

**THIS IS**  
**“GAA STORY”**  
**CAVAN!**



**SCOR**

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In 1969 Derry Gowen, a delegate from the Fermoy club, proposed a motion to the north Cork Board and subsequently to GAA Congress seeking to set up a talent competition as a cultural activity for the GAA. His aim was to promote Irish language and culture during the winter months. He hoped that the competition would combine the colour and rivalry of Gaelic Games with the social/fun element of Ireland's traditional pastimes. The motion was passed and the competition became known as Scór.

There are currently eight events/disciplines in Scór that cover all aspects of Irish culture. They are: Rince Foirne (Céilí dancing), Amhránaíocht Aonair (Solo singing), Bailéad Ghrúpa (Ballad group), Athriseoireacht/ Scéalaíocht (Recitation/story telling), Nuachleas/Léiriú Stáitse (Novelty act), Ceol Uirlise (Instrumental music), Rince Seit (Set dancing), and Tráth na gCeist (Table Quiz).

The competition is divided into two age levels,

Scór na nÓg for young people under 17 and Scór Sinsir for those over 17.

After the national Scór competition was set up counties were asked to organise their own competitions with the winners proceeding to provincial and then national level. In the autumn of 1970 Cavan county board invited GAA clubs to send representatives to a competition which was organised in Kilnacrott.



A small number took up the offer sending a few individuals to take part in various items. This was the start of Scór in Cavan and from those humble beginnings, Andy Brennan and his daughter Geraldine, single-handedly organised and grew Scór in Legaginny hall [Lacken] in the early 1970s.

The experiment quickly proved a success and in 1974 the Cornafean Scór na nÓg novelty act won the Ulster final which was a first provincial success. In the following years, standards continued to improve and there were further Ulster titles for the Cuchulainn's ballad group [1975], Lil Smith, Cornafean solo singing [1976], and Cavan Gaels Scór na nÓg quiz [1977]. By 1978, the number of clubs participating in Scór in Cavan had tripled to a total of 18, and the annual competitions were drawing large attendances to venues around the county. In the decades that followed there have been many successful winners of county and provincial titles too numerous to mention.

1981 was a landmark year for Cavan when the Killeshandra Scór na nÓg novelty act won the county's first All-Ireland title and in 1984 Cavan celebrated a double success when the Cornafean quiz team and the Cuchulainns set dancers both won All-Ireland titles at the national finals in the City Hall in Cork. In 1985 Killeshandra won another All-Ireland in the novelty act followed by Cornafean in 1991.

The Cuchulainns club has won All-Irelands with their ballad group in 1986 and again in 1989; their set dancers in 1997 and their quiz team in 2000. The highlight of the Munterconnaught club's participation was

when their set dancers won the All-Ireland in 1990. Crosserlough set dancers have won seven county titles in a row, seven Ulster titles in a row and an All-Ireland in 2013. Cornafean have won seven All-Irelands in total: 1993, 1997 and 2008 [Scór Sinsir] and 1984, 2018, 2019 and 2020 [Scór na nÓg]. Jean Galligan from Belturbet won an All-Ireland in solo singing in 1988 and céilí dancers from the same club won in 2003.

Cornafean's Michael McGibney delivered many entertaining performances in the recitation before finally clinching that elusive All-Ireland in Killarney in 2006 with his rendition of 'Doing the Double' followed by another All-Ireland success in Castlebar in 2019 with his rendition of 'The Blight'.

Many volunteers have made significant contributions to Scór at club and county level over many years. The late Joe Hegarty from Ballyhaise was the first chairman of the county Scór committee and he did

much in the early years to promote the fledgling competitions.

In 1979 Paddy McDermott from the Cornafean club was elected chairman and ever since he has been the driving force in



promoting and organising Scór in Cavan. He has watched it grow and develop through peaks and troughs. He has seen clubs excel at different times and he has been present on all the occasions when Cavan clubs won All-Irelands. Paddy has always been able to attract good people to work with him and in this regard the contribution of Scór secretaries sisters Nuala Corrigan and Geraldine Duggan has been immense.

Scór continues to hold a special place in the GAA community of Cavan and it has kept club members active during the long winter months when there was often little else to do. Participation has helped develop and nurture talent in young and old. It has brought countless hours of fun and entertainment to both competitors and supporters. Long may this continue!