THE GAEL

HOME CAMOGIE & HURLING TOURNAMENT

On September 5th, Vienna Gaels hosted round three of the Euro Camogie and Hurling tournament at the Rudolf-Tonn Stadion in Schwechat. 19 clubs took part, with around 250 players making their way to the Austrian fortress for one of Europe's most highly anticipated camogie and hurling tournaments. After a somewhat dramtic day of world-class athleticism and the occasional dislocated shoulder, our Gael's men's and women's teams earned themselves a respectable last place, just missing out on the main trophy - won by the Setanta men and the Den Haag ladies.

The evening festivities took place at a fine Viennese Gasthaus, where the clubs enjoyed a buffet meal. After a perhaps slightly longer than desired wait, the players eventually ate like 250 famished wolves, all the while listening to a truly rousing speech by our proud chair and Kerryman Dylan Harnett, and we finally made our way to Charlie P's to watch Katie Taylor crush it in her final fight at Páirc an Chrócaigh. A big thank you to all the clubs who came to see us and took part in another great day for European hurling and camogie.



THE GAEL



NEW CLUB JERSEY IN ACTION

In round three of the GGE Euro Camogie/Hurling tournament in Vienna, our **new jersey** made its long-awaited debut.

CLUB SHOP

Fancy getting a jersey for yourself? A nice fleece and a warm hat for the coming winter evenings? Head on over to our online shop at:
MCKEEVERSPORTS.COM



PLAYER PROFILE: DARREN GLEESON

Having joined the club in 2011, played all three codes, and served his time as club secretary, Darren Gleeson found his true calling as Handball Officer in 2024. Following a post-Covid decline in players, he rebuilt the weekly training numbers from a diehard core of 4-5 to a squad of around 25 players today. This has had a knock-on effect on the club's appearance at regional tournaments, where we routinely bring 10+ players to Strakonice, Brno, and Bratislava while picking up ever-shinier silverware.

He has also been instrumental in supporting the growth of the Central East region's handball scene and encouraging the Gaels to play handball further and further afield, in Italy, Spain, France, and the UK. In his home GAA club and school, handball was barely a footnote, but with the support of a trusty crew (Ryan Gormley, Ray Laverty, Anneliese O'Malley, and Elisa Cola), Darren hopes that Vienna will become one of the biggest and best handball-playing clubs on the continent. There are also plans to get a four-wall tournament on the calendar for next year - so watch this space!



THE GAEL

VERONA FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT





We arrived, put on our kit and gathered ahead of the first men's game. Our football officer and captain for the day, Jim McGinley gave one of his rousing speeches while the locals listened in with complete bewilderment as to what language he was speaking. Highly motivated and slightly confused, we were ready for our first bout of the day against Zurich, who had scraped by us last year in a tight contest. Unfortunately, this contest was not as tight as a strong Zurich team put us to the sword. Nevertheless, we regrouped and gave a good effort against a Budapest team which managed to narrowly defeat us despite little to no points from open play. Another strong side in Munich proved too much and we went into our final group game against the Milanese. The Italians playing on their home turf seemed insurmountable, but we gave it everything we had and found ourselves very much in the contest at half-time. A scrappy affair gave way to bookings on both sides in the second half, but our opponents managed to pull away, leaving us winless in the group and into the plate.

After a three-hour lunch break, we prepared for our final game of the day. Having spent hours under the close-enough-to-Tuscan sun, muscles were tight and legs were heavy. We came up against an Augsburg team we had comfortably put away in past encounters but they proved too strong for us on this occasion.

The ladies had a similar result in scores but not in spirit. Elght from Vienna, two from Augsburg and one from Kiev (plus two vocal coaches) poured their hearts and souls into each and every minute. In the first match we came across the formidable Munich who, despite proving as tough as their reputation, didn't waver our positive attitude. The girls were eager to build on their strengths, and in the second game against Budapest they came storming onto the pitch, putting up an incredible fight. Weaving, connecting and most importantly: supporting and encouraging each other. Although we didn't come away with a win, we did bag some points and slipped some screamers into the back of the net.

THE GAEL

VERONA FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

After the long lunch break we came back to face Zürich/Munich B. Unfortunately, despite a strong performance, the midday sun and long bedbug-filled night may have gotten the best of us and we narrowly missed out on a win. Despite this, we left with our heads held high, and safe in the knowledge that everyone had enjoyed themselves, played their best, and for those whose first tournament it was, gained confidence. A big mention must go to Kiev, who brought some incredible jerseys and a poignant story. Not only did Kiev co-founder Mel help the team out massively, but we also got to support an incredible club with two remarkable people.

A cynic might say we didn't win anything in Verona. And they might be right. However, perhaps the real victory was in the festivities afterwards. As always, the Vienna Gaels performed superbly in the post-tournament celebrations, living La Dolce Vita. A bug-free night ensued, and Sunday morning came. We went our separate ways and returned home, each of us stripping off before entering our apartments as to not bring the bugs in. This may not have been entirely successful.

On a personal note, despite the results on the pitch, we have two teams with enormous potential. We put in excellent performances despite severe disruption and missing several of our stalwarts who had played in our home fixtures, as well as the Berlin tournament, and the usual Erasmus cohort also not being present with the academic off-season. There are many fresh faces in training, and the quality of sessions has improved enormously in recent weeks, with record numbers turning out. If we can co-ordinate to get good turnouts going for away tournaments, I think it is very possible to see a bright year for Vienna Gaels football in 2027.





THE GAEL

DRESDEN HURLING & CAMOGIE TOURNAMENT

On the 23rd of October, Six Gaels men travelled up to Dresden for the inaugural CEE Hurling & Camogie tournament. As is now becoming Gaels tradition, we were hit by several obstacles before a ball was pucked as Shane's U-Bahn broke down, forcing him to take a late, expensive train, and those travelling with Flixbus were adversely affected by their six-and-a-half hour Flixbus jouney tragically, being on a Flixbus. Upon arriving at the hotel, they incorrectly informed us that we had double booked and put us in the wrong room, before we were eventually sorted out.

The day of the 24th came and we were amalgamated with Munich and Bern for the day, with our first game seeing us come up against the hosts. Despite a valiant effort, we went down fighting to the home side. Though we did not have any of the Camógs up with us, that could not stop a club like Vienna Gaels from participating nonetheless. To make up numbers for the camogie, Shane Moloney and budding goalkeeper Jens Brulmans joined in for a very enjoyable game, with Seamus Gilhooley (pictured) blowing a blinder with the whistle and not letting Shane away with his usual antics.

Afterwards, it was time for the second hurling fixture of the day and we renewed our rivalry with Czechia, with hurlers from Prague and Strakonice amalgamating. An incredibly high-scoring encounter saw us pipped by a 5-11 to 6-5 scoreline. It was soon Shane's turn to referee in the Dresden-Berlin derby and after being talked out of disqualifying both teams for non-compliant hurls, his otherwise no-nonsense interpretation of the hurling rulebook saw for a beautiful, fluid and incredibly violent game.

Our final game as the Gaels came, and we would play the Berlin amalgam of their two clubs. The German side displayed serious quality and enjoyed a high-scoring first half, but our valiant Gaels came out fighting in the second, outscoring the Berliners and once again, emerging from the tournament morally victorious.

The day came to a close with a 15-a-side game featuring players from all clubs on both sides in what was a superb exhibition of hurling in another high-potential and quickly growing club in Europe.





THE GAEL

HANDBALL REPORT

On the 12th of September, ten Gaels travelled to Strakonice for their annual handball tournament, with Anneliese O'Malley winning gold in the women's competition, Ryan Gormley pipping Cian Scollard to win gold in the men's intermediate, and Ray Laverty taking silver in the men's senior open. Well done to Joe Youorski (pictured) for taking silver in the men's junior A final.

Ten Gaels also travelled to Bratislava for their invitational on the 4th of October. Tri-code stalwart Elisa Cola won the women's section, while Cian Scollard won the men's senior plate. Special mention to Mark Fitzpatrick was also narrowly pipped to the men's intermediate title in his first tournament.

On the 5th of December, 35 players will take part in the Vienna one-wall tournament, kindly supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade through the Global Games Development Fund, and by Central-East Europe GAA. Current world 40x20 champion Ciana Ní Churraoin will provide a coaching session for participants prior to the commencement of the tournament.



DÁITHÍ Ó SÉ VISIT

It was a pleasure to welcome Dáithí Ó Sé with an RTE camera crew to one of our training sessions in September. They made the trip to film a profile of our club for an upcoming series to be released on RTE before Christmas time.

As our chairman forgot to iron his suit, and therefore had to wear normal training attire, designer Lorna Curran was there to present Dáithí with the new Vienna Gaels jersey, ensuring that the whole of Ireland will see the red and white of Vienna, and will inevitably be asking Santa for the full kit.



MEMBERSHIP AND TRAINING

Are you Vienna Gaels' next Hannah Tyrrell or David Clifford? For more information on becoming a player or social member, get in touch with us on social media: Instagram @viennagaelsgaa or Vienna Gaels GAA on Facebook. We train every Monday evening between 17:50-8pm at Rugby Union Donau Wien, spending one hour each on Gaelic Football and Hurling Camogie.

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SPONSORS

Vienna Gaels is proudly sponsored by Charlie P's, The Long Hall, Designer Group, Flanagan's, McKeever and Drei Bögen.