

The Kuwait Harps are one of the smallest clubs in the Middle East Gaelic football League. While many of the other clubs in the Gulf region can depend on a strong pool of Irish players, this is just not the case in Kuwait. We are a club with 70 members, and 12 different countries are represented. The wide diversity of player nationalities demonstrates the global appeal of this game in Kuwait, something that we are very proud of.

We are happy to welcome new members regardless of experience or skill, we have made it part of our culture to welcome all players with open arms. We pride ourselves on knowing every player's name and a little bit about their journey to the team. Since we are club of players that are new to Gaelic, we are a club that focuses on superb fitness and the development of skills. We train twice a week, join in with fitness sessions once a week, and join in as many organized races as a team as possible.





In addition to this, The Kuwait Harps Club is a social outlet for those new and old to Kuwait. We plan and organize many events throughout the year as well.

We have hosted yacht parties, Halloween quizzes, Christmas Dinner, in-House Tournaments, and award nights.

We are also proud to give back to our communities by offering Youth Days to teach our youth the game of Gaelic. We pride ourselves on creating a family-like atmosphere, therefore, we have recently started team bowling outings, craft nights and breakfast breaks after trainings.



SAUDI ARABIA

Overview:

Population: 33.8m

Size: 2,150,000 sq km

National Airline: Air Saudia

Currency: Saudi Riyal (SAR)

Key fact: Saudi Arabia has the world's second-largest proven petroleum reserves and the country is the largest exporter of petroleum.



NAOMH ALEE G.A.A



NAOMH ALEE GAA CLUB RIYADH – FOUNDERS OF GAELIC GAMES IN THE MIDDLE EAST

On a Sunday and Wednesday night, just after the sun goes down, it's not uncommon to hear the thump of a football boot on a size 4 and size 5 O'Neill's football in any village, town or parish in Ireland. But in the middle of a grassless nation, with its unique traditions and escalating temperatures, this is more exclusive. And yet, for a quarter of a century, this has been evident among the dunes of Riyadh as the Gaels of Saudi Arabia ply their trade....in training for the upcoming GAA season. Things are different for the GAA players in this region.

Access to any sports-field, let alone grass, is difficult to find. And training or match sessions that involve men and women in a single venue is not readily accommodated in the homeland of Mecca and the heartland of Islam.



For 25 years (and more) there has been an active and enthusiastic group of men and women, ranging in age from twenty to seventy, who 'religiously' profess their affiliation to and affinity for the codes of the GAA.

From 7:30pm on Sundays and Wednesday's and from 10am on Friday's (the Sabbath), these avid proponents of the GAA gather in their thrice weekly training sessions: - running the sprints - repeating the drills - driving the endurance laps and of course - contesting dirty ball....just like we did (and do) at home.

THIS IS OUR CLUB... THIS IS OUR COMMUNITY..... THIS IS OUR PARISH.

And it all started officially 25 years ago, in 1994. At a time when the Middle East was not the chosen destination of the Irish diaspora, a handful of Irish pioneers were forging new business practices, new business models and new lives for themselves in the Arabian desert.

They were agri-engineers with 'Mastock' now 'Al Marai'. These innovators would go on to create the Worlds' largest dairy herd, in the absence of a blade of grass; they were medical professionals who would establish a pedigree of excellence in the field of Medi-care; they were financiers and construction professionals – surveyors, engineers and tunnel builders who would literally transform the very landscape of this oil rich nation.



And in the true spirit of the 'pioneer', these Celtic men and women brought with them something of their own culture, in addition to the traditional honest work-ethic of the Irish diaspora.

Just as the overseas Irish had brought their culture, music and traditions with them to Britain, the America's, Australia and New Zealand in post famine 1800's and the early part of the 20th Century, so too this 'New Diaspora' would plant the seed of Irish Culture in its multitude of ways. For many, perhaps most of them, it was through our native games – Gaelic games.

In 1994, there was no Irish community within which to nurture the seed of Gaelic Games in Saudi Arabia – nor across the broader Middle East. It simply didn't exist. This was the literal 'Green-Field' project (or more appropriately – a 'Red Sand' initiative).



And so, the ambitious few, including Charles Sullivan, Donal McCarthy and Johnny Rae took it upon themselves to organize the burgeoning Irish community in the region, and express themselves through sport. And in 1994, the establishment of Naomh Alee GAA Club in Riyadh and Naomh Abdullah Gaels in Eastern Province (Dahran) marked the beginning of formal Gaelic Games in the Arabian Peninsula.

Initially a 'small-ball' club, noting the southern and particularly Cork heritage of the 'founders', the early years saw Hurling and Camogie dominate the exchanges between these two pioneering clubs. And in true diaspora fashion, the onward travels of Donal McCarthy to the UAE led to the establishment of the Dubai Celts and the 'seeding' of the broad Middle East GAA project.

Between 1994 – and the first affiliation of a Middle East GAA club to Croke Park – and 2002, Naomh Alee (and Naomh Abdullah in Dahran) flourished.

In 2009/10, ironically following significant 'economic challenges' in Ireland, a new wave of migrant Irish found their way to the Middle East and to Saudi Arabia.

These were different 'Irish emigrants' to the more traditional 1940's version. These were young, dynamic professionals, who had seen Ireland cement its place as an influencer of world business through the Celtic tiger years....and they would take that philosophy and shape their new destination of choice. And that 'choice' was now the buoyant - oil rich - Middle East.

A new Irish diaspora fuelled the slumbering GAA community across the region. In 2010, a revitalised Naomh Alee was formative in shaping a new competitive GAA Tournament programme across the region. The 'old club in new clothing' didn't win a tournament in 2010, but it was there – primarily now a football club – and it was making finals.



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- • In 2011 and in 2012, the boys were winning matches and the girls were on field and competing. By 2013 and 14, the boys were a recognised force and the girls were contesting finals. In the same year, Naomh Alee were at the forefront of the new Middle East GAA league and the even newer Middle East GAA Board. Within a year, by 2015, this new Middle East Board would host the inaugural GAA World Games in the presence of patron and new President of the GAA, Aogan O'Fearghail. Not alone this, but the Middle East would contest three GAA World Games finals (Elite Mens football, Elite women's Football and native (non-Irish) women's football) and would win two of them. And what's more, Naomh Alee – the oldest GAA Club in the Middle East would have representation on these teams – as well as in the administration of the Games.

A year later, in 2016, the Middle East would retain its world title in Elite Mens football in Croke Park, and add the World Games Hurling title to its list of honours. And this time the Middle East Board would count both its Chairperson and Secretary from the Naomh Alee GAA Club in Riyadh. Added to this, the Riyadh club could count two more players representing the club and the Middle East in World Games competition.

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From near extinction in the wilderness years of 2003 to 2009 – to Top of the GAA World in 2016 - Naomh Alee had survived – and thrived.

In the domestic realm of Middle East Competition, it was the time for 'na Cailíní to shine.

2016, '17 and '18 saw a new confidence emerge among the LGFA community in Riyadh, with immeasurable progress and progressive tournament wins.

But that elusive Middle East League title and Middle East championship eluded the lasses. Up until the 2017/18 season that is.



In the 2017/18 season, a remarkable sequence of games, running 22 games undefeated secured not one, but both League and Championship honours for the Naomh Alee girls – invincible in that season. And while not all seasons will be this way, it is illustrative of what focus, effort, ambition and no little skill can deliver.

With all games played ‘away from home’ because of the challenges for other clubs to enter Saudi Arabia, extensive travel - covering over 90,000 man miles in a season, was required. But this has NEVER been suggested, even once, by players or club officials as a reason to stand aside. It is what it is. We will endure, we will progress...we will grow.

Now in our Jubilee Year, with another Middle East GAA season completed, the oldest GAA club in the Middle East has secured yet more competition wins for both the men and women of Riyadh in the 2018/19 season. This season, five more pieces of Silverware made their way back to Saudi Arabia – two in men’s football, two in ladies football and one handball - from among the toughest of GAA competition outside of Ireland.



To this end, the club has fostered, developed and been instrumental in delivering the first GAA Handball competition in the Middle East. Now, in Jubilee year, we turn our attention back to its roots and toward re-establishing Hurling and Camogie as core components of this historical club.

And not forgetting the youth - the Naomh Alee GAA Academy, supported by DCU - now in its sixth year of operation – and a staple engagement for Irish, Lebanese, Sri-Lankan, Saudi, British, Malay, Canadian, Spanish and the many more young nationalities who attend at Pairc Ishbilia.

In April and May 2019, the Gaels of Naomh Alee hosted An Iar Uachtarán Aogan O’Fearghail and Tomas Mulcahy as we celebrated 25 years of the oldest GAA Club in the Middle East.

In July 2019, those celebrations travelled home to Ireland – to Dublin, hosting GAA presidents, GAA All-Stars and Ambassadors alike. After this, we returned to Riyadh, to prepare ourselves for the next quarter century of Gaelic Games in the home of the Prophet Mohammed.

In the meantime, the Naomh Alee GAA players will continue their preparations for the next season of Middle East League games in the hot, dry climate of the Arabian Desert.



QATAR



Overview:

Population: 2.8m

Size: 11,586 sq km

National Airline: Qatar Airlines

Currency: Qatari Riyal (QAR)

Key Event: Hosting Fifa World Cup 2022



QATAR G.A.A



CLUB BACKGROUND



Qatar GAA, located in the nation's capital, Doha, was founded in 2004 by a group of passionate expats who wanted to sustain their love of Gaelic Games whilst living abroad. In that first year, the club consisted of just one men's football team. Since then, Qatar GAA has developed to become one of the most successful clubs in the Middle East and Asia.

The club boasts numerous league and championship wins in hurling and football for men, and camogie and football for ladies. Our club members have also represented the region by playing on the Middle East teams that secured victory in the 2015 and 2016 GAA World Games.



The club boasts numerous league and championship wins in hurling and football for men, and camogie and football for ladies. Our club members have also represented the region by playing on the Middle East teams that secured victory in the 2015 and 2016 GAA World Games.

CODES AND GRADES

Qatar GAA field four Men's football teams from social all the way up to senior level, four ladies football teams also from social up to senior, along with a hurling team and camogie team, allowing all our members a taste of the GAA lifestyle across varying levels. The club has around 200 members and a thriving juvenile section, with both featuring players not just from Ireland, but also from the USA, Brazil, and Germany to name just a few.

Our juvenile section is also thriving, with large numbers of children down training every Friday morning honing their skills.



WHAT MAKES THE CLUB SPECIAL?

We take great pride in the fact that the club has never lost the sense of community that comes with being a member of the GAA in Ireland. For us, Gaelic games are not just about football and hurling, but about the people and lifelong friendships that are made through playing the sport in Qatar.



Whilst our member numbers are considerably less than other clubs in the region, this has never affected our success as a club and aids us in developing a close-knit community. We like to think of ourselves not just as a GAA club, but as a family away from home.



BEHIND THE SCENES ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS RUN THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

In order to build this sense of community, it is of course essential to run events over the course of the year. We regularly host internal leagues which culminate in a Finals night that will finish up with a live band and plenty of craic!

Qatar Sports Day in February is a big day for us. Over the last few years, our members completed a solo run across the entire country, which involved soloing a Gaelic football over 100km from one end of Qatar to the other. We also held the first ever Gaelic football match in the desert in 2019, playing in Khor al Udeid, the Qatar desert.

In April 2019, the club travelled to Delhi, India to play against the India Wolfhounds in the first ever GAA match to be played on Indian soil. It was amazing to support a growing club on their way to the Asian Games and to further enhance the sense of community that the GAA is all about.



We also regularly host welcome back events after the Summer holidays (often County Colours nights) for a bit of friendly rivalry, end of year award ceremonies and a St Patrick's Day ball in collaboration with the Qatar Irish Society.

We love to involve other local sporting clubs and play in the Donohue Simpson Cup every year, a compromised rules game between the Doha Kangaroos and Qatar GAA. The games are always tough but plenty of fun and great craic is had over some drinks afterwards.

ADDITIONAL INTEREST GROUPS:



UAE

Abu Dhabi:



Irish
Business
Council
Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi
IRISH
society



Dubai:



شبكة الأعمال الأيرلندية
Irish Business Network



Qatar



Kuwait



Kuwait
Irish Society

USEFUL RESOURCES



Bahrain



Saudi Arabia



Irish Business
Network Riyadh



Jeddah
Irish Society



Riyadh
Irish Society



Oman



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Email: irishbcad@gmail.com

IRISH BUSINESS COUNCIL ABU DHABI

The Irish Business Council of Abu Dhabi takes great pride in the promotion of Ireland, Irish companies, services and products. We offer local knowledge, provide introductions to local Government and private sector partners. The IBC also ensures that the local Abu Dhabi industry is aware of what Ireland has to offer across all business sectors. We support team Ireland by hosting numerous trade missions and participating in exhibitions.



Noeleen Saeed
President

Contact Details:
Email: irishbcad@gmail.com /
Website: www.irishbcad.com



THE IRISH BUSINESS NETWORK

The Irish Business Network (IBN) is a voluntary, non-profit association of professionals and companies of Irish origin in the United Arab Emirates. The objectives of IBN are as follows: To promote Irish commercial and business interests in the UAE and encourage economic and commercial activities, investments and other initiatives between Ireland and the UAE.

We provide a networking and educational platform for Irish professionals based in Dubai through our monthly meetings, seminars and online webinars to facilitate. We also hold a number of sub-sector meeting on topics such as, Finance, Young Business Network, SME's, Hospitality and Digital Innovation.



Sinead Al Sibeh
Chairperson

Contact Details:
Email: info@ibnuae.com
Website: www.ibnuae.com

DUBAI IRISH SOCIETY

- Dubai Irish Society was established in 1974 and was the first and only port of call for Irish expats for many years. Our main aim is to provide community and social support for Irish people living in Dubai and to promote a taste of Irish culture and heritage via social events.

We are probably best known for our annual 'Santa in the Desert' event, where hundreds of children and their families come to see Santa, get a present, play games and sing along with Paddyman in the middle of the desert. We have traditionally hosted a St. Patrick's Day Ball, where we all get the chance to scrub up, parade in our finery and strut our stuff on the dance floor.



We run three Facebook pages with over eight thousand members: the Dubai Irish Society page for notices and announcements; the Dubai Irish Exchange, where people ask and answer questions on topics as wide-ranging as 'How do I renew my passport?' to 'Where can I find a decent curry chip?' (both essential nuggets of information); and Dubai Irish Bazaar, where you advertise items for sale.

In recent times, we've been looking at how we can continue to support the Irish in Dubai. We're delighted to have seen so many other Irish clubs and societies take off in recent years - it's a true sign of the Irish community spirit - and are looking forward to collaborating with them all to ensure we promote and support all things Irish.

THE DUBAI IRISH GOLF SOCIETY



The Dubai Irish Golf Society has grown in strength and strength and this year there were over 175 members signed up with each event a big success for everyone involved, the committee, the sponsors, the golf clubs and of course all of the DIGS members and guests

This season had seen record number of players with 84 players involved in the event at Dubai Hills Golf Club and on average 72 players have been playing in each event.

The society has been around many years and has a monthly event in a different golf course each time followed by prize presentation, food and drinks. We have been very lucky to have sponsors for each event as well as for our DIGS shirts. To sign up please contact digscaptain@gmail.com. We also get discount on EGF membership for the year so you can have a valid handicap.

We hope to have next season's turnout just as good if not better than this season. We also had European Tour player Soren Kjeldsen join us as a guest of Colm McLoughlin. The more European Tour players the better.

We have had more golf courses coming to us this year wanting us to play on their course and this shows how much of an impact the Dubai Irish Golf Society has had. We have had 10 events each season but could easily have had 15.

All the best,
Cahal, Michael and Kieran

Contact Details:

Email: digscaptain@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/DubaiIrish-GolfSociety



Chairperson

Cahal Altman with Brian O'Driscoll

QATAR IRISH SOCIETY



Overview:

Qatar Irish Society promotes closer relations and greater engagement within the Irish community in Qatar.

We operate for the benefit of Irish people and the friends of Ireland, organising and sponsoring various social, sporting and cultural events as well as providing information and guidance for Irish expats.

With over 2,000 members, we work closely with Oryx na hÉireann (Qatar GAA) to promote our country and people, flying the flag for Ireland in Qatar.

Chairperson
Darragh Mullins

For other information, please note the following contact points and social channels:

Primary e-mail: info@qataririshsociety.com

Website: www.qataririshsociety.com

Twitter: https://twitter.com/Qatar_Irish_Soc

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/qataririshsociety/?r=nametag>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Qataririshsociety/>

THE IRISH BUSINESS NETWORK KSA



Irish Business Network
Saudi Arabia

شبكة الأعمال الأيرلندية - المملكة العربية السعودية

The IBN-KSA is a community of Irish professionals working in Saudi across a broad range of business entities. Our members are dedicated to facilitating and promoting business opportunities for Irish companies and individuals in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. We do this by actively engaging with our members and holding events that bring together Irish, Saudi, and other ex-pat nationalities to leveraging business and personal connections to build sustainable and long-lasting relationships. These networking opportunities are essential to making business contacts, positioning products & services, and sharing experiences.

Chairman: Anthony Gavin
Vice-Chair: Charlie Sullivan
Treasurer: Padraig Fitzpatrick
Secretary: Hilary McCormack

Website: www.ibnsa.org
Email: admin@ibnsa.org

New members can register here
<http://ibnsa.org/register/>



A WORD OF THANKS TO ALL CLUB SPONSORS

In these challenging times, we would like to thank all sponsors who assist clubs throughout the years and in this difficult period.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh

Stiofán O'Tuama





THANK YOU!