



In Memoriam - Liam Monagle

9th September 1956 - 15th September 2018

Liam Monagle left Carndonagh Community School in 1975 after his Leaving Cert. to pursue a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Higher Diploma in Education in St. Patrick's College Maynooth. He had already made his reputation as a soccer player of some distinction in Inishowen. He played for and captained the Maynooth University Soccer team, winning Irish Universities League Titles and a First Year Irish Universities Championship. He was unfortunately a beaten finalist in two Irish Universities Collingwood Cup campaigns. During his summers he returned to play with his beloved Carndonagh F.C. Despite his great talents and skills, Liam was modest, gracious and kind; always focusing on others, never on himself.

During his university days he met Catherine Mather and they forged a life partnership which saw them both emigrate to Australia in 1981 to take up teaching positions. Liam also managed to combine a professional soccer career with his teaching duties. He was no stranger to success during his playing days in Australia. He achieved the rare distinction of being voted Australian Soccer's Best & Fairest twice - 1983 and 1987 - one of the very few to do so. Liam and Catherine returned to Ireland in 2001 and took up teaching posts in Carndonagh Community School where they integrated into the fabric of the school.





Liam used his skills, experience and gracious personality to mentor pupils in sport and in the challenges of growing up. His coaching of Junior soccer was legendary and his team was rewarded with an All-Ireland Schools First Year Championship in 2014. This team, moulded by Liam, was to be the bedrock of further Senior Boys All-Ireland Soccer success.

Coincidentally, this team played in blue – Liam was a lifelong Chelsea supporter! Equally importantly, it represented a milestone in cementing the sense of worth and self-esteem for our pupils who now realised they could achieve at the highest levels at sport.



For those of us who were fortunate enough to play soccer with Liam, we started every game confident because we had Liam Monagle on our team. His leadership by example was inspirational; never a shout or a criticism, always encouragement. Strangely enough it was also a great pleasure to play against him because he was the consummate sportsman. Win, lose or draw, Liam kept things in perspective and he had a talent of rescuing teammates from disappointment by leading out with his famous rendition of 'Carn Fair'. For Liam it was never all about winning, it was about how you played the game. He lived his life accordingly. As a teacher he always had time for his pupils. As a colleague he was always supportive. To his friends and colleagues, to the pupils and all who knew him he was special.

Another of Liam's talents was his grace on the dancefloor. When himself and Catherine glided effortlessly in a waltz, they were as one; the great spark that was kindled in their student days was there for everyone to remark.



There is a huge gap for us in the school at the loss of such a great human being. Our thoughts and prayers are for Catherine at the loss of her soulmate. When we question the taking of someone as wonderful as Liam, it is difficult to find answers. Perhaps we can find comfort in knowing that the Liam who always led from the front is again out in front; he has gone on ahead.

