

## Hurling under a Full Moon.

Harry started playing hurling at the age of 14 months. He lived and breathed it. He lived in the country with his family in a house that was surrounded by fields; and some had fairy forts in them. He practiced hurling off the gable every day.

One night at the age of 10 while he was tucked in bed, he heard a rap on the window. He slowly drew across the curtains to take a look and he saw a tiny old man barely 3 feet standing in front of him! 'Is mise Lorcáin,' (my name is Lorcan) the small man said. 'Tá imreor in easneamh againn, an mbeidh tú in ann imirt linn,' (we are down a player, will you play with us) Harry didn't say a word. 'Inis dom gur chuala tu faoin iomáinocht,' (Please tell me you have heard of hurling) the small man said. 'Fan anseo' (stay there) said Harry and with that he went inside to get his hurl. The man brought him into the field where the fairy fort was.

Harry couldn't believe his eyes, there were fairy folk everywhere, dressed in amazing colours. There was great spirits and lots of Amhránaíocht Éireanneach (Irish singing) .It was a provincial final between Connacht & Munster. 'Teigh isteach mar cúl báire, a bhuachaill,' (get into goals, boy) said Lorcáin. Harry had never seen people run so fast and jump so high in his life, under a full moon. He saved 2 shots on goal and on the puck outs, the little people up the white thorn tree let out the most deafening roar. It was 1-17 a piece at half time. Approaching dawn Harry's team were down 2 points. 'Cuir an buachaill chun tosaigh' (put the boy up forward) said a 4 foot tall player named Fiacra who Harry found out later was 260 years old. Harry did what he was told.

Harry caught the sliotar in the air, turned the Connacht full back and bared down on goal. 'Scrois é' (bury it) shouted the boys up the white thorn.

The sliotar passed the goalie and hit the net, a roar went up around the fairy fort, how nobody heard it in the village Harry didn't know! 'Maith thú, a bhuachaill,' said Fiacra with a big smile.

As Lorcáin walked Harry out of the fairy fort, the dawn chorus began. "Go raibh míle maith agat". "Tóg an camán seo". (Take this Hurley) Tá cúpla cleas aige. (It has a few tricks) winked the old man. "Slán go fóill" said Harry

In his life Harry became a 3 time All-Ireland Winner and did things on the pitch no-one had ever seen with his hurley. "He is a SUPERHERO for Cork hurling" said Dónal Óg, on The Sunday Game one night.

Harry always felt there were more people watching him playing hurling, than he could see, especially if there was a white thorn tree close by....