

Kerry
Football
Club of
Boston



KERRY FOOTBALL CLUB OF BOSTON - 1949



KERRY FOOTBALL CLUB OF BOSTON - 1950

- Since 1960 -

In 1960, Pat Sullivan was Chairman of the club and Kerry Jim Sullivan was trainer and manager of the team. Kerry Jim was a former County player and won two All Ireland Medals.

In 1960 a number of players came from Ireland to live in Boston. John and Mickey Teahan, John Flynn, Gerry Lynch, Sean Garvey, Tim McGillicuddy, John Nash, Frank Donoghue, Jim Maunsell, and Joe Courtney played with Kerry, winning the championship the same year.

The Kerry team were beaten in 1961, some of the players were in the Army. Jim Maunsell, John Flynn and Sean Brosnan. Kerry still reached the championship final and were beaten in the final.

Kerry had a new manager by then, Brendan Quirke and some new players including, Miko Murphy, Joe McQuaide, Joe Driscoll and Oliver Briody.

Kerry again won the championship in 1974 with great, great players like Pete Nash, Kieran Whelan, Oliver Briody, John Loftus, P.J. Shaughnessy, Joe Maunsell and Joe Driscoll.



**KERRY FOOTBALL CLUB OF BOSTON
1928 U.S. CHAMPIONS**

KERRY FOOTBALL TEAM CHAMPIONS • 1960 •



TOP ROW

*J. LANDERS • T. FOLEY • J. QUIRK • J. FLYNN • J. MAHONEY • S. BROSAN • G. LYNCH • P. SHEEHAN • D. SHEA • J. NASH • J. COURTNEY
F. HANAFIN • J. TEEHAN • J. MCKENNA • J. O'SULLIVAN (Mgr.)*

BOTTOM ROW

*J. MCGILLICUDDY • P. SULLIVAN • F. DONAHUE • C. DARCY • T. MCGILLICUDDY • J. MAUNSELL • M. TEEHAN (CAPT.) • P. LYNCH
J. GANNON • B. TEEHAN • D. SULLIVAN*



1963 NEW ENGLAND CHAMPIONS

Front row, left to right: Mike Teahan, Oliver Murphy, Maurice Cronin, Billy Feeney, Joe Courtney, Capt. Miko Murphy, Sean Garvey, Pat Griffin.

Second row: Billy McDonnell, Tom Healy, John Teahan, Mike Sullivan, Jimmy Maunsell, Paddy Murphy, Joe McQuaid, Dan Shea, R.I.P., Chris Darcy, Brendan Teahan, Bro. William Hennessy, Joe Feeney.

Third row: Pat Joe Lynch, Dan O'Keefe, Dick Murphy, Jerry McKenna, Pat Sullivan, Mike Burke, Denis Murphy, Jim Feeney.

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Distant Kingdom

As Chairman of Kerry and PRO of the North Eastern Board, Connie Kelly is one of the best-known gaelis in Boston. He discusses a great year for the club with Shane Breslin.

Kerry are the American club of the nineties. That's according to the club's outspoken chairman, Connie Kelly. The record seems to substantiate his exorbitant claims. Kerry have won the Boston championship on three occasions in the past seven years, while they have demonstrated their great strength in depth by winning the junior championship twice. Indeed, the Kingdom's dominance of the Boston scene was reflected when on two occasions (1993 and '96) they claimed the senior-junior double.

The healthy state of the game in the city can be gauged from the fact that last year the Boston Shamrocks became the first team from the city to win the North American championship, which was held in Chicago. Boston will host the championship finals - which incorporate 47 games over a three-day period in three or four fields - next September.

The Kerry club had to withstand serious challenges in the past decade. "The Cork club," says Connie, "have had a few good years as well, and won the double one year, and McAnespies, who are a new team, have done very well since they started up, and have brought the likes of Peter Canavan to Boston to play with them. Things like that really help the profile of the game here."

Kerry have a panel of approximately 45 players, with around 25 of those part of the senior squad. Connie remarks that, with the North American championship played on a 13-a-side basis, the clubs have to battle to keep all their players contented. "You have to make sure everybody gets a game, and it's not too easy with over 40 players in the club. But a lot of clubs have that many players, and you just have to try and please everyone."

"With emigration slowing down a lot in the last few years, there's not the same number of people coming out from Ireland as there used to be. But, with all those coming out for the summers and that, we still have enough players - 45 is just about the limit. You don't want it to be too big, or you won't be able to accommodate everyone."

Connie goes on to explain the regulations of the Boston and North American championships. "Any team is allowed only three 'away-based' players, i.e. players who were registered between April 30th and July 20th. Any players signed before April 30th are 'home-based' players. The object is to get people out before that deadline, and to pick your three away-based players wisely. We try to bring some of the best players in Ireland out to the States - Kerry's Liam O'Flaherty and Eamonn Breen and John Quane from Limerick who was on the Irish panel that visited Australia last October. We had several Dublin lads with us in the last few years, including Darren Homan, Derek Byrne, Dermot Harrington, Paul Clifford and Danny O'Brien. We also had Mark and Mike O'Brien from Laois as well as Claremen Ger Keane and the great Tom Morrissey."

With so many players going out from Ireland each summer, one could be forgiven for thinking that the second-generation Irish may not get much of a look-in. Not so, according to Connie Kelly. "Most clubs have at least one American-born player, and some have as many as three or four. It's not easy for them to make it to senior level, but there is a New England youth league that helps them a lot. In fact, a Boston selection won the North American youth league last year, beating San Francisco in the final in Washington. So everything is looking rosy for the future as well."

Some clubs stateside find it difficult to attract players and officials. Connie makes the point that, the more successful the club is, the easier it will be to get the players and officials in. "It varies a lot from club to club, but the best players will always want to be playing with the team that's doing well. Intercountry results at home also have a bearing on the way things work out here. If Cork, for example, are beaten early on in the Munster championship, a few of their players will come out to play for the Cork team here. That's usually the way it works."

While gaelic football is unsurprisingly the focal point of the club, it also caters for hurling, camogie and ladies football. The ladies footballers have a formidable record, winning the North American championship in '99, while there are two camogie teams in the city, who compete against each other and sides from New York on a regular basis.

One problem that perennially faces exile clubs is funding. The Kerry club in Boston is no different. It relies heavily on sponsorship and the sale of advertising space for the great majority of its finances. The club runs a yearly programme, in which advertisements are sold at competitive prices, ranging from \$500 for a cover page to \$40 for a quarter-page. Kerry club sponsors include Nash's Pub, Somer's Pub, Quick Pick Disposal, Budweiser, Harp

and, as Connie puts it, "a lot of good friends".

The annual banquet is always one of the highlights of the club's year. In the past, the club has received many esteemed guests of honour. Last year, Charlie Nelligan and Kerryman journalist Eamonn Horan were in attendance, while in previous years the club welcomed Pa Laide, Mikey Sheehy, Eoin Liston, Páidí O Se, Pat Spillane and John Egan.

The 1979 banquet, in particular, will forever hold fond memories for all those long-serving club members; on that occasion, Sean Walsh and the Sam Maguire Cup were guests of honour after Kerry's All-Ireland triumph of the previous year. This year's outing was held on February 12th and was a tremendous success, hosting the



Bernie McDevitt, Ann Somers, John McDevitt, Dolly Kelly, Mossy Murphy, Connie Kelly, Pa Laide, Jane Murphy, Joe Murphy, Tony Keefe, Joe Waters, Father Sullivan, John Jo Summers
In Front Brenda Waters & Maureen Murphy

legendary Mick O'Connell and, in a break with the exclusively Kerryman tradition, Offaly's Matt Connor.

One of the major problems facing gaelic games in New England is the lack of quality referees available for important games. The dilemma is especially prevalent in hurling - with just four senior teams participating in the championship, disputes are commonplace. "We decided bringing a top referee over from Ireland for a couple of weeks towards the end of the championship last year. So we approached Willie Barrett, and brought him over for a while. It worked out great. It's the only way to do it, and it's what'll happen again this year."

With London and, since last summer, New York both participating in the Connacht championship, it is inevitable that rumours will begin circulating about the likelihood of either Boston or the North American Board as a whole following suit. Connie doesn't believe it will happen, in the near future at least. "New York would have a much bigger pool of players, they'd have more money and more ambition as regards competing in the All-Ireland championship. And good for them. But it must be a bit of a hardship for them. I'm sure they train very hard before the championship, and it'll be very difficult for them to even win a game."

Despite that, however, Connie believes that the gaelic games strongholds in America, Canada, the UK and Australia are vital to the continued well-being of the GAA. "There's been a great spread in the games in the last few years. When you see a crowd of 65,000 turning up in Australia for an International Rules game, you know that you have a great product. You have to build on those things. We have a unique game, and it's part of our identity."



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Connie Kelly, G.A.A. P.R.O., John McDevitt, Northeast Chairman,
Patrick Nipper, Gen Manager & V.P. of August Busch & Co.,
C. Scott Drysdale, Sales Dir., Cathal O'Flaherty, Category Mgr.



Pa Laide & Tom Morrissey

Pa Laide of the 1997 All Ireland Kerry Team.
Along with Tom Morrissey of Clare, One of the most popular Football Players ever to come to Boston.



KERRY SENIOR FOOTBALL TEAM
1996 NORTHEAST CHAMPIONS



1998 KERRY INTERMEDIATE TEAM



1998 KERRY SENIOR FOOTBALL TEAM