

Setanta Hurling Programme

Under-14s Waterford bound

MONTHS of preparation will reach a culmination this weekend when Laois under-14 hurlers travel to Waterford in search of glory in the Waterford Crystal Tony Forrestal Tournament, the all-Ireland inter-county championship for under-14s.

The tournament was started in the '80s to commemorate Tony Forrestal who was killed in a road accident while returning from a match and alas Laois have only tasted success on a couple of occasions in

divisions two and three.

They have competed without success in division one in the past, a division that is headed by Tipperary with nine titles but this year they have to be strong contenders for division two where the strongest opposition is likely to come from Antrim.

The Laois lads will depart for Waterford on Friday evening and have a two-night stay at the Rhu Glen Hotel. They play their first game at the De La Salle/Gracedieu venue on Saturday morning at

11.30 when they take on Westmeath who have consistently beaten Laois at this level in recent years. Then at 12.20pm they play Waterford with their final game in the group stages against Kerry at 5pm that evening.

Only the top team in each group qualifies so it is vital that Laois win all three games with Antrim, Kildare, Carlow and Meath competing for the other place in the final from group two.

The final will be played on Sunday morning at

Walsh Park with a noon throw in. The games will be 40 minutes each so for Laois to win out the competition they will have to be at their very best for almost three hours of hurling over the two days.

No stone has been left unturned in the preparation of this squad who have now been together since they started out with the first Setanta Programme as 11 year olds three years ago.

The team management of Tony Woods, Shay Kelly, Mick Scully and

Kevin Lynch have carried out their duties in a very professional manner and the young dedicated hurlers on the squad have also had the assistance of fitness coach Chris Simpson and chartered physio Deirdre Simpson of the Leinster Sports Injury Clinic at all of their training sessions.

This year they made a huge impression at the DJ Carey School in Kilkenny where they were named team of the week. They are wished every success in this weekend's tournament.



The under-14 hurling management team of Tony Woods, Shay Kelly, Kevin Lynch and Mick Scully putting final touches to the preparations for the Tony Forrestal Tournament

Setanta camp a success

Last Saturday's under-12/13 Setanta hurling camp at Clonad was a huge success with a large turnout for the full day coaching session. A full compliment of coaches was joined by county hurlers Paddy Mullaney, Conor Dunne, Willie Hyland and Tommy Fitzgerald for an intense day's coaching under organiser Pat Critchley.

The under-10 and 11 squads had a morning of games in Portlaoise with

the under-10s receiving their new Setanta jerseys.

Next weekend the under-13s move to Portlaoise for an inter-county blitz involving Carlow, Meath, Westmeath, Kildare, Laois and Offaly with the first games commencing at 9.15am.

There will also be a change of venue for the under-12s as they move to Ratheniska while the under-10/11s move to Clonad.



Cha Dwyer receiving treatment

Laois win out in challenge game

LAOIS under-14 hurlers' preparations for the Tony Forrestal Tournament got another boost on Tuesday evening last when they travelled to Kildavin and defeated Wexford in a very competitive challenge.

After the long bus journey the Laois lads got off to a very poor start and trailed by 1-8 to 0-2 after 20 minutes of play but came back in a most emphatic manner to win by six points at the end.

They could only manage points from midfielders PJ



Laois
Wexford

3-14
2-11



Scully and Darragh Nolan in the opening 20 minutes but then hit a purple patch and fired over seven points in succession from Charlie Dwyer (4), Aidan Lenihan, Brendan Ryan and PJ Scully.

They were then hit by another sucker goal to trail by 2-9 to 0-9 but they put in a storming last 20 minutes when

they held Wexford to a single point and added 3-3 themselves.

Substitute Joe Bennett started the comeback. Cha Dwyer added a point and then a goal special from Cha left just a single point between the sides in a game refereed by all-Ireland official Dicki Murphy.

A great goal from

Ballyfin's Joe Bennett gave Laois the lead for the first time. Cha Dwyer added two more points and then a David Mortimer goal assured a most impressive victory as the Laois lads totally dominated the closing stages.

The squad trained on Sunday evening in Colt and in O'Moore Park on Tuesday and will have their final get together on Thursday evening before departing for Waterford on Friday.