



Successful Global Ireland Football Tournament - GIFT 2012 - Makes History and Memories, Helps Teams Along Winning Path and Hopes to Return in Future

U.S. Ambassador Rooney, Canadian Ambassador Hearn, Dublin Lord Mayor Naoise Ó Muirí and Fans, Sponsors and Partners Endorse Global Football Event

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Wednesday, September 12, 2012 – The Global Ireland Football Tournament was declared an unprecedented success as more than 13,000 spectators flocked to three venues to enjoy the spectacle of high school and college American football teams, bands, cheerleaders and dancers in action in a special *Dublin Friday Night Lights* event organized by Global Football.

The positive reaction of all who witnessed the 12 teams from the United States, Canada and the UK play six games split between Donnybrook Stadium and Parnell Park in Dublin and Páirc Tailteann in Navan was overwhelming.

So a return to Ireland with other top school teams in future years is in the planning stages as Global Football is already working on a spectacular follow-up event to GIFT 2012. Schools considering traveling overseas in 2013 or 2014, wondering how such an adventure might impact their season will be encouraged by the fact that six of the seven GIFT teams that played back on U.S. soil the following weekend tasted victory – and the beaten school lost to a fellow GIFT traveler.

The Global Ireland Football Tournament was about much more than six regular season American football games played on August 31, with a Parade through Dublin City Centre, a Pep Rally at Trinity College, Educational tours of various Dublin and County Meath sites, practices at University College Dublin and venues throughout the region, the GAA semi-finals at Croke Park, interaction with local sports teams, and friendships made that will last a lifetime. The GIFT travelers also attended the sell-out Emerald Isle Classic between Navy and the University of Notre Dame at the Aviva Stadium.

“The entire event required an amazing team effort on the part of hundreds of dedicated people, but it all started - and ended - with the visionary commitment of each of the schools’ leaders,” said Global Football President and GIFT organizer Patrick Steenberge.

“The head coaches, athletic directors, principals, headmasters and administrators took on a huge challenge more than a year ago, in order to provide their student-athletes and communities with this most special educational experience. These are the ones who made it possible, and are very special, dedicated educators. They each dared to dream and work on behalf of their youngsters and schools, and should be praised far and wide for their efforts and commitment.”

Results, Facts and Figures from the Global Ireland Football Tournament:

Donnybrook Stadium, Dublin, Friday, August 31

Jesuit Prep Dallas (Texas) 30- Loyola Academy (Illinois) 29

John Carroll University (Ohio) 40- St Norbert College (Wisconsin) 3



U.S. Ambassador to Ireland Dan Rooney, owner of the Pittsburgh Steelers of the NFL, was among the guests at Donnybrook Stadium and performed the coin toss with Patrick Steenberge and Honorary Chairman Midshipman First Class Colin Bruton (25th Co.).

Parnell Park, Dublin, Friday, August 31

Kent School (Connecticut) 26- National School of American Football (UK) 2
Notre Dame High School (California) 27- Hamilton High School (Arizona) 15

Gaelic football legend and Head of Sports at UCD Brian Mullins was on hand to welcome the teams as Honorary Chairman and the marching bands of Notre Dame High School and Hamilton High School entertained the crowd before the games and at half time.

Pairc Tailteann, Navan, Friday, August 31

Oak Park High School (Manitoba) 18- Villanova College (Ontario) 9
Notre Dame Prep (Arizona) 20- Father Judge (Pennsylvania) 6

Canadian ambassador to Ireland Loyola Hearn was joined by former University of Notre Dame and Green Bay Packers offensive lineman Mike McCoy to welcome the teams from Canada and the United States.

Visit www.GIFT2012.com for game recaps and photos.

GIFT Parade through the City Centre streets of Dublin, Thursday, August 30

Irish natives and American visitors stood five-deep in some parts and waved from office windows as the football teams, marching bands, dancers and cheerleaders from the United States and Canada weaved their way from St Stephen's Green in a rush hour Parade, down Dawson, Nassau and Grafton streets to Trinity College and brought Dublin City Centre to a gleeful standstill. The Jesuit Rangerettes graced the front cover of the Irish daily newspaper the following day.

Dublin's commuters and some of the 35,000 Americans arriving in Dublin for a weekend of American football action and the Emerald Isle Classic enjoyed the spectacle.

Pep Rally at Trinity College, Dublin, Thursday, August 30

The GIFT participants held a Pep Rally as a 2,000-strong crowd gathered at the famous educational institution in the Irish capital. Bands and cheer teams from Loyola Academy, Jesuit Prep Dallas, Notre Dame Prep, Notre Dame High School and Hamilton High School performed.

Once at Front Square at Trinity College, the marchers and onlookers were welcomed by a series of speakers including Canadian Ambassador Loyola Hearn, GIFT Honorary Chairman Mike McCoy, Trinity College senior lecturer Patrick Geoghegan, U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Officer Susan Cleary and CEO of Tourism Ireland Niall Gibbons.

Official Reception with the Dublin Lord Mayor, Thursday, August 30

Representatives of Global Football and each of the GIFT participating teams were welcomed in his historic house by Dublin Lord Mayor Naoise Ó Muirí, who then threw a football around on the forecourt of his historical Mansion House residence with Patrick Steenberge, much to the amusement of passers by.

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Team practices at University College Dublin, Thursday, August 30

The GIFT teams descended on the spacious campus of University College Dublin where they held final practices side-by-side on five fields prepared by the UCD American football players in morning and afternoon sessions, punctuated by an opportunity to learn about studying in Ireland.

Media coverage

Media on both sides of the Atlantic featured the GIFT event on television and radio and in newspapers and on websites. Some of the prominent media outlets present at GIFT events or reporting from the games included:

- RTE television, RTE Radio, Today FM *The Last Word*
- Irish Independent, Dublin Echo, Irish Daily Mail, Evening Herald, Mail on Sunday
- Los Angeles Times, Chicago Sun Times, Toronto Star, Dallas Morning News, Philadelphia Inquirer, Cleveland Plain Dealer, Green Bay Press Gazette, Winnipeg Sun, Arizona Republic, Rivals.com

Inside the numbers

- 4.5 million - Euros: anticipated economic impact of the GIFT event on the Irish economy*
- 2,500 - travelers from the United States who visited Ireland specifically for the GIFT event
- 225 - total points scored in six GIFT games
- 1 - point: the margin of victory for Jesuit Prep Dallas over Loyola Academy
- 8 - hotels used by GIFT teams and official travelers: Citywest Hotel, Saggart; Bewleys, Leopardstown; Bewleys Newlands Cross; Green Isle, Newlands Cross; Louis Fitzgerald Hotel, Newlands Cross; Knightsbrook Hotel, Trim; Royal Hotel, Bray and Newgrange Hotel, Navan
- 8,000 - combined attendance for both games at Donnybrook Stadium
- 3,500 - combined attendance for both games at Pairc Tailteann
- 1,500 - combined attendance for both games at Parnell Park
- 2,000 – estimated attendance at the GIFT Pep Rally
- 2 - Ambassadors to Ireland in attendance at GIFT games
- 90 - media accredited for GIFT games at three venues

* The economic impact figure is calculated by measuring payments made by 2,500 travelers visiting for the GIFT event and their anticipated spend while in Ireland, including:

- Hotel nights during a four/five-day stay
- Travelers booked on Aer Lingus and other airline flights
- Meals at local restaurants and pubs
- Public transportation and taxis
- Souvenirs and gifts
- Visits to tourist attractions
- Stadium rental and additional event operations costs
- Spend at stadium concessions



Scot Bemis Play Like A Champion Today® Character Award

Scot Bemis Play Like A Champion Today® nominees from each of the participating GIFT schools were highlighted at a private banquet hosted by Price Waterhouse Coopers in Dublin and the final overall award was presented to Peter Pujals of Loyola Academy at the Pre-Game Tailgate at the CityWest Hotel Conference Centre on September 1.

Play Like A Champion Today® is an affiliate of the Institute for Educational Initiatives at the University of Notre Dame and is a program for teaching, outreach and research. Its mission is to develop the whole person through sports in a moral community by producing and delivering character-oriented, research-based educational programs for coaches, parents, athletes and administrators. The GIFT award was made in memory of Notre Dame Prep head coach Scot Bemis, who passed away after a battle with cancer in January.

GIFT webcast

For just \$19.95, American football fans anywhere in the world were be able to watch the GIFT 2012 action from Ireland, by ordering a webcast of the Global Ireland Football Tournament games between kickoff time and December 1.

Games were streamed on GlobalFootball.com and GIFT2012.com and at halftime fans saw highlights of the teams' tour in Ireland from arrival to game day, including the GIFT City Center Parade, Trinity College Pep Rally, UCD training session, educational tours and more. Produced by Asgard TV of Dublin and made available by TodoCast Live Internet Broadcasting, the games featured live cameras, interviews, knowledgeable on-air talent, and score updates from other games. To order, visit GIFT2012.com/watch-live.

Back home and back to winning ways

Six of the seven GIFT teams that returned home to a busy week of practices and a game the following weekend showed no signs of fatigue or jetlag, as they tasted victory back on home soil. The only team to suffer defeat was playing against a fellow GIFT school, so somebody had to lose.

Father Judge 34 - Council Rock South 14
Jesuit Prep Dallas 34 - Keller Fossil Ridge 21
Loyola Academy 41 - Lake Forest Academy 7
Hamilton High School 58 - **Notre Dame Prep** 0
Notre Dame High School 56 - Taft 0
St Norbert College 31 - Knox College 20

GIFT Partners / Supporters: University College Dublin, Trinity College, Education in Ireland, Failte Ireland, IAFA, Play Like a Champion Today, Abbey Tours, Anthony Travel, Rogers Athletic, Tourism Ireland.

About Global Football: Under the guidance of President Patrick Steenberge, a former Notre Dame quarterback and high school All-American at Erie Cathedral Prep, Global Football has produced football games in 19 nations during the past 16 years. Working partners include USA Football, NFL, Super Bowl Host Committees, American Football Coaches Association (AFCA), Notre Dame, Penn State, Pop Warner, Tanzania Sports Council and dozens of NCAA Division III colleges as well as National Football Federations worldwide.
www.globalfootball.com.