

John Carroll

A Knock man born (16th January, 1978) and bred, I have spent my hurling life here in Roscrea. When I started to hurl there were no provisions for under-age in Knock and it was due to people like Jim Sheedy that I got involved in and stayed in hurling, in Roscrea.

I enjoyed great success as a young lad in Roscrea with U-12, U-14, and U-16 north medals and U-12 and U-14 county titles. My first taste of inter-county hurling was at U-14

level in the Tony Forrester Cup and captaining the side to victory at U-16. One of the greatest honours for any young lad is to wear their county colours and I was no different. To be selected for a minor team is a privilege and in 1996 we had fantastic success winning the Munster and All-Ireland titles.

For the three years that followed I played U-21 hurling culminating in a historic victory over Clare in Ennis in the 1999 Munster Final. Unfortunately, we were pipped by Galway for the All-Ireland.

It was after this that I progressed to the senior team, making my debut at wing-back against Waterford in the first round of the championship 2000. I stayed at this position for the season but it wasn't to be our year. I did however find consolation in the honour of being selected in my position for the GAA All-Stars 2000. It was also a privilege to play with Munster last year winning a Railway Cup medal, and with Ireland winning the Shinty series.

2001 would be without doubt the highlight of my hurling life. Playing in a number of positions throughout the league campaign, a switch to centre-forward in the championship made a great difference to my play and allowed me to be part of a historic All-Ireland victory. This was made all the better by having League and Munster titles behind us.

While hurling is my first love I also am a keen footballer and still play with Inane Rovers. I have a county minor medal with the club and have played minor U-21 senior and junior with the county. It is however getting more and more difficult to play both.

I do not think it would be right to talk about my luck and success without thanking those in the hurling and football clubs for their help and support over the years. I also got great help, encouragement and experience through playing with both the CBS and Roscrea Vocational School.

My parents, family and friends have been a great source of support to me over the years and without them I would not be where I am today.

I'd like to thank the committee for selecting me. It is both an honour and a privilege to receive this award from people of my own area.

