

THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND FEDERATION OF CLUBS

# Review <sup>Club</sup>

VOLUME 39 - Issue 3, 2026

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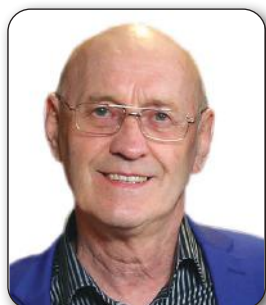
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# Looking Ahead with Confidence



John Davidson BEM  
Chairman, N.I.F.C.



Harry Beckinsale BEM  
Secretary, N.I.F.C.

Dear Colleagues,

As we enter the summer recess, we remain mindful of the increasing financial pressures facing our member clubs and indeed the wider hospitality and leisure sectors. Rising operating costs, continuing economic uncertainty and changing consumer habits continue to present significant challenges for many organisations across Northern Ireland.

As outlined in previous communications, Northern Ireland is no stranger to adversity and resilience. Throughout our history, communities and organisations have repeatedly demonstrated an ability to adapt, endure and ultimately overcome difficult circumstances. While many of the current challenges are beyond our control, we have every confidence that our member clubs will face the months ahead with the same determination, commitment and community spirit that have characterised the registered club movement for generations.

The recent reconvening of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Registered Clubs at Westminster provides an important opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of developments within Westminster and their potential implications for registered clubs throughout the United Kingdom. It also reinforces the importance of ensuring that Northern Ireland's interests are properly represented within the Group.

The Federation has once again written to all Northern Ireland Members of Parliament seeking their support and participation. Similar approaches in previous years met with only limited success; however, we remain hopeful that a greater level of engagement will be forthcoming on this occasion. The issues affecting registered clubs are significant and deserve representation at parliamentary level, particularly given the vital social, sporting and community role clubs continue to play within their local areas.

It was reassuring to learn that Robin Swann MP and Gavin Robinson MP have joined the All Party Parliamentary Group and hopefully they will be joined by MP's from Northern Ireland's other political Parties.

Beyond our own shores, it is impossible to ignore the ongoing conflicts that continue to affect communities around the world. The continuing unrest in the Middle East has brought not only economic consequences that are felt internationally, but also the tragic and ongoing loss of human life. Likewise, the conflict in Ukraine remains a source of deep concern and sadness, with little indication at present

of a lasting resolution. We can only hope that meaningful progress towards peace can be achieved in all affected regions.

We are delighted to learn that Harris Stocktaking Systems are coming back on board with the Registered Club sector. Now under new ownership, Stephen Garvin of Harris Stocktaking Systems expressed his wish to add to the already growing club client base.

While the weather may not always reflect our expectations of summer in Northern Ireland, we trust that the season will nevertheless provide an opportunity for rest, recreation and renewed optimism for the months ahead.

We extend our sincere thanks to all club officials, volunteers, committee members and staff, whose dedication ensures that clubs continue to thrive at the heart of their communities.

Yours sincerely,

John Davidson BEM - Chairman • Harry Beckinsale BEM - Secretary

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## Minutes of the Executive Meeting

Hosted by Harland & Wolff Welders FSC on Wednesday 2nd June 2026

The Executive Committee Meeting was hosted by Harland & Wolff Welders FSC on Wednesday 2 June 2026. The meeting commenced with the Secretary conveying apologies on behalf of Executive Committee member Gerry Gallagher, who is currently recovering from an operation. Members asked that their best wishes be recorded and extended to Gerry for a full and speedy recovery.

### Portaferry Sailing Club - Rating Matter

The Secretary provided a detailed report on a recent visit to Portaferry Sailing Club, undertaken in an effort to assist the club in addressing an ongoing rating-related issue.

Members were advised that discussions had taken place with Rory Clarke regarding the matter and the options available to the club.

It was confirmed that an appeal is to be lodged and that the Federation will continue to offer whatever assistance is possible throughout the process. Members expressed the sincere hope that the issue can be resolved satisfactorily and that an outcome favourable to the club can be achieved.

The Federation Chairman also addressed the meeting on the matter, outlining his views on the circumstances surrounding the case and discussing possible avenues through which the

club's position in respect of Sport and Recreational Relief might be supported. Members acknowledged the importance of ensuring that clubs are treated fairly and that all available mechanisms are explored in order to secure an equitable resolution.

### All-Party Parliamentary Group for Registered Clubs

The Secretary then reported on the reconvening of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Registered Clubs, which was scheduled to meet in London on 2 June 2026.

Members were advised that all Northern Ireland political parties had been contacted and encouraged either to attend

the meeting or lend their support to the APPG. The importance of maintaining a strong parliamentary voice for the registered club sector was emphasised, particularly in relation to future legislative, licensing and community development matters affecting clubs throughout the United Kingdom.

Following discussion, it was considered appropriate for the Federation to utilise its social media platforms to encourage member clubs to contact their local Members of Parliament and seek support for the APPG. Members agreed that broad engagement across the sector would assist in highlighting the significant contribution made

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by registered clubs to local communities.

### Supplier Support and Federation Partnerships

A discussion then took place regarding supplier support for the Federation and its activities.

Members welcomed the fact that the Federation has retained the support of the majority of its associated suppliers and commercial partners. This continued backing was recognised as an important factor in enabling the Federation to deliver services and representation on behalf of member clubs.

However, disappointment was expressed that Bushmills, despite being an internationally recognised brand with strong local roots, had chosen to withdraw support from the Federation's official publication and communication channels. Similar concern was noted regarding the withdrawal of support from PPL/PRS and AVA Leisure (EZE Gaming).

While members acknowledged that commercial decisions are subject to review by individual organisations, it was agreed that the loss of support from these partners was regrettable. Nevertheless, it was hoped that discussions may continue and that opportunities for renewed engagement and cooperation could arise in the coming months.

### Club Insurance Update

The Secretary reported that both he and the Federation Chairman had recently attended a meeting with Dermot Rollins of Rollins Club Insurance, together with representatives of Brown & Brown, the parent organisation under whose ownership Rollins Club Insurance now operates.

Members were informed that assurances had been received that the comprehensive

insurance arrangements currently available to registered clubs through Rollins Club Insurance would continue to be provided. This was welcomed by the Committee, given the importance of reliable and specialist insurance cover for clubs.

During discussion, it was recognised that a number of alternative providers are now actively marketing competitive insurance products within the sector. While healthy competition was welcomed, members stressed the importance of ensuring that any comparison between policies is conducted on a genuine like-for-like basis.

It was noted that headline premiums can often mask significant differences in policy wording, exclusions, levels of cover and additional benefits. Members agreed that clubs should be encouraged to examine policy details carefully before making decisions, recognising that the true value of insurance protection frequently lies within the finer details of the cover provided.

### Summer Recess

With all agenda items concluded, members exchanged good wishes for the forthcoming summer period and expressed their appreciation for the continued commitment and work undertaken by Executive Committee colleagues throughout the year.

A sincere vote of thanks was recorded to Harland & Wolff Welders FSC for hosting the meeting and for the excellent hospitality extended to Executive Committee members.

With there being no further business, the meeting concluded.

H. Beckinsale  
*Secretary*

# Trusted Support, Greater Strength - O'Hara Shearer joins forces with M.B. McGrady & Co.



Lawrence Shearer pictured with McGrady's director team - (L- R) Lawrence Shearer, Kim Rainey, Mal McGrady, Conaill McGrady.

The Northern Ireland clubs network will be interested to learn of an important and exciting development involving long-standing Federation accountant, Lawrence Shearer, and his practice, O'Hara Shearer Chartered Accountants & Statutory Auditors.

Lawrence has now merged with M.B. McGrady & Co. Chartered Accountants, one of Northern Ireland's most

established and respected independent accountancy firms. Founded in the early 1950s, M.B. McGrady has grown into a substantial practice with offices in Belfast, Downpatrick, and Newtownards, offering expertise across accountancy, taxation, audit, cloud accounting, payroll, succession planning, and business advisory services.

*continued overleaf*



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For clubs already working with Lawrence and O'Hara Shearer, the key message is one of continuity and added strength. Lawrence will continue to handle clients in the same trusted and approachable manner as before, particularly in areas such as statutory auditing, taxation etc., ensuring that existing relationships, day-to-day contacts, and personalised support remain firmly in place.

At the same time, this merger brings with it the considerable depth and resources of a larger, highly experienced professional team. Clubs and committees will now benefit from access to an even broader range of specialist knowledge and support, particularly in areas such as taxation, compliance, payroll, cloud accounting, inheritance planning, and the increasingly important requirements surrounding

Making Tax Digital and financial governance.

In today's increasingly regulated financial environment, many clubs face growing administrative and reporting demands. The additional expertise now available through the M.B. McGrady organisation provides reassurance that clubs can continue to receive professional advice tailored to their specific needs, while still enjoying the familiar personal service they have valued over the years from Lawrence and his team.

Importantly, the merger also reflects a shared ethos between both firms - combining professionalism, accessibility, and a strong commitment to client relationships. M.B. McGrady itself has highlighted the importance of maintaining a personal approach while



O'Hara Shearer team merging with McGrady's - (L-R) Bridgeen Shannon, Lawrence Shearer, Claire Gallagher.

expanding its services and capabilities across Northern Ireland.

This development should therefore be viewed as a very positive step forward for clubs throughout the Federation network. It strengthens the

level of expertise available, future-proofs the service offering, and ensures that clubs will continue to receive trusted guidance from familiar faces, backed by the resources and experience of one of Northern Ireland's leading independent accountancy practices.

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# Getting the Best Value from Your Club Insurance

Insurance is one of the most important protections any club can put in place, yet it is often something that only receives attention when renewal time comes around. According to Rollins Insurance Brokers, taking the time to review your cover regularly and seeking specialist advice can help ensure your club is properly protected when it matters most.



*Dermot Rollins, Managing Director, Rollins Insurance Brokers.*

Rollins Insurance Brokers have proudly supported clubs across Northern Ireland for many years, standing alongside them through changing economic conditions, evolving regulations, and the many challenges faced by the sector. As the Federation's approved insurance broker, Rollins has built a reputation for specialist knowledge, personal service, and a deep understanding of the issues affecting clubs. Managing Director, Dermot Rollins, believes that this experience is invaluable when helping clubs secure the right insurance protection. "It is now relatively easy to purchase insurance online, and whilst that may appear to be the simplest option, business insurance is far more complex than many people realise," says Dermot. "The quality of insurance products can vary significantly and some lower-cost policies contain exclusions and conditions that may only become apparent when a claim occurs. Having worked with clubs for many years, we understand the unique risks they face and can help ensure they have appropriate cover in place. Specialist advice can make a significant difference when it comes to protecting a club's assets, members and future."

## ***One of the most common issues Rollins encounters is underinsurance***

"Many clubs have not reviewed their sums insured for a number of years. Construction and rebuilding costs have increased dramatically and, as a result, some properties may now be insured for considerably less than their true replacement value. If a serious claim occurs, insurers can apply underinsurance clauses, meaning the club may receive only part of the claim settlement. This can leave organisations facing significant unexpected costs. Where necessary, we can assist clubs by arranging professional valuations through specialist partners."

## ***Dermot also highlights the growing importance of cyber insurance, an area many clubs may not have considered***

"There is a common misconception that cyber crime only affects large corporations or financial institutions. In reality, criminals increasingly target smaller organisations because they often have fewer safeguards in place. Clubs hold member information, financial records and other sensitive data which can be attractive to cyber criminals. A data breach or cyber attack can result in substantial costs and liabilities. The encouraging news is that cyber insurance is often much more affordable than people expect and can provide valuable protection."

***Personal service remains a key part of the Rollins approach***

"We believe there is real value in meeting clients face to face and regularly visiting clubs. By seeing premises first-hand and understanding how an organisation operates, we can better assess risks and provide more tailored advice. That level of understanding can be difficult to achieve through online forms or telephone conversations alone."

Rollins Insurance Brokers have been serving clients throughout Northern Ireland for decades and continue to provide specialist insurance solutions to clubs across the province. In 2024, the company became part of Brown & Brown, one of the world's largest insurance brokerage organisations.

Dermot concluded, "We are now part of a powerful international organisation with significant buying power and influence within the insurance market. That allows us to combine the strength and resources of a global business with the local knowledge, personal service and specialist expertise that clubs have come to expect from Rollins."

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## Grievances, Stress and the Growing Pressure on Employers



If there's one theme we are seeing more than anything at the moment, it's this - workplace issues are becoming more complex.

Over recent months, there has been a noticeable increase in formal grievances being raised by employees. These are not always straightforward complaints. More often, they involve a combination of interpersonal conflict, communication breakdowns, management concerns, and allegations of unfair treatment.

Alongside this, we are also seeing more employees going off sick citing work-related stress, often linked to the same underlying issues. For employers, this creates a difficult and often sensitive situation, not just from a legal perspective, but from an operational and people management point of view.

### The Rise in Grievances

Grievances are a normal part of any workplace, but what is changing is the nature of them. Increasingly, grievances are not isolated to one issue or incident. Instead, they tend to involve multiple concerns, sometimes going back over a period of time.

In many cases, employers are dealing with grievances that include:

- A mix of interpersonal conflict and management concerns
- Historical issues that were never formally addressed
- Allegations involving more than one individual
- Broader concerns around fairness, communication, or workplace culture

What might have started as a relatively minor issue can quickly escalate if it is not dealt with early and clearly. By the time a formal grievance is raised, positions are often more entrenched and resolution becomes more difficult.

### Stress-Related Absence - A Linked Issue

At the same time, there is a clear increase in employees going off sick with work-related stress, often during or shortly after workplace disputes.

This creates a challenging balance for employers. There is a duty of care to support employee wellbeing, but there is also a need to continue managing the underlying issue whether that is a grievance, a performance concern, or a conduct matter.

Common situations we are seeing include employees raising a grievance and then going off sick shortly afterwards, ongoing processes being delayed due to absence, and difficulties maintaining appropriate communication while the employee is not at work.

In many cases, the grievance and the absence become closely connected, which adds another layer of complexity to how the situation should be managed.

### Why These Issues Escalate

A common pattern in many of these cases is not necessarily that something has gone seriously wrong, but that issues have not been handled in a structured or consistent way early on.

For example, concerns may be raised informally but not followed up, conversations may take place without being

documented, or expectations may not be clearly set. Interpersonal issues can also be allowed to drift in the hope that they will resolve themselves.

Over time, this can lead to frustration building up. When that frustration eventually surfaces, it often does so through a formal grievance, by which point the situation is more difficult to manage.

### Managing Grievances Effectively

When a grievance is raised, it is important that the process is handled fairly, consistently, and without unnecessary delay. This does not mean making the process overly complicated, but it does require a clear structure.

Employers should ensure that the grievance is acknowledged promptly, the issues are clearly understood, and an appropriate person is appointed to investigate. It is also important that the employee understands the process and that outcomes are based on evidence rather than assumption.

Where grievances involve multiple issues or individuals, it is often helpful to break these down and deal with each aspect methodically, rather than trying to address everything at once.

### Managing Absence During a Process

One of the more challenging aspects is managing a grievance or disciplinary process where the employee is off sick.

There is no single approach that fits every situation, but it is important to maintain appropriate contact and to consider medical advice where



Ronnie McCullough  
Managing Director  
Tel: 07835 255794



Nicola Curry  
HR Consultant



Alan Hall  
Health & Safety Specialist

necessary. Employers should assess whether the employee is fit to participate in meetings and whether any adjustments may be needed, such as remote meetings or written responses.

It is not always necessary to pause a process entirely due to absence, but proceeding without considering the employee's wellbeing can create additional risk.

### The Importance of Clear Communication

Many of these situations come back to communication. Where expectations, decisions, and processes are not clearly communicated, misunderstandings can arise.

Following up conversations in writing, explaining the reasoning behind decisions, and ensuring employees understand what is expected of them can all help to prevent issues from escalating.

Often, it is not the issue itself that causes the problem, but the lack of clarity around it.

### What Employers Should Be Doing Now

Given the increase in grievances and stress-related absence, this is a good time for employers to review how these situations are being managed in practice.

This includes ensuring that managers are trained and feel confident handling difficult conversations, that issues are addressed early and consistently, and that documentation is clear and up to date. It is also important to have clear processes for managing absence alongside ongoing workplace issues.

In many cases, strengthening structure and consistency at an early stage can prevent more complex problems developing later.

### Final Word

Workplace issues are becoming more nuanced, and grievances and stress-related absence are increasingly linked.

For employers, the focus should not just be on reacting when problems arise, but on creating an environment where concerns are addressed early, fairly, and consistently.

Clear processes, effective communication, and confident management remain the key to reducing both risk and disruption.

If you need further information or support, please contact:  
**Ronnie McCullough,**  
Managing Director,  
RKM Business Solutions on  
07835 255794.

Q. We have a local person who wishes to become a member of the club. This person has had issues with other licensed establishments in the town and it is unlikely that the club's committee would vote for him to be admitted as a member to our club. Our steward has already expressed concerns as he is aware of this person from other incidents within the town. Do we need to provide a reason for refusing this person's membership application and is there any way that they could challenge the committee's decision? At our last committee meeting it was suggested that our decision could be judicially reviewed by this person.

A. No one can 'judicially review' a decision of a club for the main reason that a Judicial Review only applies to decisions made by public bodies such as the Government and Local Authority. The club is a private members' club and therefore decisions made by the club cannot be challenged by way of a Judicial Review.

For the vast majority of clubs in Northern Ireland, membership decisions are purely vested with the committee and two votes against admission will prevent the candidate from becoming a member of the club. The committee is not obliged to provide a reason to an unsuccessful candidate as it would often be impossible to provide a reason since individual committee members voting are not obliged to reveal why they have voted the way they have. Even if a committee knew why a membership application had been unsuccessful, they would still not be obliged to disclose this reason to the unsuccessful candidate. The committee can simply inform the candidate that their application was not successful. You do not need to provide any further details.

It is also completely appropriate to take into account the steward's concerns. It is appropriate that the committee considers any concerns raised by an employee towards a membership applicant as the committee does have a duty of care towards the club's employees. Should the committee wish to hear from the steward prior to voting then they are free to invite the steward to the committee meeting to hear his views. Ultimately, however, the final decision must be made by the committee. Employees cannot 'veto' prospective members.

Once the vote has been taken, the applicant can then be simply informed whether their application has been successful or unsuccessful. No committee member has to provide a reason for the way that they voted and the committee would be completely in order to just minute whether the application is successful or unsuccessful.



One final piece of advice is that it is always easier to prevent a person from becoming a member than to expel them once they have joined. It is therefore completely understandable that committees tend to err on the side of caution when considering membership applications.

*This Q&A is for general guidance and should not be relied upon as definitive advice. Clubs are advised to seek independent legal or professional advice before taking any action. The Federation Helplines remain available to assist with general queries.*

**SDM** SHEAN DICKSON MERRICK  
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## Federation Congratulates Roger Bell BEM

The Northern Ireland Federation of Clubs extends its warmest congratulations to Roger Bell on being awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) in His Majesty The King's Birthday Honours List for services to local cricket.

Roger's award is richly deserved recognition of a lifetime dedicated to the development and promotion of cricket in Northern Ireland. Over more than five decades, he has made an outstanding contribution to both Carrickfergus Cricket Club and the Northern Cricket Union, serving in a wide range of roles and helping to strengthen the sport at every level.

Currently Honorary Treasurer and an Honorary Life Member of Carrickfergus Cricket Club, Roger has also served with distinction as President and Chairman of the Northern Cricket Union. His commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm have earned him widespread respect throughout the cricketing community.

Speaking following the announcement, Roger said he was “surprised and delighted” to receive the honour, adding that it was pleasing to see both Carrickfergus Cricket Club and the Northern Cricket Union recognised in this way.

The Federation joins the many friends and colleagues who have worked alongside Roger over the years in congratulating him on this well-deserved honour and thanking him for his exceptional service to sport and the wider community.



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The 2026 Formula 1 season is in full flow, and every race is raising the stakes.

From the early-season battles to the heart of the European legs, momentum is building. Rivalries are intensifying, strategies are evolving, and the margins between victory and defeat are tighter than ever. Now, the championship enters its defining phase - where titles are won and lost on some of the sport's most iconic circuits.

July brings the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, followed by races in Belgium and Hungary. After the summer break, the action resumes in the Netherlands before moving to Monza for the Italian Grand Prix in early September. Every session, qualifying round and race is live on Sky Sports.

And when the racing stops, the action doesn't. Sky Sports continues to deliver live international cricket throughout the summer, alongside coverage of some of golf's biggest tournaments as the world's leading players battle for major honours.

The return of domestic football in August adds even more



Photo by permission of Getty Images

excitement, with live coverage from the Premier League, the English Football League and the Scottish Premiership bringing fans back into the heart of the action.

From motor sport and cricket to golf and football, Sky Sports offers a packed schedule of live sport throughout the summer months.

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### July - September Highlights

Sunday 28th June .....	Formula 1 - Austrian Grand Prix
Sunday 5th July .....	Formula 1 - British Grand Prix
Thurs.-Sun. 16th - 19th July .....	The Open Championship (Royal Birkdale)
Sunday 19th July .....	Formula 1 - Belgian Grand Prix
21st July - 16th August .....	The Hundred (Men's and Women's) Cricket
Sunday 26th July .....	Formula 1 - Hungarian Grand Prix
19th - 23rd August .....	England v Pakistan - 1st Test (Headingley)
Saturday 22nd August .....	Start of the 2026/27 Premier League season
Sunday 23rd August .....	Formula 1 - Netherlands Grand Prix
27th - 31st August .....	England v Pakistan - 2nd Test (Lord's)
Sunday 6th September .....	Formula 1 - Italian Grand Prix
9th - 13th September .....	England v Pakistan - 3rd Test (Edgbaston)
Sunday 13th September .....	Formula 1 - Spanish Grand Prix



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# Heineken 0.0 Accelerates Growth Across the On-Trade with New Flavoured Innovation

Heineken 0.0 is continuing its strong momentum across the UK and Ireland on-trade, with growing demand from pubs, bars, hotels, restaurants, social clubs and sports clubs reflecting a significant shift in consumer drinking habits towards alcohol-free options.

As one of the world's leading alcohol-free beer brands, Heineken 0.0 has become a key driver within the no- and low-alcohol category, as consumers increasingly seek moderation, wellness and greater choice when socialising. In Northern Ireland, distribution is supported by United Wines, a subsidiary of the Heineken Group, which services more than 1,000 customers across both the on- and off-trade.

The hospitality sector has played a pivotal role in the brand's success, with operators recognising the importance of offering a credible alcohol-free range to meet evolving consumer expectations. Whether catering for designated drivers, midweek occasions, sporting events or consumers choosing mindful drinking, Heineken 0.0 provides venues with a premium alcohol-free option from a globally recognised brand.

Building on this momentum, Heineken is continuing to invest in innovation within the alcohol-free space, introducing two new flavoured variants designed to bring greater choice and excitement to consumers. The latest additions, Heineken 0.0 Nectarine & Juniper and Heineken 0.0 Lemon & Elderflower, offer a refreshing twist on the original. Nectarine & Juniper combines subtle stone-fruit sweetness with aromatic botanical notes, while Lemon & Elderflower delivers crisp citrus refreshment balanced by delicate floral character.

The launch provides on-trade operators with an opportunity to enhance their alcohol-free offering, attract new consumers and encourage trial within a category that continues to grow in both popularity and importance. As consumer expectations evolve, innovation within the alcohol-free segment is becoming increasingly important in helping venues deliver choice without compromise.

David Greenlees, Senior Brand Manager at United Wines, commented, "The no- and low-alcohol category has seen remarkable growth over recent years, with consumers increasingly expecting high-quality alcohol-free options wherever they choose to socialise. Heineken 0.0 has played a leading role in that growth thanks to its great taste, premium positioning and strong brand credentials.

"Our new flavoured variants give operators an exciting opportunity to broaden their alcohol-free range and engage consumers looking for something different, while still delivering the trusted quality associated with the Heineken brand. We believe these innovations will help venues meet growing demand and drive incremental sales within the category."

With continued investment in innovation and flavour expansion, Heineken 0.0 is well positioned to remain a cornerstone of the alcohol-free category across the on-trade, helping operators future-proof their drinks offering while meeting the needs of today's increasingly mindful consumer.

## Magners Adds Iconic Pint Bottle to its 0.0% Range

Magners Irish Cider is expanding its zero alcohol range with the launch of Magners 0.0% in its iconic pint bottle (568ml). The format is now available across on-trade venues, offering the same great refreshing taste as Magners Original but without the alcohol.

Magners pint bottle first revolutionised the category back in the early 2000s with its over-ice serve and today it's still the number one packaged cider in Northern Ireland in both volume and value in the on-trade.

The expansion of the range is in response to the growing trend for moderation which is now a key part of modern culture. Recent research from the National Association of Cider Makers (NACM) found that no and low cider is the most appealing option for non-drinkers considering such a drink, ranking ahead of beer, wine and cocktails - highlighting its importance on the bar this summer.

Commenting, Phoebe Small, Head of Brand for Magners, said: "We're delighted to be able to offer Magners 0.0% in pint bottle in time for the summer, giving consumers even more options to enjoy

our iconic over-ice serve. The trend for moderation is showing no signs of slowing and it's fantastic to see the role cider is playing amongst those looking to reduce or avoid alcohol.

"Summer is an important time for the category with many favouring cider as a refreshing, sessionable option. With moderation on the rise, many consumers will be looking for no and low alcohol options so it's great to have more formats available alongside our Original Magners Irish Cider and with strong brand awareness, Magners 0.0% pint bottles will be a strong addition in the fridge this summer."

The new pint bottle is available to order from this month.

For more information, please visit [tennentsdirect.com](http://tennentsdirect.com) or [magners.com/uk/](http://magners.com/uk/)



# Heineken® 0.0 with a twist of **Lemon Elderflower** or **Nectarine Juniper**.

**NEW**

**LEMON  
ELDERFLOWER**



**NECTARINE  
JUNIPER**



## Enjoy a refreshingly crisp Schweppes this Summer

### Savour Sophisticated Flavour

Schweppes was founded in 1783 by Jacob Schweppes. He invented the first ever process of capturing bubbles, and from this carbonation system, Schweppes Soda water was born - the world's first ever soft drink.

Thanks to Jacob we have been enjoying the superior taste of Schweppes mixers for over 200 years and is the No1 branded mixer in Ireland enjoyed with and without alcohol.

With consumers increasingly looking for flavoured mixer options, which deliver on taste and fizz, Schweppes has the perfect range to meet this demand. The Schweppes 200ml range is available in Tonic Water, Slimline Tonic Water, Elderflower Slimline Tonic Water, Soda Water, Pink Grapefruit Soda and Ginger Ale.

We also added a unique new flavour to the Schweppes 200ml range in May. New Schweppes Tropical Soda is a blend of exotic flavours including Dragon fruit, Guava, Blackcurrant and Hibiscus, perfectly balancing a touch of sweetness and fruity tartness. Schweppes Tropical Soda provides an opportunity to further grow Schweppes within the on trade, driving relevance for the brand with the return of the spring/summer social occasion in pubs, bars and restaurants, whilst tapping into the ever-growing flavoured soda trend.



Schweppes kicked off the spring-summer season in May with Pink Grapefruit Soda activation in line with 'World Paloma Day' on the 22nd of May 2026 targeting socialisers ages 25-39. The rising popularity of the Paloma serve across bars nationwide is a trend Schweppes Pink Grapefruit Soda will tap into and will help simplify the bartenders' path to a great Paloma serve by simply adding tequila and pink grapefruit garnish. For consumers who prefer a no-alcohol alternative, Schweppes Pink Grapefruit is best served poured over ice for a crisp and refreshing alcohol-free option.

We will continue our flavoured soda activation from June to inspire consumers with a fully integrated marketing campaign to support the launch of Schweppes Tropical Soda. This will include value added deals for outlets with functional activation items such as glassware to keep the brand top of mind for customers and to support the 'cocktail' and 'sprit' trend, and venue point-of-sale. There will also be a newly developed 'suggested serve' booklet to provide Schweppes inspiration for summer menus, targeted social, out of home media and PR.

The Schweppes sales team will also work in partnership with outlets to activate the brand on menus, highlighting mixability, straight drinking opportunities and suggested serves. Schweppes Pink Grapefruit and Tropical soda will be supported all summer long with the return of the Schweppes 'Taste the Summer' roadshow across venues in Ireland and Northern Ireland and feature as part of Schweppes takeovers at key summer festivals.



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# Belfast Prepares to Welcome the Fleadh



This August, Belfast will take centre stage as it hosts one of the largest cultural celebrations ever to come to Northern Ireland. From 2nd-9th August 2026, the city will welcome the world-famous Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann, an event that attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors and showcases the very best of Irish music, dance, language and culture.

First established in 1951, the Fleadh has grown into the world's largest celebration of traditional Irish culture, drawing performers, competitors and visitors from across Ireland and around the globe. The week-long festival features not only prestigious music competitions but also concerts, street performances, cultural exhibitions, céilís, pageants and a wide range of family-friendly events.

The 2026 festival will be particularly significant as it marks the first time Belfast has hosted the event and only the second occasion that the Fleadh has been held in Northern Ireland.

For Belfast and the wider hospitality sector, the economic benefits are expected to be substantial. Previous host cities have experienced significant boosts to tourism, accommodation, retail and hospitality trade, with large visitor numbers generating millions of pounds for local economies. Belfast is expected to welcome an unprecedented influx of visitors during the week, creating valuable opportunities for businesses throughout the city and beyond.

The festival promises a vibrant programme of events centred around Belfast City Hall and venues across the city. Visitors can expect free outdoor performances, concerts featuring internationally recognised artists, community showcases and countless informal music sessions that have become synonymous with the Fleadh experience.

For registered clubs throughout Northern Ireland, the event represents an opportunity to showcase the warmth, hospitality and community spirit for which our club movement is renowned. Many visitors attending the Fleadh will take the opportunity to explore other parts of the province, and clubs can play an important role in extending a warm welcome to those discovering Northern Ireland for the first time.

Regardless of one's musical tastes, there is no doubt that hosting an event of this scale is a major achievement for Belfast and a positive opportunity to present Northern Ireland to a worldwide audience. The Federation extends its best wishes to the organisers, volunteers, performers and all those involved in delivering what promises to be a memorable and historic week for our capital city.

As the countdown continues, August promises to bring music, culture, visitors and a unique atmosphere to Belfast. It is an occasion of which the city can be proud and one that many across the club network will look forward to experiencing.

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# RORY'S

# MILES MAYO



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2026



## THE TRILOGY



Irish rugby legend **Rory Best** is leading a team of business leaders on his third and final walking challenge **in aid of Cancer Fund for Children**. Together, these incredible individuals are **walking 9 marathons in 9 days and covering 235 miles** throughout the island of Ireland to raise vital funds in aid of children and young people impacted by cancer. **You can help them make a difference.**

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## Celebrating Excellence at the Northern Ireland Football Writers' Awards

The annual Northern Ireland Football Writers' Association Awards once again provided an opportunity to celebrate the outstanding achievements of players, managers and personalities who have made a significant contribution to the local game during the 2025/26 season.

Held in Belfast in May, the awards ceremony brought together representatives from clubs across the footballing spectrum to recognise excellence both on and off the pitch. In a season that delivered excitement, drama and quality football from the opening fixture to the final whistle, the awards reflected the high standards that continue to be evident throughout the local game.

Among the major winners was Larne defender Matt Ridley, who was named Northern Ireland Football Writers' Player of the Year following an exceptional campaign. Ridley played a pivotal role in Larne's title-winning season, producing a series of commanding performances that helped secure the Gibson Cup for the Invermen. His consistency, leadership and defensive qualities made him a worthy recipient of one of the game's most prestigious individual honours.

Larne's success was further recognised when manager Gary Haveron collected the Manager of the Year award. Under his guidance, the club once again demonstrated remarkable resilience and quality, maintaining the standards that have made them one of the leading forces in Irish League football.

The women's game was also celebrated, with Glentoran Women's captain Jess Foy receiving the Women's Player of the Year award after helping her side secure another league title. Her achievement underlines the continued growth and strength of women's football



The two Dr Malcolm Brodie Hall of Fame award winners, Gareth McAuley and Marissa Callaghan, the first female player to receive this distinguished honour.

in Northern Ireland, which continues to attract increasing support and recognition.

One of the most memorable moments of the afternoon came with the induction of two outstanding figures into the Dr Malcolm Brodie Hall of Fame. Former Northern Ireland international Gareth McAuley was recognised for a career that took him from the Irish League to the Premier League and the European Championship finals. Joining him was former Cliftonville and Northern Ireland captain Marissa Callaghan, who became the first female player to receive this distinguished honour. Their inclusion acknowledges not only their individual achievements but also the inspiration they have provided to future generations of footballers.

Awards ceremonies such as these serve an important purpose. While trophies and league tables often dominate headlines, they also remind us of the dedication, commitment and professionalism that underpin football at every level. Behind every successful season are countless hours of training, preparation and sacrifice from players, coaches, volunteers and supporters alike.

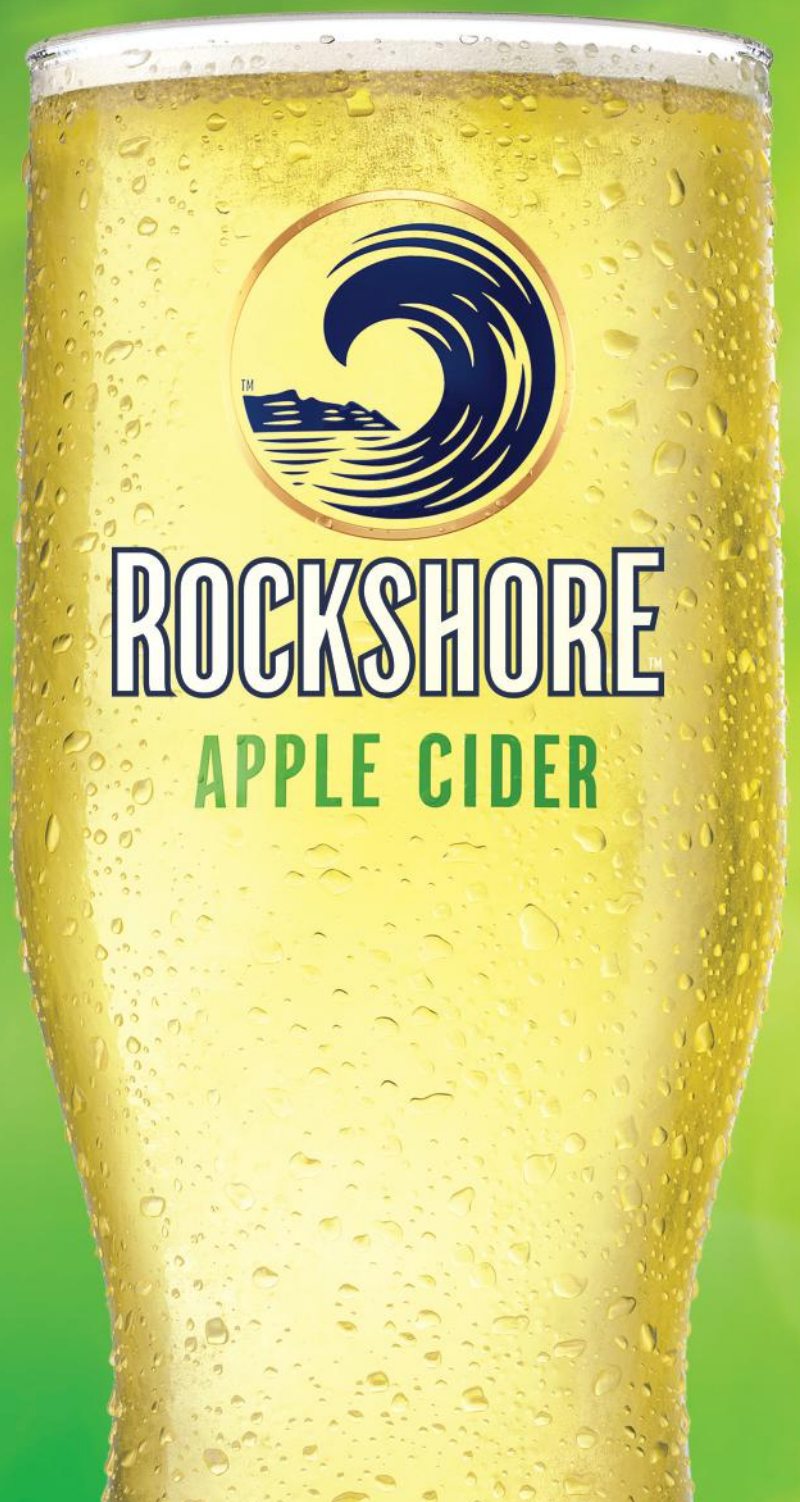
The Northern Ireland Football Writers' Awards continue to shine a spotlight on those contributions and provide a fitting opportunity to celebrate the very best of our local game. As another memorable season draws to a close, all those honoured at this year's ceremony can take great pride in the recognition bestowed upon them by the journalists who follow and report on football throughout Northern Ireland.




Larne FC won two of the major awards on the night following a successful season - Gary Haveron 'Manager of the Year' and Matt Ridley, 'Player of the Year'.

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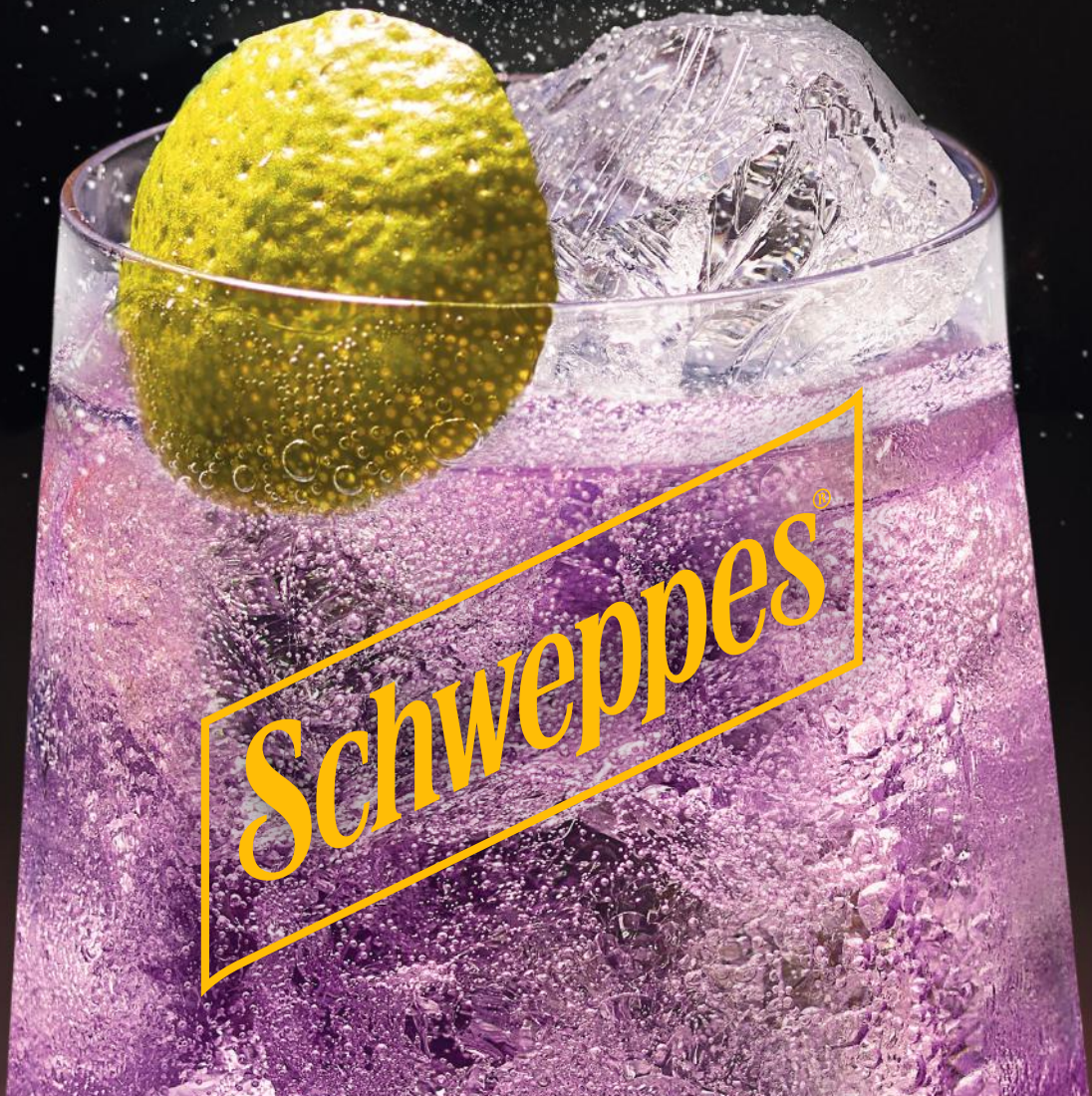


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