

www.ipfba.org



REACHING OUT

An overview of the origins, ambitions, and work so far of the
Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association

Presentation





GROUNDSWELL OF GOODWILL

Over a century old, the League of Ireland has given enjoyment to countless football fans down through the decades.

Many hundreds of players have forged fine careers in the domestic game. Others were professionals here before or after going overseas. Some became internationals.

Generations of families have given service to the League and the development of Irish football. We recognise their contribution and respect their legacy.



As green shoots emerge within the League of Ireland, we want to remember and honour those who graced its fields in difficult times – and fund supports for some of the players who kept it alive against the odds.



FORMAL FOOTING



Founded in October 2023, the aim of the IPFBA is to holistically improve the welfare of former footballers, particularly those who have fallen on hard times.

When League of Ireland great James ‘Jacko’ McDonagh suffered a debilitating stroke in 2022, the football community rallied to his aid.

While this campaign pre-dated the IPFBA, the collective response indicated a wider need to support former players in a structured way. And so the IPFBA was formally established with a view to addressing some of the difficulties ex-footballers can face, including health and financial concerns.

TODAY

200 active members





OUR MISSION

Committed to the wellbeing of our members and supporting their quality of life, where possible we will seek to financially assist former players who find themselves in need of healthcare or faced with other challenges.



REACHING OUT

Martin Lawlor

“ We have laid the groundwork for a member-driven organisation aimed at compassion, dignity and practical support. The IPFBA continues to build relationships with clubs, medical professionals, other sporting organisations and potential sponsors to help us extend our reach and resources. These partnerships will be critical as we evolve from start-up phase to long-term sustainability. ”





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EXECUTIVE TEAM

Our executive consists of former League of Ireland players and entrepreneurs experienced in sports management and the professional football environment.



Harry McCue
CHAIRPERSON



Martin Lawlor
SECRETARY



Harry Kenny
TREASURER

Regional Officers

We have Regional Officers based throughout the country in areas with League of Ireland clubs to help coordinate IPFBA initiatives and enhance awareness



Committee

Committee members include ex-players from Dublin, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Galway, Derry, Athlone, Dundalk, and Drogheda.

The women's game is well represented, with **Linda Gorman** (left) our vice-chair.



**JOHN
GILES**

**KEITH
TREACY**

**NIAL
QUINN**

**EOIN
HAND**

**LIAM
BRADY**



PROUD PATRONS

Former Ireland internationals John Giles, Eoin Hand, Niall Quinn, Liam Brady and Keith Treacy are Patrons of the IPFBA.

Their passionate, high-profile support has been outstanding and invaluable as we build our reach and engagement.

All see the need to assist ex-players and the value in forming closer ties among “old pros” given our shared experiences and knowledge about the beautiful game.

We want to strengthen that sense of fellowship across all ages for the betterment of our present and future members.



INCLUSIVE CLUB

Our membership comprises both men and women who have played at League of Ireland level. We recognise that the female football fraternity has a key role to play in advancing our mutual aims.



LADIES OUT TO LUNCH

The IPFBA have held vibrant get-togethers of former female LOI players before the Women's FA Cup Finals in 2024, 2025 and will do so again in 2026.





SUPPORTIVE PARTNERS

The Professional Footballers Association of Ireland (PFAI) have been hugely supportive of our work.

We were delighted to be the official Charity Partner at the PFA Ireland Awards Dinner in late 2023, showing their early backing.

“It is important that former professional players are supported when facing challenges.”

FAI PRESIDENT PAUL COOKE



The Irish Soccer Writers Association have also been hugely supportive of the IPFBA's work to date. Harry Kenny (left) is pictured with 102-year-old legendary ex-referee and former Ireland kitman Charlie O'Leary at this year's gala awards banquet .



The Football Association of Ireland have given us valuable backing. League of Ireland Director Mark Scanlon attended the IPFBA's official launch at the FAI headquarters in Abbotstown in February 2024.

We work closely with the Professional Footballers Association of Ireland

**PFA IRELAND
CHARITY
PARTNER**



July 12th 2025, marked a little piece of history with the first ever annual general meeting staged by an ex-professional benevolent association from the League of Ireland. We held our second (below) twelve months later.



RED-LETTER DAY



POST-CAREER CARE

Issues like homelessness, mental health problems, and financial woes are just some of the challenges we need to tackle in the months and years ahead. This will take considerable resources.

The IPFBA regularly holds bucket collections at League of Ireland games across the country thanks to our many willing volunteers and the goodwill of clubs

In the past year, 7 former professionals were in receipt of financial help from us to defray bills for audiologist fees, an oncology appointment, therapeutic services, knee surgery and nursing home costs. We know there are others who require support.

Let's let them know we are here to help.





Free Health Screening
For IPFBA members :: non-transferable

Shamrock Lodge Hotel, Athlone

• Thurs, 8th Jan '26
• Fri, 9th Jan '26
• Thurs, 15th Jan '26
• Fri, 16th Jan '26

PHYSICAL TESTS

- ✓ Blood Pressure Waist
- ✓ Circumference Body Mass Index (BMI)
- ✓ 12 Lead ECG
- ✓ (Cardiac Test)

BLOODS

- ✓ Lipids HbA1c (Cholesterol)
- ✓ Renal
- ✓ Liver
- ✓ Thyroid
- ✓ Full Blood Count
- ✓ PSA

Lifestyle & Mental Health Questionnaire also included

tinyurl.com/ipfba-screening

THE IPFBA AND ADVANCED MEDICAL SERVICES (THROUGH OUR MEDICAL OFFICER, DR. ALAN BYRNE) TEAMED UP TO PROVIDE VITAL FREE HEALTH SCREENING FOR 48 FORMER PLAYERS IN ATHLONE IN EARLY JANUARY 2026

FUNDRAISING

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Fundraising Golf Classics have been held in Limerick (2024), Galway (2025) and Dublin (2026). The 4th annual event will take place at a prestigious Leinster course next May.

Superb sponsorship has been a key driver of their success.



ipfba
Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association

GOLF CLASSIC

INAUGURAL FUNDRAISER 2024

LIMITED TEE TIMES LEFT
Contact Brendan Storan 087-8107155

Team of 4 €300 including Dinner

Limerick Golf Club
FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER

Followed by **Auction**

To donate items contact Harry McCue
086-6097544 harry@ipfba.com

www.ipfba.com | Reaching Out facebook.com/groups/ipfba

Fundraising
Golf Classic

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Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association
IPFBA.ORG REACHING OUT

Hosted by IPFBA Patron Niall Quinn

Castleknock Golf Club
Friday, 15th May 2026

€400 per team of 4 including MEAL
Double Shotgun Start: 9.30am, 2.30pm

TO REGISTER, SPONSOR A HOLE OR FIND OUT MORE

PETER MADDEN 086-2416870 pdsadden@gmail.com
ALAN O'NEILL 087-7710517 aon1957@hotmail.com
ROBBIE GAFFNEY 087-2780170 rgaffney@bsr.ie

Address Porterstown Rd, Castleknock, Dublin 15, D15 E20R

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Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association
IPFBA.ORG REACHING OUT

GOLF CLASSIC

FUNDRAISER

Galway Bay Golf Club
FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Renville, Oranmore H91 T4A4

€400 per Team of 4 including Dinner afterwards

PRIZES FOR GOLF + RAFFLE

FOR TEE-TIME RESERVATIONS

JOHN MANNION 086 2494375
TERRY O'REAGAN 086 1956974
RONAN KILEEN 086 2427014

DUNDALK FC • IPFBA

HALL OF FAME



Tommy McConville

SALUTING LEGENDS

The IPFBA believes the greats who have made an indelible mark on our game deserve to be recognised.

We have been co-sponsors of Dundalk FC's Centenary Legends / Hall of Fame inductees in 2026 and have lobbied other League of Ireland clubs to follow suit



Joey Malone & friends



MEDIA COVERAGE

Since launching, our activities have been widely covered in the national and local media, including RTÉ, the Irish Examiner, Irish Independent, the Irish Sun, the Irish Mirror, the Irish Daily Star and several provincial and regional news publications.



12 NEWS

SHOWING THEIR SUPPORT

Galway United stalwarts play their part in new Footballers Benevolent Association

BY DAVE O'CONNELL

THEY were the sporting heroes of our younger days, the men who brought League of Ireland football to Galway and played an integral role in the evolution of the club over almost half a century – and now they're back on a different kind of team to offer support to some of their own.

Because a title of Galway United players from the past are heading the local branch of the new Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association – helping their former team-mates and colleagues who are finding life tough.

John Mannion, Gerry Daly and Kevin Cassidy are behind the Galway United branch of this fledgling organisation that has two other League of Ireland legends – Brian Donohue and Shamrock Rovers and Athlone Town centre-half Harry McCue and his Dundalk team-mate, and then Galway United defender, Martin Lawlor – as chairman and secretary respectively. The ambition is to look after former players – from the recent and distant past – who may be struggling with health and/or financial challenges, by offering them access to services, funded by the players themselves.

Already the Galway branch looks set to have more than 40 members – all named players who played for the club since the club arrived onto the national stage in the mid-Seventies.

Nationally the IPFBA has just announced details of its inaugural annual Golf Classic at Limerick Golf Club on Friday, September 27 – and Galway United legends who will be

playing with the small ball include Denis Lannan, his brother Blackmore, Martin McDonnell, Derek Rodgers, Mickey McLaughlin, Terry O'Keefe and Brian Kilgallon.

The genesis of the Association came from the growing realisation that so many former players were trying to cope with adversity in all of its guises, without a whole lot of support.

"The Association has been set up to try and get some funds together to help on League of Ireland players – male and female – if they have any difficulties. We talking about health, alcoholism, depression, mental health, dementia," explains John Mannion.

All these players were there at, or close to, the beginning of League of Ireland football coming to Galway – and for all of them, John Herrick played a key role in their careers.

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CONNAUGHT TRIBUNE FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

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Galway United stalwarts play their part in new Footballers Benevolent Association

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ON THE BALL

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60 Saturday October 20, 2024

SPORT

Athlone group aiming to give benevolent fund a regional focus

KERAN GALVIN

FORMER Athlone Town great Harry McCue, the recently appointed chairman of the Irish Professional Footballers Benevolent Association (IPFBA), was among those who attended a meeting in The Bounty, Athlone last Thursday night.

The purpose of the meeting was to get together and discuss any problems or health issues that former players may have. The newly established group is looking to provide care and consideration for ex-players who may have fallen on hard times for any reason.

Former Athlone Town player Denis Clarke and Galway United defender, Martin Lawlor, were also present, representing the Galway group.

The intention is to have a group of regional officers in every area of the country where League of Ireland clubs play.



Pictured at last week's IPFBA meeting in The Bounty, Athlone were, at back, J.J. Harry McCue, Michael Sheehan, Colum McKelvey, John Mannion, Tom Sills. Front row J.J. Paulie Quinn, Dennis Clarke, Paulie Nicholson, Gordon Brett and Gerry Daly.

Professional football careers and support to the late Jackie Quinn, a footballing hero of his when growing up, and also to John Mannion, a former Athlone Town team-mate, who has endured some health challenges.

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Ireland legend Niall is a fan of IPFBA's mission

The fundraising element is just one of the positives that Quinn can see from the establishment of this new association.

"I think the beauty of this, and one of the things that will help, is that it will reintroduce people to each other, having events like the golf day," he said.

"Yes, it makes money for the group and it helps in areas where it's going to help, but it also rekindles relationships."

"I just know that every time I meet an ex-colleague, either from the Arsenal or Man City dressing room, it feels great."

"And particularly when the Irish lads meet up, there is a bond or a bit of electricity that doesn't exist in your lives again, more that comes alive again."

"I think that, to me, is as important – putting networks in place where all of these ex-colleagues come together again."

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SOCIAL ASPECT

Without doubt, one of the benefits of our association are the connections continued and rekindled with old team-mates and others who shared the same playing fields. The camaraderie and sense of community has been life-affirming, and an important factor in our growth.





OUR 'THREE WISE MEN' FUNDRAISING EVENT WITH JOHN GILES, LIAM BRADY & NIAL QUINN IN VICAR ST., DUBLIN, IN LATE APRIL 2025 WAS A BIG SUCCESS

'TALKING REDS' WITH RAY HOUGHTON & MARK LAWRENSON TAKES PLACE AT THE SAME VENUE ON 19 OCTOBER 2026





Talking Reds

AN UNMISSABLE EVENING OF ANECDOTES + COMMENTARY
FOR LIVERPOOL / IRELAND / FOOTBALL FANS



Ray
HOUGHTON



Mark
LAWRENSON

Monday, 19th October 2026

live @ VICAR ST.
An IPFBA Fundraiser



KICK-OFF 8:00 PM

TICKETS €35.00 EXCLUDING FEES VIA [ticketmaster](#)

Compères Nathan Murphy & Barry Murphy
Après Match Jerseys Auction & Raffle

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THANK YOU

F O R Y O U R I N T E R E S T A N D S U P P O R T