**2017 60X30 County Juvenile Singles Finals Report**

**By Marguerite Gore/Gavin Buggy**

Last weekend saw the culmination of a very busy 60X30 County Juvenile schedule when the Singles Finals got the go ahead at venues around the County. The programme of finals got underway Friday evening in St.Marys HBC, saw the Girls U-17 Singles Final open proceedings when Cora Doyle took on Eva Crean and both St.Josephs girls battled it out in their very last juvenile game within the county. They both have been terrific ambassadors over the last number of years for Wexford Handball and look set to build on their stellar careers at adult level. Cora settled better here and ground out a 21-7,21-15 victory with Eva making relentless progress in the 2nd Game and causing Cora all sorts of problems. Cora has been the winning-most juvenile girl in the County for some considerable time and is expected to feature prominently when the All Ireland U-17 Singles gets the green light early in September.

Josh Kavanagh added the 60X30 title to the 40X20 one from earlier in the year when he beat Cian Kehoe in another all St.Josephs affair 21-11,21-15. This was a hard hitting encounter with both players showing tremendous ability but it was Josh who got the breaks when he needed them most to win it a shade comfortably. Colm Parnell (Ballyhogue) edged out Robert Cogley (Ballymitty) in a very good Boys U-17 Singles Final where both players looked to have massive potential for the future. Colm held a huge advantage at 17-4 in the 1st Game but only scraped home 21-20 after a monumental comeback from Robert. That just gave the Ballyhogue man an edge and he went on to show himself in a good light winning the 2nd 21-15. Great effort and sportsmanship from both boys was a notable feature of this Final.

The next round of finals took place Saturday evening in the northern county club of Coolgreany, where a warm friendly welcome always awaits vistors. The opening final featuring the talented  U-10 boys Eoin Kinsella (Coolgreany) and Conor Doyle(Taghmon). The local boy Eoin seemed to relish the support of the large home crowd and got off to a strong start taking an early lead. Conor settled his nerves after a couple of great shots but Eoins early lead was just to much to make up and took he the first game. The second game was a tremendous battle with the boys matching each other point for point, both playing excellent handball. With the boys tied at 10 all, Eoin played a couple of lovely passing shots taking the lead he never looked back and secured his second county title in a week.

The next final up was the Boys U-12 which saw another local boy Conor Horan take on St. Marys Shane Kehoe. Conor had a difficult path to the final having come through the hotly contested qualifying group first and then the A championship group. This stood to him and he dominated this final from the start winning the first game comfortably. No one would doubt Shane's enormous handball ability and on his day can produce eye-catching handball, but unfortunately this was not his day. He tried to push on and put up a fight but couldn't get any sort of break and was not afforded any either by his determined opponent, who displayed skillful handball throughout the second game. Conor made sure that the County Under 12 title was not heading down the Wexford road in impressive style.

The Boys U-13 final was without a doubt the game of the weekend, featuring Miley Connors(Coolgreany) and St.Josephs Johnny Goggins. This was a repeat of last year's under 12 final, Johnny taking the honours that day by the narrowest of margins. It was Johnny who settled the best producing some excellent shots and fine serving and took the first game 15-10. Last years disappointment was clearly on Mileys mind as he entered the second game and a battle ensued between both boys. The atmosphere around the "back wall" was tense as Miley looked for the last couple of points. He wrapped up the second game on 15-11 scoreline. Johnny had the serve in the tie breaker game and certainly took advantage of this taking an 9-0 lead, leaving the home crowd shell shocked. What followed was a remarkable comeback from Miley, serve by serve he reeled Johnny back to 9-9, pushing out to 13-9 lead. Johnny took the next 3 points only to then lose his serve. Miley took the next point to set up a game ball, only to hit a back light and lose his serve. Johnny produced two fine serves to level it at 14-14. The excitement and support of the home crowd seemed to rise Miley who returned pressure shots county senior players wouldn't get and regained serve. He certainly made no mistakes this time and secured the county title to the roars and delight of the home support. A truly fantastic game by both boys.

Up next was the an all Coolgreany affair, the girls under 16 final featuring the two ever reliable Leanne Boland and Cliodhna O'Connell. Both girls have been on the handball scene for many years and always show great attitude and potential when playing. Unfortunately, the days leading up to the final Leanne was unwell and really struggled to get anyway involved in this final. Her stablemate didn't afford her any sympathy either playing crisp clinical handball. Cliodhna took a comprehensive 2 straight game win to add another county title to her growing list of honours. Both girls will team up together to represent Wexford the upcoming Leinster Championship.

Sunday morning August 13th saw four other Finals also played in St.Marys where honours were decided at Boys U-11,U-14 and U-15 and Girls U-13. Jamie Barnes (St.Marys) took home his clubs only Juvenile Singles title when he fashioned a 15-14,15-9 victory over Rory Gilbert (St.Josephs) in a high class Boys U-11 Final. The 1st Game swung backwards and forwards and at 14-10 up the 'Matty's Alley' man looked to have settled the issue but Rory had other ideas and levelled at 14-14 and had chances to take it but it was Jamie who wrapped it up and as so often is the case at underage the opening game proved crucial and he held off the Josephs boy 15-9 to win '2 Straight'.

Mark Doyle (Taghmon) remains Wexford's most prolific Juvenile and he took the spoils at Boys U-14 with a comprehensive 15-0,15-4 defeat of Ben Keeling (St.Josephs) in a game that featured some terrific shots. Ben would have been faced with an arduous task from the outset but tried hard. This got Taghmon onto the medal table and was their solitary title.

Dean O'Neill (Ballymitty) showed Diarmuid Moore (St.Josephs) a clean pair of heels in the end but not after a very tactical and well contested game. This was Dean's maiden singles title in the County and he achieved it on a 15-10,15-7 scoreline. Both boys will team up as Doubles partners in the upcoming Leinster Championship.

Jodie Keeling (St.Josephs) continued on her merry way in 2017 when she accounted for Ellie Murphy O'Gorman (St.Josephs) 2 Games to 0 after quite a decent game in Girls U-13 Singles. Both girls hopefully will make up into quite good players going forward at national level.

 The Finals wouldn't have been possible without the enormous amount of work undertaken by Juvenile Games Officer Marguerite Gore who excelled in her new post and also the contribution of Mick Flood and Fintan Furlong in St.Marys who selflessly gave of their time to provide the venue and oversee proceedings in an efficient and friendly manner was very much appreciated.

A special thanks must go to all club officials, without all your help these championship could not happen. The County Wexford Juvenile Committee cannot stress enough our appreciation and heartfelt thanks.

Coolgreany topped the honours list with four titles, followed closely by St.Josephs on three, Ballymitty notched two while Taghmon, St.Marys and Ballyhogue all returned one each.