



25ú Eanáir 2023

A chairde,

There is nothing like the excitement of the new season – the sense of apprehension and anticipation and the hope and belief and optimism that are pent up in every county before a ball is thrown in.

For our dedicated players who have primed themselves over the last number of weeks it is a time for looking ahead and for ambitious thinking and setting sights on scaling new heights.

As always, we will marvel at the execution of the skills which make Gaelic games so unique in world sport. Another quality that will ensure that our games retain this pre-eminent position will be Respect. Respect for ourselves, respect for the opposition and respect for match officials is crucial for the integrity and reputation of our games and our organisation.

How we conduct ourselves says a lot about us. It is my wish that the respect agenda is driven by us, collectively.

Respect should be a cornerstone of the culture of CLG. But culture is learned behaviour, and demonstrating respect as a culture must be learned, reinforced and constantly demonstrated, so that it is unequivocally our normal and acceptable behaviour.

This is not about trying to temper the display of passion at, or in our games – not at all, but when we allow that passion to spill over and get out of control, then the events that follow damage our games and our reputation. When that occurs, we should not be afraid to be self-critical and address the behaviour in an appropriate manner.

At the Congress of 2023 in February, the Association will make a statement on how serious we intend to take the issue of dealing with indiscipline with a review and proposed tightening of sanctions.

Congress aside, there is a role for all of us involved in Gaelic games to ensure that we can be proud of our culture of respect for our games, our players, match officials, coaches, volunteers, and supporters. Whether you play at club or county, are a volunteer official, are a supporter at club or county, we have a responsibility to set an example for ourselves and for others.

Give Respect, Get Respect.

Is mise le meas,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, which reads 'Labhrás Mac Carthaigh'.

Labhrás Mac Carthaigh

Uachtarán