



LOUGHGIEL SHAMROCKS



Tír na nÓg Established 1906
Dalriadians Established 1909
Hibernians

The first hurling match in Loughgiel took place in 1888 when the Belfast Gaelic Athletic Association visited to set up a branch. The earliest team, Tír na nÓg, competed in the first North Antrim Hurling League in 1906. Dalriadians joined the league in 1909 and in the same year Hibernians played a single friendly game.

Loughgiel Shamrocks

The fate of Tír na nÓg, Dalriadians and Hibernians is unclear. However, it is likely that those clubs became the foundation of Loughgiel Shamrocks. A Loughgiel team played under the name Shamrocks for the 1912 season before the current club was established in 1915 by Eddie and Harry Connolly and John Campbell. Their first major trophy was the North Antrim Championship in 1919, swiftly followed by the County Championship in 1920. The club went from strength to strength and remained unbeaten for 1924 & 1925.

During the 1940s and 1950s, Loughgiel reached the County final twelve times but managed only two wins. This consistency continued into the 1960s as the Shamrocks made eight final appearances, winning four, including 1966-1968, their first 3 in a row. They asserted their dominance by winning the first Ulster Club Championship in 1971, defeating Ballygalet to qualify for the inaugural All-Ireland Club Championship. A second Ulster crown followed in 1972.

In 1983 Loughgiel won the All-Ireland Club Hurling Championship becoming the first, and so far only, team from Ulster to win the title. They defeated Moycarkey Borris, Munster in the semi-final and St Rynagh's, Leinster in the final after a replay at Casement Park. In July they beat Connacht Champions, Kiltomer, completing the remarkable feat of beating all three Provincial Champions in one year.

The new Millennium brought both promise and frustration. Loughgiel reached six County Finals in a row between 2003-2008 but failed to win any. Then, between 2010 and 2013, their fortunes changed as they won four County and four Ulster titles in a row. In 2012 Shamrocks won their second All-Ireland title 4-13 to 0-17 against Coolderry with Liam Watson scoring 3-7 in a display of magnificent skill.



Hurling was played in Loughgiel long before the first club affiliated to the G.A.A. In 1906, Proper kits were not always available - these hurlers from 1904 played in braces and work shirts!



Loughgiel hurlers from the 1924-25 season with the County Championship trophy. Founders John Campbell and Eddie Connolly both played in the final against Rossa.



Hurling board Chairman Darryl McAlister presents Loughgiel captain Liam McGarry with the Donnelly Cup after Shamrocks defeated Dunloy 3-6 to 3-2 in 1963. It was the first meeting in the final between the two local rivals.



The Loughgiel team that beat O'Donovan Rossa, Belfast in 1968 to win three Antrim Championships in a row for the first time.



Iconic goalkeeper Niall Patterson with the Vounteer Cup in 1982. The County Championship victory over McQuillans, Ballycastle was the first step on the road to All Ireland glory.



Loughgiel line up at Casement Park before the 1983 All-Ireland replay against St Rynagh's. Shamrocks held on to win 2-12 to 1-12 despite a late goal from the Offaly men.



'Goostie' Traynor lifts the ball during Loughgiel's 1989 Ulster Final victory over Portlaffery. It was the club's last Provincial final for 21 years.



Three Loughgiel players are powerless to prevent a Ruairi O'g score in 2005. Shamrocks were the nearly men of the 2000s reaching six County finals in a row but failing to win one.



Liam Watson scores his third goal against Coolderry before half time. He is the only player to have scored a hat trick in an All-Ireland Club Final.



Damian "DD" McQuinn and captain Johnny Campbell lift the trophy for Loughgiel's second All-Ireland Championship. McQuinn deputised for Campbell when he was injured at the beginning of the season.



Loughgiel players celebrating their fourth County title in a row in 2013 after thrashing Ruairi O'g, Cushendall, 3-14 to 2-6. Later in the season they matched this feat in the Ulster Championship beating Slaughtneil of Derry in the final.



Since taking over in 2010, P.J. O'Mullan has transformed Loughgiel from the nearly men of the early 2000s to the dominant force of Antrim and Ulster hurling of recent years. He was awarded 'Manager of the Year' in 2012 at the Belfast Telegraph Sports Awards.