



Memo to Clubs from Coiste Chontae an Dúin

A chara

Coiste Chontae an Dúin are asking clubs to consider this correspondence and to bring the information within to the attention of their committees, members and supporters.

We are now at the penultimate and final stages of our Club Championships, and this weekend the semi-finals of our Senior and Intermediate Football Championships and the final of our County Senior Hurling Championship will take place. All have the potential to be great sporting occasions for the clubs involved and we are certainly looking forward to those games.

However, we need to bring to the attention of all clubs the fact that the experience of attending some of our games in recent weeks has not been a completely pleasant one for some people. There has been a regrettable increase in the level of abuse directed towards other supporters, match officials and county Officers by some patrons attending some games.

We accept that people will be passionate about their club's participation, and passion is to be admired when it is channelled in a positive way; after all the GAA is built on the platform of club, parish and community. Verbal abuse and intimidating behaviour has no place at our games and we are giving notice that patrons who do not show respect to fellow Gaels at our fixtures this weekend and into the future will be identified and action will be taken.

We want people who attend our fixtures to have an enjoyable experience, to respect each other and to encourage their team in a manner that befits the ethos of our organisation.

On another note, from a Health, Safety and Child Welfare consideration, we are very concerned about the number of young people who are left unattended during fixtures at Páirc Esler. We encourage the attendance of young people, but would remind patrons that once inside the gate of a ground, that young person is still the responsibility of the person who brought them to the ground. Down GAA stewards have been subjected to derogatory taunts from some teenagers who seem to use the venue as a place where they can have license to run through the stand area creating havoc.

As a result of this, Down GAA will be implementing a £2 charge for Under 16s attending our semi-finals at Páirc Esler this weekend. We implore all parents/guardians to take responsibility for their children at the games - Páirc Esler is a wide and expansive stadium and we ask that parents/guardians ensure that their child/children are with them during the games.

We will be deploying additional stewarding and security this weekend to try and ensure that our patrons have an enjoyable experience and that people enter and exit the ground safely.

Down GAA is fully committed to the health and wellbeing of all of our supporters and we want to ensure that everyone can enjoy our games and competitions. We hope that you can use your club's communication tools to relay the key information in this correspondence across your unit.

Seán Ó Ruanaidh
Cathaoirleach

Seán Óg Mac an tSaoir
Rúnaí