



**14th Asian Gaelic Games
Bangkok, Thailand
16th – 18th October 2009**

Press release

October sees the Asian Gaelic Games coming to Bangkok for the first time.

Now in its 14th year the Games have grown from humble beginnings in Manila in 1995 into a major amateur sporting event. Over 500 players and 40 teams from 16 countries from Japan to Qatar are traveling to Bangkok to compete in the regional championships of the exciting and fast paced sports of Hurling and Gaelic Football, the national sports of Ireland.

Gaelic football, played by both men and women, is the most popular sport in Ireland. Combining elements of soccer and rugby, this exciting sport will seem familiar to Australian Rules fans although there are also many differences. With a three thousand year history, Hurling is said to be the world's fastest field game, combining the aggression of lacrosse, the skills of field hockey and the hard-hitting elements of baseball. These sports have reached every corner of the world through the widespread Irish diaspora with hundreds of clubs in cities in the USA, Canada, Britain, Asia, Australasia and Europe - wherever a group of Irish expatriates are likely be ! **The sports are governed by the Gaelic Athletic Association whose headquarters, the legendary Croke Park in Dublin, is filled every weekend during June to September to its 80,000 capacity for the culmination of the All Ireland Championships.** Notable players include well known current and former soccer, rugby and Australian Rules stars including Martin O'Neill (Aston Villa manager); Kevin Moran, John O'Shea (Man Utd); Niall Quinn (Arsenal, Sunderland); Eric Miller, John Hayes (Ireland Rugby); Jim Stynes (Demons Melbourne AFL).

More than just a sporting event, the Asian Gaelic Games are a celebration of Irish sport, culture and business success. As are the biggest celebration of Irish culture in the region, the event will attract local and international media attention. High profile guests flying in for the occasion include politicians, ambassadors, business leaders, broadcasters and musicians.

The weekend kicks off on Friday 16th October, at the Dusit Thani Hotel, Bangkok, with the Asia Pacific Ireland Business Forum, a networking event featuring business leaders and keynote speakers from the region and Ireland.

The opening ceremony for the Games takes place at the same location on the evening of Friday 16th October. **The Games are played out over the Saturday and Sunday , 17 and 18th, at the playing fields of Bangkok Patana School, Sukhmvit 105.**

The organizers are proud of the support from the Tourism Authority of Thailand and the following list of sponsors Property Care Services (PCS), Kerry, LawtonAsia, ADT, Guinness, Etihad, PCH, Enterprise Ireland, & Irish Abroad, .

John Campbell, Chairman of the Thai GAA Club which is hosting the games is “**confident that the event will help put the Irish Community & Gaelic Games on the map in Thailand**” and is “very pleased that we will be able to support those less fortunate than ourselves through the three nominated charities – The Human Development Foundation, PREDA and the Good Shepherd Sisters, which do powerful work with disadvantaged young people in Thailand & across the region.”

Admission to the Games is free, with food and beverages available pitchside.

For more info contact

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