

Gaelic Games News

# Harte move 'came out of the blue' - Califf



Gordon Manning

Louth goalkeeper says players 'hadn't even heard any whispers' of decision to take Derry job

It is difficult for the dust to settle when the wind still blows. James Califf's phone has been hopping since Monday evening. His, he knows, is not the only one.

The Mickey Harte Years, time will determine their legacy. Still, nobody could have predicted the ending - a sudden departure by the godfather of Tyrone football who had decided instead to hitch his wagon to the most unexpected of passing trains, Mickey Harte, Derry manager. Choo, choo.

Former Tyrone forward Owen Mulligan jokingly online compared it to taking charge of Rangers, while ex-Derry player Joe Broolly ventured that it is 'the worst thing to happen to Derry since the plantation'. At least Harte appears to have already united the camps.

For Louth, they were the collateral damage. "I suppose we're still coming to terms with the news," says Califf. "It came out of the blue, it stunned a lot

of players, to be honest." Califf was a central pillar in the Harte and Gavin Devlin Louth project. After the best part of a decade in Louth's midfield, Califf had hung up his intercounty boots when a proposition was put to him to return as a goalkeeper in 2022.

Harte and Devlin met him to outline their vision. "It's very hard to say no to them in person," he smiles. They coaxed him back to be Louth's goalkeeper for 2023 as well.

"I was more or less done the year before they came in. I just had other stuff on, after the first year they kind of approached me to go back as a goalkeeper. I probably would have felt I had as close a relationship as any other player with them, given I was one of the elder statesmen."

Blindsided But like everybody else, he was blindsided by Monday's developments. After Louth chairman Peter Fitzpatrick spoke with Harte on Monday morning, team captain Sam Mulroy was alerted and he met with the three-time All-Ireland winning manager.

Subsequently, a joint meeting of the Louth panel and the county's management committee was called for Darver on Monday evening. Califf, who became a father for the first time only two weeks ago, couldn't make the meeting. And he wasn't the only absentee, with several players having training commitments as the club championships are ongoing.

"It's strange, we hadn't even heard any whispers about it.



Louth goalkeeper James Califf says he would have had a close relationship with outgoing manager Mickey Harte. Photograph: Lorraine O'Sullivan/Inpho

We weren't exactly sure what the story was because it was such late notice," says Califf. "It wouldn't be totally unusual for us to have meetings like that, last minute. It could have been about preseason or anything, so it just came as a shock."

Califf was part of the Louth minor management team this season and soaked up as much knowledge as possible from Harte and Devlin.

"To be able to learn off them was great, I'd be interested to see how they operate and things like that. It's funny, I thought I knew football and had tactical awareness, but then you meet Gavin and Mickey and you gain a completely different perspective and insight."

Still, the ending came in such a rush. One moment Harte was Louth manager, the next he was off to Owenbeg. The cold analysis suggests Harte and Devlin feel there is more potential in Derry than Louth. Sam Maguire trumped Sam Mulroy.

"When you look at Derry from the outside, they were semi-finalists and probably could have been in the All-Ireland final," adds Califf. "Maybe that was the pull. Look, Mickey and Gavin are ambitious men, no matter what you say, maybe they feel they could get the top silverware quicker with Derry, perhaps that was in their thinking."

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there is familiarity for Gavin with the Slaughtneil lads as well. You can't deny they probably did see there was a good chance of getting the top honours with Derry fairly soon rather than staying on a longer project with Louth."

Solid foundation Not that Califf believes the last three years were a waste. Far from it, in fact. He views the experience as very much a positive for Louth football, which if harnessed correctly can prove to be a solid foundation for further growth.

"The players are disappointed but at the same time everybody is grateful as well," explains Califf. "There are not too

many players get the opportunity to work under such experienced coaches like Mickey and Gavin. And it wasn't just one season, they were there for three years. For Louth football it is better to have had them for that period than not at all.

"That might have got overlooked in all of this, but not many players get exposed to that level of man-management and coaching for three seasons.

"It was invaluable exposure to that level of coaching and it's a matter now of building on that. The players are still there, they are eager to learn, so we'd hope the position does attract good interest and somebody takes on the role now to continue the project."

# Harte is confirmed in role by Derry GAA

GORDON MANNING

Derry GAA have officially appointed Mickey Harte as manager of their senior football team.

Harte has been handed a three-year term and will be joined on his management team by Gavin Devlin, who also assisted him during his time in charge of his native Tyrone and also during his recent spell as Louth boss.

The shock news that Harte was leaving Louth to take up the managerial role in Derry only emerged on Monday evening, with Oak Leaf officials then moving quickly to arrange a county board meeting for last night, at which the three-time All-Ireland winning manager was ratified.

## Sole All-Ireland success

"Following tonight's meeting of Coiste Chontae Dhoire, Derry GAA are pleased to announce the senior football management team for the incoming year," confirmed a Derry GAA statement.

"Multiple All-Ireland winning manager Mickey Harte has been appointed on a three-year term and will lead a management team including Gavin Devlin. Further details about the back room team will be confirmed in due course."

The appointment of Harte comes 30 years to the day after Derry's 1993 All-Ireland final triumph - the county's sole Sam Maguire success. It is hoped Harte's arrival can bridge that gap and bring another All-Ireland back to the county.

Next week marks the 20th anniversary of Harte leading Tyrone to their maiden All-Ireland victory. Derry, who have won the last two Ulster titles, are seen as genuine All-Ireland contenders.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

## Racing Listowel preview

McManus bids to secure Kerry National glory, yet lost

could see from the child's face that "something was seriously wrong" and recalled Hannah's face being "really pale" after she was taken from the pool.

**brillator**

r failing to detect any pulse, a lawlor said she started compressions on Hannah's chest, which resulted in water squirt-out of her mouth. The infant heard a defibrillator from a local GAA club was in Ms Donald's house and was taken to apply two shocks to Hannah.

paramedics arrived soon after and detected a weak pulse after treating Hannah. Staff at Midlands Regional Hospital quickly assessed that Hannah had gone without oxygen for a significant period.

Gallagher said a post-mortem showed Hannah suffered a cardiac injury as a result of a diving incident, and pneumonia, acquired as a result of getting into the pool, was a contributory factor in her death.

radbally-based Garda Brielly told the inquest he had a toy tractor next to the diving pool and he believed Hannah stood on it in order to get into the pool. He agreed to be the coroner that the pool was larger than standard paddling pools, estimating the width at 2ft to 2½ft.

turning a verdict of accidental death, Dr Gallagher said it was an "appalling tragedy" here were no words that could offer to lessen the grief of Hannah's family. She said Hannah was given every care by how people reacted to the incident and noted that her organs had been donated to help others.



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**Racing Listowel preview**

**McManus bids to secure Kerry National glory at last**



**Brian O'Connor**  
Racing Correspondent

Vauban 4-1 favourite for the Melbourne Cup after the weights are released

The Guinness Kerry National remains a glaring gap in JP McManus's domestic big-race portfolio although it is one the renowned owner will hope to finally fill today. McManus's silks are carried by three of the 18 starters in the €200,000 Lin-

victories to his name in the Irish Grand National, as well as unmet successes in other versions.

One of his trio today, Stealthy Tom, landed the Connacht National at Roscommon during the summer and is joined by both Ciel De Neige and A Wave Of The Sea.

Over the years McManus has thrown a lot of darts at the Kerry National board but even the top-class Carlingford Castle could finish only runner-up a decade ago. It is a curious omission for the renowned 72-year-old champion owner whose Martinstown base in Co Limerick is just an hour from Listowel, and he has admitted the festival highlight is "still on my bucket list". Major cross-channel prizes McManus has yet to collect include the King George, the Champion Chase and the Scottish National, but victories at the



Vauban has been allocated a weight of 55kg for the Melbourne Cup, putting him 16th on the list of entries for the race. PHOTOGRAPH: MORGAN TREACY/INPHO

ion Salvador Ziggy, winner of his last three starts. Up to 20mm of forecast overnight rain may not help his chances, although it should not be an is-

his Roscommon win with a runner-up placing in the Midlands National at Kilbeggan, and bounced back with a very smooth success in Killarney last

on today's card, although safe at home back in Carlow is the horse that is already the focus of much attention in Australia. Mullins's dual-purpose star

the list of entries for a race in which a maximum of 24 can run on the first Tuesday in November.

Mullins's Ebor winner Absurde is assured of a slot in the race and has been assigned 53kgs, while Aidan O'Brien has left in both Broome and Saturday's St Leger fourth Tower of London.

Dermot Weld, who famously changed the face of the Melbourne Cup with Vintage Crop's groundbreaking success 30 years ago, has left open the option of trying to win the race for a third time through the rising star Harbour Wind. However, his 50kgs allocation leaves him well down the list of early entries that is topped by last year's winner Gold Trip.

Instead of a trip down under Tower Of London could line up instead in this Sunday's €600,000 Friends of the Cur-

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Having had regard to the provisions of Section 42B(1) of the Industrial Relations Act 1946, the Contract Cleaning Industry Joint Labour Committee hereby gives notice that it has formulated proposals for fixing the minimum remuneration and working conditions of workers in relation to whom the Committee operates. Copies of the proposals are available at the request of the Contract Cleaning Industry Joint Labour Committee on the website of the Labour Court at [www.labourcourt.ie](http://www.labourcourt.ie)

Any person wishing to make representations in the form of written submission in relation to the proposals should do so in the form of written submission, **by 5pm, on or before, 10th of October 2023**. Any such representation should be sent by post to The Secretary, Contract Cleaning Industry Joint Labour Committee, Lansdowne House, Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4, or by email to [jlcsecretary@enterprise.gov.ie](mailto:jlcsecretary@enterprise.gov.ie)

Representations received after that date shall not be considered.

**APPOINTMENTS**

**SITUATIONS VACANT**

Chef De Partie (Indian Cuisine) Required (Responsible for the food preparation and cooking of Indian Biomedical Scientist in Histology. The Biomedical Scientist will be responsible