

152

AUG 2009
To
SEPT. 2009

Kilkenny and Cork advance to final

Corkery's class fires Rebelettes to final

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE SEMI-FINAL

Jim O'Sullivan
Nowlan Park

Cork.....2-13

Wexford.....1-10

NOTWITHSTANDING the magnificent Briege Corkery, the other key reason why holders Cork won through to meet Kilkenny in the Gala All-Ireland senior camogie decider was simply that as a unit, they responded so effectively to a below par first-half display.

At half-time in Saturday's semi-final in Nowlan Park, their prospects of making it to the final looked decidedly shaky when they trailed by two points after having enjoyed the advantage of the wind. But, drawing inspiration from a 40th minute goal from midfielder Corkery — and further boosted minutes later by a second from Emer O'Farrell which was made by outstanding substitute Julia White — they outplayed a Wexford side which had beaten them in the 2007 final.

"I don't think we played well in the first half and we knew that ourselves in the dressing room," said Cork manager Denise Cronin — the winning captain 14 years ago when Cork last met Kilkenny in a final. "We spoke about what we needed to do in each position and the players all worked harder in the second half."

Scores were level three times in the opening quarter before Ursula Jacob (daughter of former great Mick Jacob) goaled for Wexford in the 19th minute. On balance, they looked stronger in attack — with Katrina Parrock very impressive — and comfortable at the back against a Cork attack dependent on the free-taking of Rachel Moloney. Dual star Corkery was a dynamo and

contributed two points from play.

At the break, it was 1-5 to 0-6 and while Cork showed a steady improvement in the early stages of the second half, Wexford's confident play enabled them to stay in front. But, then came Corkery's goal. It levelled the scores and changed the course of the game.

"It maybe went away from us in the second half," said a devastated Wexford manager Stella Sinnott. "Cork are hugely experienced and when the going got tough, their big players came up to the mark. The first goal probably killed the game and when they got the next one very quickly after that, heads maybe dropped."

Corkery's recall of her goal was characteristically humorous. "Gemma (O'Connor) gave me a ball through the centre and it was normally a ball that I'd miss — and when I get near the goals I normally miss as well. One night at training (goalkeeper) Aoife Murray gave out to me because I'd be laughing every time I'd go in for a goal."

"She told me to 'cop' myself on, that if I put my mind to it, I could do it. And that's exactly what I was thinking about as I was going in!"

Wexford competed gamely all the way to the finish but they were fighting a losing battle from the time O'Farrell's goal went in. Cork's full-back line was heroic, Murray was inspirational in goal and Mary O'Connor was every bit as strong at centre-back as was Cathriona Foley at the edge of the square.

Additionally, Orla Connor, Gemma O'Connor and an improved Rachel Moloney made important contributions, as did substitutes Linda O'Connell and Julia White in particular. Cronin acknowledged the greater return from the forwards as a group once they opened up the play, saying: "I knew once we got the lead we weren't going to let it behind."

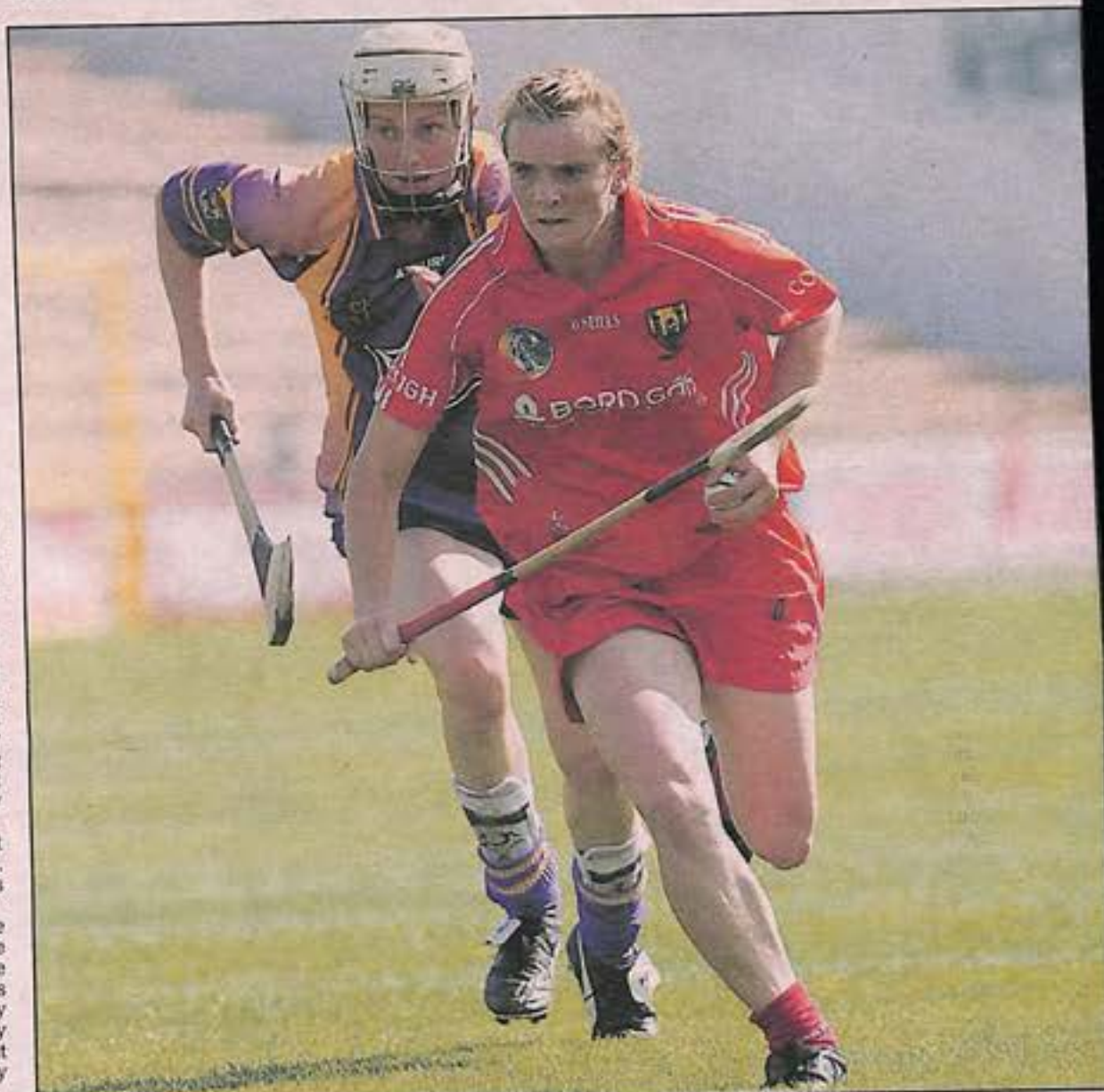
Meanwhile, the Wexford boss Sinnott gives Kilkenny a good chance in the final: "I don't think they will have any fear — they showed that against Galway. It will need a huge performance, but I'd still fancy their chances. Cork won't like playing



WINNING SMILES: Cork's Sile Burns and Orla Cotter celebrate at the final whistle. Picture: Lorraine O'Sullivan



SINKING FEELING: Wexford defender Claire O'Connor shows the pain of defeat after the game. Picture: Matt Browne



FULLY FOCUSED: Cork's Briege Corkery surges past Wexford's Caroline Murphy at Nowlan Park. Picture: Matt Browne

“

We spoke about what we needed to do in each position and the players all worked harder in the second-half

them. They're a young fast team."

Scorers for Cork: R. Moloney 0-8 (0-8 frees); B. Corkery 1-2; E. O'Farrell 1-0; S. Burns, U. O'Donoghue and G. O'Connor 0-1 each.

Wexford: U. Jacob 1-2; K. Kelly 0-4 (0-3 frees); K. Parrock 0-2; C. Murphy and R.M. Breen 0-1 each.

CORK: A. Murray, J. O'Callaghan, C. Foley, R. Buckley, J. Duffy, M. O'Connor, S. Hayes, B. Corkery, O. Cotter, E. Dillon, G. O'Connor, U. O'Donoghue, S. Burns, E. O'Farrell, R. Moloney.

Subs: L. O'Connell for Duffy (23rd minute); J. White for Dillon (28); K. Mackey for O'Farrell (54); E. O'Sullivan for O'Donoghue (52).

WEXFORD: M. Darcy, D. Codd, C. O'Loughlin, C. O'Connor, A. Codd, M. Leacy, A. O'Connor (capt.), C. Murphy, K. Kelly, M. O'Leary, R.M. Breen, K. Parrock, U. Leacy, U. Jacob, J. Dwyer.

Subs: L. Holohan for Murphy (47); M. Hearne for U. Leacy (59).

Referee: Una Kearney (Armagh).

Cork qualify for All-Ireland camogie final

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE SEMI-FINAL

CORK.....2-13

WEXFORD.....1-10

at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny

DESPITE trailing by two points at the interval and turning to play against the stiff wind Cork made it through to their eighth consecutive Gala All-Ireland senior camogie final as they turned the tides to

record a six-point victory over National League champions Wexford in Nowlan Park on Saturday last.

Having played with the wind in the first half cork trailed 1-5 to 0-6 at the break after Ursula Jacob had put Wexford ahead in the nineteenth minute firing the ball to the cork net. Cork through the first half found the going turn against a strong Wexford defence but they hung in

there with four points from Rachel Moloney and one apiece from their superb mid field duo of Briege Corkery and Orla Cotter.

Cork were a transformed side in the second half as Briege Corkery and Orla Cotter came storming into the action at midfield, Briege Corkery broke through for a goal and it was level at 1-8 apiece. Emer O'Farrell had Cork's second goal at the

three quarter stage and it was the score they needed as they tacked on the points to run our eventual winners.

SCORERS

CORK: R. Moloney 0-7 (0-8 frees); E. O'Farrell 1-0; O. Cotter, G. O'Connor, U. O'Donoghue, S. Burns and K. Mackey 0-1 each.

WEXFORD: U. Jacob 1-2; K. Kelly 0-4 (21, 1 '45); K. Parrock 0-2; C. Murphy and R.M. Breen 0-1 each.

CORK: A. Murray, J. O'Callaghan, C. Foley, R. Buckley, J. Duffy, M. O'Connor, S. Hayes, B. Corkery, O.

Cotter, E. Dillon, G. O'Connor, U. O'Donoghue, S. Burns, E. O'Farrell, R. Moloney. Subs: L. O'Connell for J. Duffy (22 m), J. White for E. Dillon (28), K. Mackey for E. O'Farrell (54), E. O'Sullivan for U. O'Donoghue (52).

WEXFORD: M. Darcy, D. Codd, C. O'Loughlin, G. O'Connor, A. Codd, M. Leacy, A. O'Connor (Capt.), C. Murphy, M. O'Leary, U. Leacy, R.M. Breen, K. Parrock, U. Jacob, K. Kelly, J. Dwyer. Subs: L. Holohan for C. Murphy (45), M. Hearne for U. Leacy (59).

REFeree: U. Kearney (Armagh)

AUG. 2009

CAMOGIE GALA ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL

CAMOGIE DREAM DIES

DEAN GOODISON

In Nowlan Park

CORK 2-13
WEXFORD 1-10

SOME DAYS you are left to wonder what might have been. Saturday was one of those for the Wexford camogie team as they went out with a whimper against Cork at Nowlan Park in the Gala All-Ireland Senior championship semi-final.

It all looked so promising at half-time. Wexford led by two points and it could, and should, have been more as they dominated territorially, had ample possession and spurned several opportunities in front of goal. The second-half started brightly but turned sour after just ten minutes.

In truth the referee was inept. It's always the easiest thing in the world to do, heap blame on an official, but it was both at key moments and also whenever Wexford got in a scoring position that her whistle seemed to go missing. Anyone can make a couple of mistakes, but it proves costly when they are all at the expense of one team.

The 2-13 notched by Cork was the largest score Wexford conceded all season. It is difficult to place too much blame on the defence when they restricted their opponents to six wind-aided points in the opening half and were under constant pressure for long periods of the second.

In midfield Caroline Murphy struggled against Briege Corkery, but the Cork lynchpin was in superb form and would have excelled against almost anyone. Kate Kelly was her normal, influential self in the first-half while Michelle O'Leary adds more balance on the wing than in midfield.

All of the forwards struggled in the second-half as opportunities became limited. In the opening period the sextet got the opportunity to show their worth.

Aptly, it was pretty much a reflection on the whole year, as Josie Dwyer and Rose-Marie Breen worked tirelessly to create openings. Ursula Jacob picked off a handful of scores, Katrina Parrock is a diamond with a few rough edges to smooth out to become Wexford's star, and Una Leacy performed to her inconsistent worst.

Kate Kelly opened the scoring in the opening minute before Rachel Moloney and Orla Cotter put Cork on top. Jacob flicked over from a long-range Kelly free in the tenth minute and Katrina Parrock fired over after good work by Breen and Caroline Murphy.



■ Josie Dwyer tries to shake off Cork centre-back Mary O'Connor.

A second Moloney free and a Briege Corkery over again saw the lead change hands before Jacob had her effort blocked on the Cork goal-line. Parrock had another effort saved by Aoife Murray but Jacob fired in the rebound to put Wexford up by 1-3 to 0-4 after 19 minutes.

A soft Moloney free pulled her side within one but a long-range shot by Caroline Murphy quickly cancelled out her score. With five minutes left in the half, Parrock was scythed down when about to fire home Wexford's second goal, but all she got for her efforts was a painful back as referee Una Kearney again displayed clouded vision.

Jacob, Murphy and Michelle O'Leary all dropped point attempts short approaching the interval, while Josie Dwyer just failed to force the ball into the net after a scramble. Kelly added an injury time '45 which was countered by Moloney at the other end, leaving Wexford up by two at the interval (1-5 to 0-6).

Katrina Parrock, Rose-Marie Breen and Kelly - moved to wing-forward in a switch with Michelle O'Leary - all added overs in the opening five minutes of the second-half to open up a four-point lead, but the intensity started to drop in the Wexford side and they paid for it with two more Moloney frees and a brace of goals in two minutes.

Gemma O'Connor played in Corkery for the first before Julia White handpassed to a free Emer O'Farrell for the second. Ursula Jacob pulled Wexford within three but Sile Burns re-established the advantage with 15 minutes remaining.

Substitute Lenny Holohan failed to control first-time from Breen's pass as Wexford's last goal opportunity went harmlessly away. Kelly's '45, with twelve minutes remaining, proved to be Wexford's final score, as three late Cork points finished their year.

The victors face Kilkenny in the final after a late Marie O'Connor goal saw them edge past Galway.

Devastated boss feels it's time for a new voice

STELLAH SINNOTT cast a forlorn shadow following Wexford's defeat to All-Ireland champions Cork on Saturday.

'We were against the wind and put up a tremendous performance first-half, but I think the second goal early in the second-half really killed us,' stated Sinnott. 'The heads went down a little bit after that and it was hard to recover from, even with the wind.'

'We are all gutted and devastated, especially with the amount of work this team put in, and the commitment that they gave. They have been at it since last January, they are just a tremendous bunch of girls to work with. They gave so much to Wexford sport and Wexford camogie, but I'm absolutely devastated.'

On the referee's abysmal display, Stella said: 'I really felt that Katrina was brought down for a penalty. A few decisions like that go against you and it tells in the end. There were defiantly a few that were very, very questionable.'

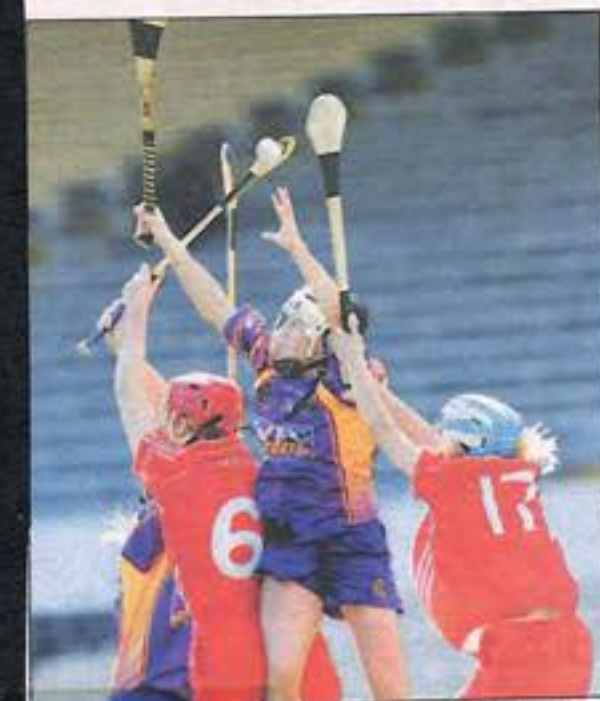
On the switch of Kate Kelly from midfield to wing-forward, she explained: 'we thought Kate could slot over a few points and keep the pressure on Cork. It didn't work out like that but these are the decisions you make on the day.'

The defeat at the hands of Cork could well be the end of an era for Wexford camogie. With several players pushing 30 and uncertainty surrounding the future of

Stella Sinnott and her backroom team, questions will be asked and answered in the coming weeks.

'We came in as a management team, won an All-Ireland and a league title. I don't know, I haven't spoken to the other lads about what they are doing. I think a fresh voice at this stage is something I would think about.'

'I'm absolutely devastated we are not in another All-Ireland but at the same time, on my watch (if I were to leave), I have hopefully left Wexford camogie in a better state than it was.'



■ Kate Kelly in an aerial battle with Cork defenders Mary O'Connor and Lynda O'Connell.

WEXFORD

SCORERS: Ursula Jacob (1-2), Kate Kelly (0-4, 2 '45s, 1 free), Katrina Parrock (0-2), Caroline Murphy and Rose-Marie Breen (0-1 each).

1. Mags D'Arcy
2. Deirdre Codd
3. Catherine O'Loughlin
4. Claire O'Connor
5. Aine Codd
6. Mary Leacy
7. Aoife O'Connor (capt.)
8. Caroline Murphy
14. Kate Kelly
9. Michelle O'Leary
11. Rose-Marie Breen
12. Katrina Parrock
10. Una Leacy
13. Ursula Jacob
15. Josie Dwyer

SUBS: Lenny Holohan for Murphy (46); Michelle Hearne for U. Leacy (58).

CORK

SCORERS: Rachel Moloney (0-8, 5 frees, 1 '45), Briege Corkery (1-1), Emer O'Farrell (1-0), Orla Cotter, Sile Burns, Una O'Donoghue and Gemma O'Connor (0-1).

1. Aoife Murray
2. Joanne O'Callaghan
3. Cathriona Foley
4. Rena Buckley
5. Jenny Duffy
6. Mary O'Connor
7. Sara Hayes
8. Briege Corkery
9. Orla Cotter
10. Emer Dillon
11. Gemma O'Connor
12. Una O'Donoghue
13. Sile Burns
14. Emer O'Farrell
15. Rachel Moloney

SUBS: Lynda O'Connell for Duffy (22); Julia White for Dillon (28); Katriona Mackey for O'Farrell (54); Elmeare O'Sullivan for O'Donoghue (60).

REFEREE: Una Kearney (Armagh).

VENUE: Nowlan Park, Kilkenny.



■ A dejected Claire O'Connor after the final whistle.



Linda Mellerick

Wexford are hit for six by Rebels in the second half

Cork 2-13
Wexford 1-10

CORK have progressed to their eighth consecutive All-Ireland final after seeing off the challenge of Wexford in Nowlan Park.

A scintillating second-half display saw Cork advance after a poor first-half showing, the Rebels trailed by three points and were turning to face into a strong breeze.

Eleven of Wexford's starting 15 were members of the team which defeated Cork in the final of the 2007 campaign and they took the game to Cork from the throw-in.

Playing against a strong wind, Kate Kelly had Wexford's first point on the board within a minute after a weak clearance by Cork.

Wexford's defence was once again controlling matters. Catherine O'Loughlin, Claire O'Connor, Deirdre Codd, Aine Codd, Mary Leacy and Aoife O'Connor were lord-ing it against Cork's forward division.

While Kate Kelly was winning good ball around the middle of the field, so too were Orla Cotter and Breige Corkery, Cork's two stars of the first half.

A Rachel Moloney free and a Cot-ter point saw Cork settle a little on the scoreboard but Wexford were get-ting away from their markers up front and points from Ursula Jacob and Katrina Parrock swung the pen-dulum again in Wexford's direction.

On 19 minutes Rose Marie Breen

gathered in the half-forward line, turned her marker and flanked by Katrina Parrock raced towards goal. The initial strike was blocked by Aoife Murray but Ursula Jacob was first to react to the rebound and pulled to the net.

Wexford led 1-3 to 0-4. Not a worry-ing gap but all of Wexford's scores had come from play compared to two for Cork and both of them coming from the midfield pairing.

Cork were struggling in many posi-tions. It was Corkery and Cotter that were keeping their heads above wa-ter. Jenny Duffy was also actively in-volved in a sweeping role and she was unfortunate to be substituted four minutes later.

But Katrina Parrock was causing problems and the Cork mentors pos-sibly felt they needed more of a one on one marker. Lynda O'Connell was introduced and had a fine game.

Both sides had chances of a goal but were denied. Rachel Moloney (free) and Caroline Murphy swapped points before two '45s, one apiece, leaving the half-time score 1-5 to 0-6.

It wasn't looking good for Cork. They looked lacklustre in key posi-tions. With none of the forwards hav-ing scored from play and turning to face a strong wind matters didn't look good for the Rebels.

But champions die hard.

Josie Dwyer pointed within a minute of the restart. Breen and Mo-loney swapped again and with both sides converting frees three points was the gap between the sides seven minutes in.

Cork's full-back line of Joanne O'Callaghan, Rena Buckley and Ca-



Cork's top scorer Rachel Moloney, with eight points, gets away from Wexford's Deirdre Codd during the Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Nowlan Park.

Picture: Inpho

triona Foley were now coming into their own, particularly Buckley who had a storming second half.

It was obvious that Kate Kelly was starting to tire, a result of her injury over the past few weeks, and Wexford switched her into left half-for-ward. She was no longer an influence as O'Connell reigned.

The next two minutes flattened Wexford and you could see no way back for them.

Julia White had entered the fray before the break. She gathered and passed to Gemma O'Connor who flicked to Corkery in full flight. There was no stopping Corkery as she tore around the outside of de-fence and rocked the net.

Moloney hit over a free and the crowd barely had time to catch its breath before goal poacher supreme Emer O'Farrell pulled first on a breaking ball to the net, after good work by Moloney and White again, to leave the score 2-9 to 1-8.

The life seemed to be sapped out of Wexford, the intensity of their chal-lenge evaporated. From that moment on Cork were going to advance. Jacob pointed and Kelly hit a 45 in the remaining 25 minutes as Cork grew stronger.

Sile Burns, Moloney, Una O'Donoghue and Gemma O'Connor all tapped over points as Cork ad-vanced with a six-point margin.

Scorers for Cork: R Moloney 0-8 (0-5 f, 0-1 45), B Corkery 1-1, E O'Farrell 1-0, O Cotter, S Burns, U O'Donoghue, G O'Connor 0-1 each.

Wexford: U Jacob 1-2, K Kelly 0-4 (0-1 f, 0-2 45), K Parrock, C Murphy, R M Breen, J Dwyer 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley, J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes, B Cork-ery, O Cotter, E Dillon, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue, S Burns, E O'Farrell, R Moloney.

Subs: L O'Connell for J Duffy (23), J White for E Dillon (28), K Mackey for E O'Farrell (54), E O'Sullivan for U O'Donoghue (62).

WEXFORD: M O'Leary, D Codd, C O'Loughlin, C O'Connor, A Codd, M Leacy, A O'Connor, C Murphy, K Kelly, M O'Leary, RM Breen, K Par-rock, U Leacy, U Ursula, J Dwyer.

Subs: L Holohan for C Murphy (45), M Hearn for U Leacy (50).

Referee: Una Kearney (Armagh).

Cronin happy with closing half performance

CORK manager Denise Cronin was thrilled to say the least at Cork's second half performance.

"At half time you couldn't see Cork turning the game the way they did especially when you're playing with the wind in the first half and Wexford are on top. I didn't think we played well and we knew that ourselves."

"We were kind of slug-gish and it was just about getting the basics right."

We spoke about what we needed to do in each posi-tion and the girls took everything on board. They worked harder in the second half and that's all it was.

Cork's full back line were excellent in the second half according to Cronin.

"We knew we were going to be under pressure and there was a possibility that changes were going to be made but I will say that

anyone who started the game gave as much as they could and anyone that came on did the same."

"I thought Lynda O'Con-nell had an amazing game on Kate Kelly, that she nullified her totally. Julia White was also excellent."

However, the first half wasn't so commendable with none of the forwards scoring from play.

It was Breige Corkery's goal in the 10th minute of the second half that

opened the floodgates for Cork.

Denise agrees: "Yes, a fabulous take from Breige, she seemed to be every-where again. We told the forwards to spread it out and stay out around the touchline. Once we opened it out our forwards got the space to take the scores."

Was Denise surprised at how quickly Wexford wilted once Cork got their nose in front?

"They looked a bit tired

alright. I will say that for the last 10 minutes they did look a small bit tired. I knew once we got the lead that we weren't going to leave it behind."

Denise conceded that they did not see the first semi-final as they had their own game to concen-trate on but it will be Cork V Kilkenny on September 13th, fourteen years since the sides last met in the fi-nal. And that day? A Cork victory.

Muskerry look to be too strong

By LINDA MELLERICK
Camogie

TONIGHT,
Evening Echo Cork County Senior championship, Imokilly V Muskerry, Castle road, Mahon, 7pm

THE final round of the di-divisional section in this year's Cork county senior championship takes place this evening in Castle Road, Mahon.

Muskerry, full of mo-mentum after two games to date, will find this meeting their toughest to date.

However, Imokilly have yet to take to the cham-pionship field this season, having received a walkover from Carbery and that won't have done their preparations any fa-vours.

The standard was poor as Muskerry advanced against Carrigdhoun 1-7 to 1-4 and their first half scoring that evening of a single point must have been a worry. They raised their game somewhat in the second half to take a low scoring victory.

Muskerry more than made up for their subdued approach when they next faced Seandun. A facile 5-18 to 0-8 opened the scor-ing floodgates again.

2007 champions Musk-erry reached the semi-fi-nal twelve months ago only to lose to eventual champions Douglas.

Many felt that the loss of the Rockban players, now playing at senior level, would be too much of a loss for Muskerry in '09, yet they still have plenty of talent and con-tinue to play some good camogie with players from Ballincollig and Eir-e Og.

Patricia Buttimer, Den-ise Cronin, Leah Weste and Margaret O'Herlihy are once again sure to be to the forefront.

Imokilly suffered a heavy defeat to Muskerry in 2008 yet that victory was spearheaded by Cath-riona Foley and Sile Burns and one would ex-pect that the standards between the sides won't be so great this time round.

The panel provided by Imokilly for the match programme would suggest that stalwarts such as Mary O'Connor and An-gela Walsh are unavail-able for selection. Bearing that in mind and the fact that the gap last year was so wide, it all points to a Muskerry victory.

Muskerry prove far too strong for Imokilly

Muskerry 2-12
Imokilly 1-3

WET and greasy conditions didn't dampen the enthusiasm of Muskerry and Imokilly in this Evening Echo SCC divisional tie in Castle road last evening.

A second-half, in which Mus-kerry pulled away, didn't do justice to Imokilly's contribution but Muskerry had the better forwards and their second half scoring of 2-7 ensured a com-prehensive victory.

Despite starting without the injured Linda Dorgan, it was

expected that Muskerry would be too strong for an east Cork divisional side that were miss-ing a number of key figures from their line-up.

However, good defensive work from both sides kept scoring to a minimum. A slip-pery surface didn't help the player's first touch and with the score standing at five points to three at half time in favour of Muskerry, after three good points by Margaret O'Herlihy, it was clear that a goal would de-cide matters.

That goal came within a minute of the re-start. A low

By LINDA MELLERICK
Evening Echo SCC

shot by Patricia Buttimer should have been spotted by the keeper but with poor visibil-ity on the night the ball stole in to the corner of the net. With Buttimer afforded too much space by Imokilly she struck over another two points by the 12th minute.

It was all Muskerry now as they led 1-10 to 0-3 midway through the half. Imokilly did have a number of chances but time and again their shots dropped short into the hands of

Marie Gleeson.

On 18 minutes a long drive from Denise Cronin seemed to go all the way to the net, al-though it may have got a touch from Aoife McCarthy. Either way it was a second soft goal for Muskerry and Imokilly were now playing for pride. Kate Ahern pulled a goal back after a cross ball from Emer O'Far-rell but it was a token gesture as two further points from Mus-kerry sealed a comfortable vic-tory in the end.

Scorers for Muskerry: P Buttimer 1-3, M O'Herlihy 0-5 (0-1 f), D Cronin 1-0, M O'Donoghue 0-3, A McCarthy

0-1.
Imokilly: K Ahern 1-0, M O'Neill 0-2 (0-1 f), E O'Farrell 0-1.

MUSKERRY: M Gleeson, K O'Donoghue, S Gleeson, K Mc-Carthy, T Roche, S Buckley, C McK-enna, S Buckley, D Cronin, P But-timer, L Weste, A Twomey, A Mc-Carthy, M O'Donoghue, M O'Herli-hy.

Subs: C McCarthy for A Twomey (51), A Coughlan for K McCarthy, A Cotter for Sarah Buckley, C O'Leary for A McCarthy (55m).

IMOKILLY: C Murphy, J Murphy, U Day, G Kearney, S Smiddy, C O'Connell, E Murphy (Sars), E Murphy (Killesh), K Harrington, A Whoolley, K Sloane, M O'Neill, K Murphy, E O'Farrell, K Ahern.

Subs: M O'Sullivan for C O'Connell (39), E Sexton for K Sloane (52), N Nagle for A Whoolley (55), C O'Con-nell for G Kearney (59).

Referee: John O'Leary (Mallow).

AUG 2009

Downey is thrilled for her young charges

KILKENNY manager Ann Downey was delighted that her side made it over the finishing line with their noses ahead, writes MARY NEWMAN

"To be honest at this point I am just relieved it's over; it's great to have won and be in the final that was what we

set out to do. The girls worked so hard to get there, we never gave up the chase even when they went five points ahead we just kept picking off the point when the opportunities came.

"We introduced two substitutes in the second half and they worked for us Marie

O'Connor is an experienced player and we knew she would work hard and when the opportunity came she held her nerve and grabbed the vital goal."

Having achieved everything as a player, the Kilkenny manager was thrilled at the prospect of

leading her young charges to Croke Park.

"It's so special for a player to play in an All-Ireland final to run out on to Croke Park on what is a huge day in your career; this is what we were aiming for since January."

"These girls have worked

so hard to make it happen and we will now turn our attention to the final.

"They are a very young side but they have been learning as they go along and they won't have any fears in Croke Park. We are just delighted to be heading to the final."



Galway's Therese Manton and Aoife Neary of Kilkenny battle for possession during their Gala All-Ireland senior camogie semi-final.

Picture: INPI

Injury-time heartbreak for Galway as Kilkenny advance

Kilkenny
Galway

1-13
1-11

By MARY NEWMAN

All-Ireland senior semi-final

KILKENNY may have a hurling king in Henry Shefflin but the title of camogie queen is definitely bestowed on sub Marie O'Connor.

Her goal three minutes into injury time fired the Cats into their first All-Ireland senior camogie final since 1995.

The die look cast and Ann Downey's young charges seemed to be heading to the losers' corner but O'Connor had different ideas.

But spare a thought for poor Galway who looked to have done enough to reach their second final in-a-row only for the unmarked Marie O'Connor lurking on the edge of their square to spoil their day.

Galway went in as favourites to reach the decider but a young Kilkenny side hung in there and battled hard grabbing their opportunity at the final call giving last year's defeated finalists little chance to recover.

Despite playing with the aid of the strong wind in the opening half, Galway went to the dressing room with only a two-point lead, on three occasions in the opening half they allowed Kilkenny claw their way back into the game as they failed to build on their advantage.

Aisling Connolly and Denise Gaule exchanged early points but with Breda Hanney edging them ahead, Therese Maher striking three superb long-range efforts in-a-row and Jessica Gill adding one, Galway were four ahead.

Both sides employed strange tactics and had a defender from each side standing unmarked as an over crowded mid field tried to make headway, eventually both sides decided to get on with the show and revert to the usual formations. Kilkenny with three unanswered points from Katie Power, Aoife Neary and Michelle Quilty, were hanging in there. Aisling Connolly pointed a Galway free but with Colette Dormer and Ann Dalton doing trojan work at

midfield, Kilkenny were on level terms with two in-a-row from Denise Gaule and Aoife Neary.

Kilkenny went the last seven minutes of the half without a score as Galway took control.

Aisling Connolly and Veronica Curtin hit points and Kilkenny lived dangerously as Jessica Gill's 45-metre free hit the post and came back into play only for Veronica Curtin's close-in effort to be twice taken off the line and cleared to safety to the sound of the half-time whistle as Galway led 0-9 to 0-7.

Galway were five point ahead inside 10 minutes of the restart Breda Hanney and Aoife Neary had exchanging points before Orla Kilkenny fired home the games opening goal but with the wind to their backs Kilkenny got themselves back on track. Their defence now much tighter dealt with everything Galway threw at them and they hit five points in-a-row to narrow the gap to just one as the game entered injury time.

Battling to stay ahead, Breda Hanney pointed with two of the four minutes of added time played but

crucially Galway struck two wides as they failed to put the game beyond Kilkenny's reach and just when the die looked cast right half-back Elaine Alyward surged forward on a darting run before parting to the unmarked O'Connor who made no mistake to fire Kilkenny into the lead for the first time in the game. Three further minutes of injury-time saw Katie Power strike the insurance point for a rampant Kilkenny as a shocked Galway were left stunned.

Scorers for Kilkenny: A Neary 0-5 (0-3 f, 0-2 45), M O'Connor 1-1, D Gaule 0-3, K Power 0-2, A Dalton, M Quilty 0-1 each.

Scorers for Galway: O Kilkenny 1-0, T Maher and A Connolly (0-1, 0-1 45") 0-3 each, B Hanney 0-2, V Curtin J Gill 0-1 each.

KILKENNY: C Ryan, L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby, E Alyward, A Butler, L Lynip, C Dormer, A Dalton (c); E Keane, K Power, T Muldowney; M Quilty, D Gaule, A Neary.

Subs: M O'Connor for M Quilty, A Dunphy for T Muldowney (both 43).

GALWAY: S Eamer, R Glynn, A Kelly, T Marston, A M Hayes, S Cahlan (c), N Kilkenny, S Tannion, L Ryan, B Hanney, T Maher, J Gill, V Curtin, O Kilkenny, A Connolly.

Subs: C Glynn for L Ryan (48), C Cormican for J Gill (52), S Donoghue for O Kilkenny (57), A Hillary for S Tannion (58).

Referee: Cathal Egan (Cork).

Aisling in top form as Ballinhassig win easily

By MARY NEWMAN

Senior B camogie

Ballinhassig
Carrigaline

4-20
0-3

FROM early on in this Evening Echo Senior B Championship clash at Riverstick last night, Ballinhassig looked good.

Inside as many minutes they had four points on the score board and when Aisling O'Brien crashed home the first of her three goals, Carrigaline were in real trouble.

Ballinhassig had stretched their lead with two pointed frees from Sinead O'Callaghan and Catriona Collins before Sarah Cotter had Carrigaline on the score board but it was Ballinhassig who continued to dominate, tacking on six points to their tally before the unmarked Sinead O'Callaghan finished to the net to give her side a 2-12 to 0-1 interval lead.

Carrigaline had a mountain to climb in the second half and to their credit they never allowed their heads to drop as they battled to try and get into the game.

Sarah Cotter, Deirdre O'Leary and Patti O'Keeffe worked hard but the strength of Ballinhassig, powered by Cork senior Eimear O'Sullivan, Emma Jordan and Deirdre Coomey was evident.

Aisling O'Brien, Eimear O'Sullivan and Emma Jordan added points before Aisling O'Brien struck for two goals in a five-minute spell that effectively finished the game as a contest.

Still Carrigaline kept working away, with Sarah Cotter pointing twice, and it was no more than they deserved as their efforts over the hour has to be commended.

Ballinhassig showed a marked improvement on their opening round performance as they annexed their first set of points to keep their interest alive in the round robin series of this championship.

Scorers for Ballinhassig: A O'Brien 3-2, S O'Callaghan 1-6, E Jordan 0-4, E O'Sullivan 0-3, C Collins, L Jordan 0-2 each, D Coomey 0-1.

Carrigaline: S Cotter 0-3 (0-2f).

BALLINHASSIG: G O'Callaghan; D O'Brien, M O'Reardon, E O'Donovan; J Cullinane, C Collins, H Cullinane; M Killeher, A Coleman; L Jordan, D Coomey, E O'Sullivan; E Jordan, A O'Brien, S O'Callaghan. **Subs:** M Collins for C Collins (45), E O'Brien for E O'Sullivan (46).

CARRIGALINE: A Kiely, A Kearney, J O'Keeffe, E Power; D Smyth, L Kelleher, C O'Connell; S Cotter, M Moran; M Scully, O Cotter; P O'Keeffe; U O'Farrell, R Harrington, D O'Leary. **Subs:** S Moran for A Kearney (29); G Harrington for M Scully, A Collins for D Smyth (both h-t).

Ref: John Kirby (Aghada).

Ladies dashing late, late show ends with All-Ireland final date



Charging into another final... Kilkenny minor star, Denise Gaule is having some season. She will contest her third All-Ireland camogie final of the year next month. She has already been successful in finals with her school, St Brigid's College, Callan and the county minors, who completed the All-Ireland four in-a-row. In this picture Denise slips past Sinead Cahalan (Galway) on her way into the senior All-Ireland decider.

Photo: Eoin Hennessy

See Page 14

Intermediate girls take on Tipp for a place in All-Ireland final

STEPHEN GLENNON

GALWAY'S intermediate camogie team make their bid for a place in the All-Ireland final when they face Tipperary in the penultimate stages of the competition at Semple Stadium this Saturday (4:30 p.m.).

Following the disappointment of last year – when Galway conceded a late goal to Kilkenny to lose out in an All-Ireland semi-final replay – the Tribeswomen will be determined to set the record straight this time round.

That said, the team has changed significantly over the last 12 months, with only a handful of surviving members featuring in the 2-11 to 0-9 victory over Derry last day out. These included Caroline Mur-

ray, Martina Conroy, Tara Rutledge and Gemma Kelly, although Paula Kenny, Stacy Coen and Aisling Hobbins were all introduced from the bench against the Northerners.

Indeed, under the new management of boss Noel Finn, trainer Basil Larkin and selectors Kevin Kelly, Helena Huban and Johnny Keane, a promising side full of potential has taken shape, with players of note such as defenders Collette Gill and Sarah Dervan, midfielders Collette Glennon and captain Caroline Kelly, and wing-forward Cathy Bowes strengthening the side. 2009 has also seen the welcome return of Athenry attacker Deirdre Ward to the fold, with the promising teenager lining out in goals, on this occasion, for the county.

Although Galway have not come across Tipperary in competitive action this year – they did play them in a challenge match and won by a margin of five points some months ago – the Tribeswomen did meet them twice in 2008, with mixed results.

In their opening National League fixture, Tipperary scored a 1-16 to 3-7 victory over the Westerners, before Galway overturned this result with a resounding 2-19 to 0-4 win over the Premier County in the championship. However, that was a weak Tipperary outfit, disjointed by the fact that they were already out of the competition.

While Finn – who led Galway to junior and intermediate All-Ireland titles in the early 2000s – acknowledged that

this was a strong Galway squad, he believed that they could take nothing for granted against a Tipperary side at such an important stage of the competition.

"Definitely, we will have our work cut out," said the Galway manager. "Tipperary in an All-Ireland semi-final are never easy. I suppose, with their seniors somewhat in decline, they will be looking to the likes of their intermediate team to rebuild."

For his part, Finn – having taken over the reins from manager Gerry Flannery after the National League – has overseen Galway wins over Clare, Wexford and Derry in the championship. One of the key factors in these successes was the fact that their scores have virtually come from anywhere

and everywhere.

"Yeah, we have had four or five forwards scoring in every game. Against Derry, then, all six of our starting forwards scored, as did Paula Kenny, who had just come in from the senior panel and who we introduced after half-time in that game. So we are not relying on just one or two players to score, which is a big bonus."

While Tipperary defeated reigning champions Kilkenny (2-19 to 0-5) and pushed title favourites Cork all the way – losing narrowly by 2-9 to 2-6 – in the group stages, Noel Finn's charges get the nod to advance on the strength of the balance of the team, the experience involved, and, hopefully, the hunger to succeed after the disappointment of last year.

It was like Roy of the Rovers stuff as O'Connor shoots Cats into final

Camogie

ALAN NEARY

Kilkenny 1-13

Galway 1-11

IT WAS Roy of the Rovers stuff in the end. Kilkenny, who haven't contested a senior camogie All-Ireland

final since 2001, were trailing by a couple of points at the end of regulation time in this thrilling semi-final on Saturday at Nowlan Park.

Then up popped Marie O'Connor. She conjured up

a deadly match winning effort, shooting a goal in injury-time. Thus O'Connor booked the dogged Cats a place in Croke Park on September 13 against mighty defending champions Cork.

At half time the Cats were fortunate to find themselves a mere two points adrift after an opening 30 minutes in which Galway bossed from start to finish.

Galway's wides tally of eight to Kilkenny's one told it's own story; yet by the midway stage the scoreboard read a close 0-9 to 0-7 in the visitors favour.

Few could have predicted the enthralling conclusion which was to come as the outstanding Elaine Aylward played O'Connor in for the decisive goal 20 seconds from the end of the four minutes of additional time deemed necessary for stoppages.

As it happened Cork referee Cathal Egan played six minutes of additional time; during that time the accuracy of O'Connor and Katie Power (a point) turned the game on its head.

It was a very different story in a first half during which Galway dominated. It wasn't long before Orla Kilkenny won a free which Aislinn Connolly converted.

Composure

Two minutes later and Denis Gaule gathered a Power pass before she was forced wide of goal. The Windgap player regained her composure to even things up.

Things got even better for Kilkenny when Ann Dalton grabbed a fine score on the counter-attack, and soon after that Ailbhe Kelly denied Kilkenny's first sniff of goal.

Michelle Quilty, Aoife Neary and Gaule broke goalward before Kelly maintained the slimmest of margins between the sides.

The intervention of Kelly was important as Galway raised the white flag five times without reply. Therese Maher hit a hat-trick of scores and Brenda Hanney and Jessica Gill were on the mark as Galway pulled 0-6 to 0-2 ahead.

With a quarter of an hour gone Kilkenny needed to get a score. There was a sense of relief among the home support when Power ambled in from the right to score to leave a goal in it.

Things nearly got better for Kilkenny when Gaule went within a whisker of netting, but Kelly and Sinead Callahan made their presence felt and kept out the home team.

A successful placed ball from Neary (a free) and then a Michelle Quilty score took the Cats to within a point of the opposition before Gaule and Aislinn Connolly cancelled efforts from each other.

Neary's 23rd minute



Lizzie Lyng (Kilkenny) goes to strike as Jessica Gill (Galway) closes in during the senior camogie All-Ireland semi-final in Nowlan Park. (Photo: Eoin Hennessy/www.ehp.ie)

pointed free meant Kilkenny were level for the first time in over 20 minutes.

However, two scores from frees by Connolly meant that Galway, after a wind-assisted first half, were a modest two points to the good.

After those Connolly points, the same player struck the woodwork, and rushing team mates Veronica Curtin and Orla Kilkenny were unfortunate not to finish the ball to the net.

Upon the restart Curtin stretched Galway's lead to a goal before Neary (45) again took Kilkenny to within two points.

The Galway trio of Brenda Hanney, Maher and Curtin threatened Kilkenny goalkeeper Catriona Ryan as the Westerners tried to move further in front. Thirty seconds later and Ryan's opposite number Susan Earner raced to near the sideline in order to deny Kilkenny with less than 10 second half minutes gone.

The hosts looked dead and buried when Kilkenny netted for Galway as they edged into a 1-10 to 0-8 advantage.

Gaule, Neary (two frees) and Marie O'Connor revived the Cats with scores to take their side to within a point of the leaders.

Ferocious determination

Manager Ann Downey has infused the troops with ferocious determination, and the team refused to surrender after that potentially crippling strike by Orla Kilkenny.

A terrific score from Hanney heaped more misery on Kilkenny as the

Westerners edged 1-11 to 0-12 as the clock ticked towards the end of normal time.

No one, just no one could have foreseen what was about to happen as O'Connor, introduced 13 minutes after half time, latched onto a glorious assist from Aylward. When the ball hit the net, the cheer that followed nearly lifted the roof off the stand. Katie Power sealed victory with a point before the six minutes of extra-time were up.

Kilkenny play Cork in the decider. The champions overcame Wexford in the second semi.

Scorers: Kilkenny - Aoife Neary (0-5, four frees, one 45); Marie O'Connor (1-1); Denis Gaule (0-3); Katie Power (0-2); Ann Dalton, Michelle Quilty (0-1 each). Galway - Aislinn Connolly (0-4, three frees); Orla Kilkenny (1-0); Therese Maher (0-3); Brenda Hanney (0-2); Veronica Curtin, Jessica Gill (0-1 each).

Kilkenny - C. Ryan, L. Fennelly, C. Doherty, J. Frisby, E. Aylward, A. Butler, L. Lyng, C. Dormer, A. Dalton, E. Keane, D. Gaule, K. Power, M. Quilty, T. Muldowney, A. Neary. Subs - M. O'Connor for Muldowney 43rd min; A. Dunphy for Quilty 43rd min.

Galway - S. Earner, R. Glynn, A. Kelly, T. Manton, A. Hayes, S. Cahalan, N. Kilkenny, S. Tannion, L. Ryan, B. Hanney, T. Maher, J. Gill, V. Curtin, O. Kilkenny, A. Connolly. Subs - C. Glynn for Ryan 47 min; C. Corcoran for Gill 49 min; A. Hillary for Tannion 57 min; S. Donoghue for Kilkenny 57 min.

Referee - Cathal Egan (Cork).



Aoife Neary (Kilkenny) races away from Therese Manton (Galway) during the senior camogie All-Ireland semi-final in Nowlan Park. (Photo: Eoin Hennessy/www.ehp.ie)



Sandra Tannion of Galway shields the sliotar from Ann Dalton, Kilkenny, at Nowlan Park.



Edwina Keane (Kilkenny) gets away from Sinead Cahalan (Galway) during the Senior Camogie All-Ireland Semi-Final clash in Nowlan Park. (Photo: Eoin)

Dreams of glory are demolished right at the end

O'Connor pounces as dramatic late Kilkenny goal puts an end to Galway camogie's title aspirations

Kilkenny 1-13
Galway 1-11

DARREN KELLY AT NOWLAN PARK

GALWAY'S All-Ireland camogie dreams were torn to pieces last Saturday when substitute Marie O'Connor struck to the net in the third minute of injury time to book Kilkenny a final spot for the first time since 2001.

After Orla Kilkenny's Galway goal on 38 minutes made it 1-10 to 0-8, the Tribesgirls never built on this advantage as the younger Kilkenny legs took control on their home turf to narrow the deficit before getting the sensational winner.

The Galway defence, led by Ann Marie Hayes, worked tirelessly over the last 25 minutes as the Cats attacked in waves and players like Hayes, Regina Glynn, Sinead Cahalan, Ailbhe Kelly and Therese Manton cleared plenty of ball only to see it coming straight back into them.

Aoife Neary scored from three placed balls while O'Connor added another to bring it back to a one point ball game before Hayes set up Brenda Hanney for Galway two minutes into injury time to make it 1-11 to 0-12 and there was hope that the maroon and white would hold out.

But then Ann Dalton won possession on the Galway 45 metre line and her spilled pass, after a couple of interceptions, worked its way to Elaine Ayl-



Therese Maher of Galway attempts to shake off the attentions of Kilkenny's Amy Butler at Nowlan Park.

ward who cut through the defence before picking out O'Connor unmarked on the edge of the square and the 2008 Kilkenny captain was never going to miss, striking past Susan Eamer to give Ann Downey's charges the lead. Katie Power sealed the deal three minutes later when she split the posts for the two point victory.

Camogie enthusiasts were left scratching their heads as to how Liam Donoghue's side let this game slip. The tactic of

pulling the full forward line out the field with the wind in the first half didn't work even though it allowed the half forwards to pack the middle and win plenty of ball. But eight first half wides would be Galway's undoing as they only went in 0-9 to 0-7 ahead at half-time.

But the biggest surprise was the number of stray passes and panic signs that surfaced from a more experienced Galway team when Kilkenny upped the tempo in the final quarter.

After Orla Kilkenny's goal, the Tribesgirls only managed one more point in the game as Colette Dormer and Ann Dalton dominated midfield for Kilkenny, along with strong performances from Jacqui Frisby, Aylward, Edwina Keane, minor star Denise Gaule, Power and Neary.

Hayes and Therese Maher rallied for Galway while Sandra Tannion ran until she dropped but the momentum was definitely with Kilkenny.

Even at the start, there were signs that this was not going to be an easy day for Galway. After Ashlenn Connolly opened the scoring with a free, Kilkenny replied with points from Gaule and Dalton before the fifth minute to take the lead.

Already, Galway's tactics of packing the middle were evident and they did enjoy a six minute spell where they sent over five fantastic points to go 0-6 to 0-2 ahead. Hanney got the first score from just inside the 65 metre line before Maher fired over three in five minutes from a similar distance. Jessica Gill split the posts on 15 minutes to give Galway the four point cushion.

Even though Galway's fielding was superior, the wide count had started to build while any low ball into the danger area was quickly cleared by the unmarked full back Catherine Doherty.

Kilkenny settled down and replied with three unanswered scores from Power, Neary and Michelle Quilty before Connolly replied for Galway with

and traditionally being a strong second half team, one would have been forgiven for putting their life savings on Galway to win but they missed chances to add to the goal and eventually Kilkenny smelled blood.

In the end, there was only two points between the teams, but this was a very winnable game and the loss is going to hurt Galway for quite some time. However, this side has shown the potential they possess and their problems are fixable: keeping the game simple, taking their chances and refusing to panic. Stability is the key now and hopefully the players and management will stay for another effort in 2010.

The mentioned defenders worked very hard throughout the hour with Glynn and Hayes being the pick of them.

Eamer did everything required between the posts while Tannion gave every ounce of energy she had to the Galway cause. And in attack, Maher played one of her finest games in the maroon and white as she still chases that elusive All-Ireland medal.

Galway: S. Eamer; R. Glynn, A. Kelly, T. Manton; A-M Hayes, S. Cahalan, N. Kilkenny; S. Tannion, L. Ryan; B. Hanney (0-2), T. Maher (0-3), J. Gill (0-1); V. Curtin (0-2), O. Kilkenny (1-0), A. Connolly (0-3, two frees). Subs: C. Glynn for Ryan (48 mins), C. McCormack for Gill (49 mins), S. Donoghue for O Kilkenny (57 mins), A. Hilary for Tannion (58 mins).

Kilkenny: C. Ryan; L. Fennelly, C. Doherty, J. Frisby; E. Aylward, A. Butler, L. Lyng; C. Dormer, A. Dalton (0-1); E. Keane, K. Power (0-2), T. Muldowney; M. Quilty (0-1), D. Gaule (0-3), A. Neary (0-5, three frees, two 45s). Subs: M. O'Connor (1-1) for Quilty (43 mins), A. Dunphy for Muldowney (43 mins).

Referee: C Egan (Cork).

a free on 20 minutes making it 0-7 to 0-5. Gaule and Neary put the teams on level terms three minutes later before Connolly and Veronica Curtin gave Galway their two point interval lead.

But before the teams went in for the break, one of the game's defining moments occurred when Leanne Fennelly and goalkeeper Catriona Ryan combined to pull off two quick point blank saves from Curtin and Orla Kilkenny that could have painted a different complexion on this contest. It wasn't the first time that Ryan would be called upon as she denied Curtin again in the second half when Maher and Hanney set up the Kinvara forward.

But Curtin did open the scoring 45 seconds after the

game's resumption to put three between them before Eamer was called upon to make an important save from Keane. Neary sent over the resulting 45 on four minutes making it 0-10 to 0-8 but then Galway struck for what appeared to be the match winning score on the 38th minute.

Moved to midfield for the second period, Niamh Kilkenny was enjoying her extra freedom getting involved in numerous attacks and she took possession gaining a few yards before striking for a point. Her effort fell just short as Ryan knocked the ball out to space only to see the sister act in full swing as Orla Kilkenny was first to the rebound striking for goal to put five between them.

With the added experience,

Aug. 2009

Manager Donoghue laments lack of killer touch in semi-final defeat

DARREN KELLY

GALWAY manager Liam Donoghue reflected the desolate mood in his side's dressing room after Kilkenny's late winner denied his charges a place in the All-Ireland final at Croke Park next month, when he paused for a few words after the semi-final defeat.

"We're absolutely gutted. I can't believe it. We just came up a bit short at the finish," said Donoghue. "In fairness, we probably set our stall out a bit early trying to see out the lead. Our backs in fairness were clearing brilliant ball. It was like a wall, it (the ball) was coming back on top of us just as fast and, if I'm being honest,

you could see the goal was coming. We were hoping we could see it out. We got caught in injury time. That's how it goes."

Galway led by 0-9 to 0-7 with the wind at half-time but Donoghue was satisfied with how the game was going even though the missed goal chance would have given more momentum.

"I thought we played some good hurling. We knew Kilkenny were going to drop back extra players and our game plan was to drop short and at one stage we picked off six unanswered points. Our game plan seemed to be working. We had a goal chance before half-time. I felt if that had went in, we would

have had a bit more momentum."

The Clarinbridge native went on to complement Kilkenny on their victory before paying tribute to his squad of Galway girls.

"In fairness, Kilkenny kept it up. We had three fists at it (goal) and we couldn't finish. They had a game plan. They stuck to it brilliantly, they dropped back, they had two extra players in defence and their work rate throughout the field was phenomenal. But in saying that, we had the chances and we didn't take them. When you get to a semi-final, it's about being ruthless and taking your chances. I've got no complaints. It just wasn't to be on

the day.

"I don't think people realise his camogie team are as committed as any lads teams I've been a part of. Myself and the management are absolutely gutted for the girls and ourselves. We really thought that this year we were going to get back and try win that elusive All-Ireland for Galway. But unfortunately it wasn't to be, but the amount of effort has been unbelievable. They're a credit to their clubs and their families. I just wish them the best in the future."

Captain Sinead Cahalan also acknowledged the effort of the squad and management along with coming to terms with this defeat.

"It is total devastation for a

bunch of girls and management and a team who put their hearts and souls into everything," said the Mullagh centre back. "A side who've been totally focused on this for the last nine months."

"There was absolutely no doubt in our minds we were going to bring the O'Duffy Cup home this year. We were taking it step by step. There were five steps and this was step four today and we couldn't have prepared better than we did. Every girl gave everything. We did everything we were asked and more. I feel sorry for everyone in management. It's an absolute devastation for everyone. Everyone wanted it more than anything."



Galway's Niamh Kilkenny is put under pressure by Kilkenny's Collette Dormer in the All-Ireland camogie semi-final on Saturday. PHOTOS: MATT BROWNE / SPORTSFILE.



Above right: Limerick's Sarah Carey bursts out of defence with Trish Jackman in pursuit. Right: Limerick's Mary O'Callaghan races away from Marie Russell and Trish Jackman of Waterford.

Gerry Murphy

Aug. 2009

Cork can't be written off ahead of semi

TOMORROW

Gala All-Ireland Intermediate Championship semi-final, Cork v Derry, Blakestown 2.30pm
CORK face the journey to Kildare for their meeting with Derry in the intermediate semi-final tomorrow, writes **MARY NEWMAN**.

It's a repeat of last season's semi-final where Cork tore the form books to shreds to defeat the hot favourites. Two years ago Derry were crowned All-Ireland junior champions and once again this year they have been installed as favourites for ultimate honours and given that they will be fielding the county's first-choice side, it would be hard to argue with this.

They got their championship campaign off to a good start with a victory over Division Two league champions Wexford, where they hit 3-11 to Wexford's 2-6, but they were brought down to earth when they lost out to Galway in their last game in the group series.

Finishing as runners-up in their group to make it to the semi-finals, they were boosted by their recent victory in the Ulster final over hot favourites Antrim and their manager Danny McGrellis was thrilled with his side's performance:

"It was a real team performance on the day and we knew the strength that we have on the bench and that showed when we were able to replace our half-forward line, all the girls that were brought on registered a score."

On the day, Derry had excellent displays from Katrina and Mary O'Kane, Brieghe Convery and Katie McAuley and they will be looking for more of the same if they are to reverse the result of last season's clash with Cork.

While Cork did not enjoy the best of luck in their league campaign missing out narrowly on qualifying they bounced back to turn in good displays in the round robin series in the championship and playing with confidence defeated Kilkenny before going on to edge past Tipperary with a goal to spare in tight contest.

Again since last season when the sides met there have been changes to the Cork panel with players gaining promotion to the senior panel but experienced players such as Christine O'Neill, Leah Weste, Michelle Browne and Ann Marie Fleming continue to form the foundations of the side.

Marion Jaego who was out of the county on holidays will be expected to return to the Cork line out and she will be a valuable asset.

The Cork backroom team and coach Bobby Thornhill will be under no illusions as to the task facing their charges but having lost out in last year's final to Kilkenny and the 2007 final to Limerick after a replay they would dearly love another crack at it.

Coach Thornhill gives his charges every chance of making it to the final.

"We have a nice blend of youth and experience in our panel but we know Derry will be tough but we are ready and determined to get another Cork team into an All-Ireland final."

Without doubt the task is a huge one given that Derry are fielding the counties first choice 15 but this Cork side are hugely determined to book their place in an All-Ireland decider and anybody who writes them off would be foolish.



Cork intermediate players Jennifer Lynch, Marion Jaego, Ann Marie Fleming and Evelyn Ronayne with Kieran Barry of the New Furniture Centre.

Fleming hopes it's third time lucky

DESPITE having two All-Ireland intermediate championship medals, Cork captain Ann Marie Fleming is hoping that 2009 will see her complete the hat-trick.

Already she has had two attempts to get that elusive third medal and having lost out in the final of 2007 to Limerick and last year to Kilkenny Ann Marie felt that maybe it was time to call it a day.

The summer of 2007 is one Ann Marie wants to forget as she broke her leg and missed out almost the entire season but she returned to come on as a sub in the All-Ireland final replay in early October.

"To be out of the game for so long was awful and I had to really work hard to get back but I was determined to do so, it was just a pity that we lost it the first day as the game should never have gone to a replay."

"After last year's final we were gutted it was awful to lose out in extra time to a late Kilkenny goal, to be honest the least we deserved was a draw and few of us were contemplating just finishing and not playing inter county again but then when we took a look around at the younger players and their enthusiasm we decided to give it another go."

"There are some superb youngsters in our panel and hopefully those of us with experience can help them reach the final this year and make up for the last two defeats."

Experience is something that Ann Marie is not lacking having started her career in Barryroe NS under the guidance of teacher Mary Whelton,



Cork's Mariah Reidy gets away from Tipp's Fiona Judge in the All-Ireland Intermediate Camogie Championship quarter-final. Picture: Larry Cummins

By **MARY NEWMAN**
Camogie latest

lining out for the school in the Sciath na Scol competitions.

"It was a great introduction to camogie and to be honest we didn't win much but the enjoyment was huge and I suppose that's really where most players get their first taste of competitive games."

Progression to play camogie for the local club was inevitable given that her father Patrick played at junior level with the club and in 1998 she was part of a panel that won the senior B championship and won promotion for the young club.

"That was a great year for Barryroe and it is a much cherished medal as it is the only thing I have won with the club, while we did reach the county final in 2000 we were un-

lucky to come up against a really good Bishopstown side who took their fourth title in a row."

While success at club level may have been limited at colleges level Ann Marie was part of a superb Sacred Heart Clonakilty team that included Ger Collins, Jennifer O'Leary, Rosalie Holland and Ger Casey and it came as no surprise that they were crowned All Ireland colleges senior B champions in 1999 under the guidance of Liam Nash.

"That was another moment not to be forgotten, to win an All Ireland colleges medal with such a superb group of players was a great honour and we were very fortunate to be guided by Liam."

Progression to Mary Immaculate training college saw Ann Marie participate in the Purcell Cup and from there it was on to her teaching job in

Ahiohill NS, where she has been based for five years.

"I really enjoy teaching and hopefully I can help impart some of what I have learned both on and off the playing fields to my young pupils, they are very interested and like us all at a young age they love the games and the excitement of it all."

After last year's defeat Ann Marie is more determined than ever that Cork will beat Derry on Saturday and get a chance to be crowned champions at the third attempt.

"There is a great buzz in the camp and training is going well, those of us who have been around awhile see it in the younger players, this year we have a lot of minors in the squad and every one of us has to really fight for our places."

"A few of us like myself Marion Jaego, Liz Power, Gillian Harrington and Regina Curtin have been there a while and it is great to see the panel been strengthened every year."

She is very much aware of the challenge Derry pose.

"They beat us last year in the round robin series and we turned the tables in the semi-final, it is their first choice team and they are a very strong side, they were runners up in their group but I don't think losing to Galway was a worry to them as they were already qualified."

"We have a tough hour ahead of us but I have every faith in our squad I think if we play to our full potential we will make it to the final."

With the senior team already in the final the hunt is on to make it a double, let's hope the schoolteacher dishes out a hard lesson to Derry.

Ballyhea are ones to catch in Junior A

WITH six of the round-robin series of rounds played in the *Evening Echo* Junior A championship, the battle is on for the four semi-final places *writes* MARY NEWMAN.

Ballyhea are to date setting the pace closely followed by Watergrasshill Enniskeane and Brian Dillon's.

In round one, Ballyhea had a victory over Enniskeane before going on to defeat Brian Dillon's and Douglas. Watergrasshill have been keeping pace with a first round win over Brian Dillon's. They had their second victory with a win over Enniskeane but they were held to a draw by Blackrock.

Enniskeane have two wins out of four games, defeating Douglas and Blackrock, after losing out in round one to Ballyhea and then to Brian Dillon's in round six.

Brian Dillon's have two victories out of three. They got a good start with a win over Blackrock, but lost out to Ballyhea and Watergrasshill before recording a good win over Enniskeane, to keep their hopes alive.

Blackrock got off to a bad start, where they lost to Brian Dillon's and Enniskeane, but they rallied and held a strong Watergrasshill side to a draw and they will be hoping to build on this result with games to come against Ballyhea and Douglas.

Earlier in the competition, Ballincollig dropped out to participate instead in the junior shield competition, having suffered defeat at the hands of Douglas, Ballyhea and Blackrock. The points from their unplayed games will be allocated to the teams they were to play.

We can expect to see it coming down to the wire as the pace increases with two rounds to go to the cut-off date. Semi-finals are down for decision on the weekend of September 5 and 6 and the outstanding games to be played are Ballyhea v Blackrock, Watergrasshill v Douglas, Blackrock v Douglas, Ballyhea v Watergrasshill, Brian Dillon's v Douglas.

Éire Óg and Bishopstown are in top form

WITH games in round three of the *Evening Echo* Senior B championship down for decision in the week ahead, a quick review of the position to date shows Éire Óg and Ballincollig topping section A, *writes* MARY NEWMAN.

They have two victories out of two. Éire Óg accounted for Valleys before beating Bishopstown.

Ballincollig got their campaign of the ground with a win over Newcestown before defeating Aghabullogue. Bishopstown have a victory over Aghabullogue, while Newcestown bounced back from defeat by Ballincollig to get a victory over Valley Rovers.

They also have an extra game played, where they had a win over Aghabullogue.

In Section B, Glen Rovers have two victories out of two played with wins over Ballinhassig and Kilbrittain. Killeagh, with only one game played, have a 100% record, with a win over Carrigaline, while Ballinhassig bounced back to record a win over Carrigaline also.

It's on to round three and some interesting games this coming week on Tuesday.

Éire Óg, with Margaret O'Herlihy, Alanna and Ciara McKenna, will be hoping to make it three out of three when they meet a Newcestown side who will be looking to Colleen Long, Fiona Crowley and Anita Coughlan to fire them to victory.

Kilbrittain will be hoping to annex their first points when they meet Ballinhassig. Marion Murphy, Danielle O'Sullivan and Miriam Deasy will be big players for Kilbrittain, while Sinead O'Callaghan, Eimear O'Sullivan and Aisling O'Brien have been to the fore for Ballinhassig to date.

Glen Rovers will play Killeagh also and on Wednesday, Bishopstown meet Ballincollig.



Linda Mellerick

Cats should bring out the best in the Rebels

IT'S 14 years since Cork and Kilkenny last met in an All-Ireland final and it seems like only yesterday.

I can remember every minute of that game.

In fact, I can even remember the night before and how Kathleen Costine and I were so nervous we went off somewhere quiet on our own to discuss the game rather than head out to the Shelbourne Park with the rest of the panel.

Normally, I don't recall memories like that but I have said that that victory was one of the sweetest in my career and for no other reason than that the Cats broke my heart so many times.

Year after year after year in the late eighties, we suffered.

Most of the Angela Downey's 12 All-Ireland medals were at Cork's expense and I took that very personally.

When you retire you can acknowledge how great a team that Kilkenny squad was and applaud them.

However, at the time — it hurt!

I got a call-up to the Cork set up in 1985 and won my first All-Ireland in 1992 — seven years later.

Kilkenny won seven-in-a-row during that time, from 1985 to 1991.

To think that Bridie McGarry's niece scored the winning goal for Kilkenny last weekend.

Bridie was a great player, as tough as nails, as the entire Kilkenny team were.

They blew you away. I particularly remember the battles that Ann Downey and Val Fitzpatrick had, even at club level. Many a time both players walked away with cuts, bruises and blood dripping.

But they also had great respect for each other and they would be 'slagging' each other off big time afterwards.

That game was a classic. Will 2009 be the same?

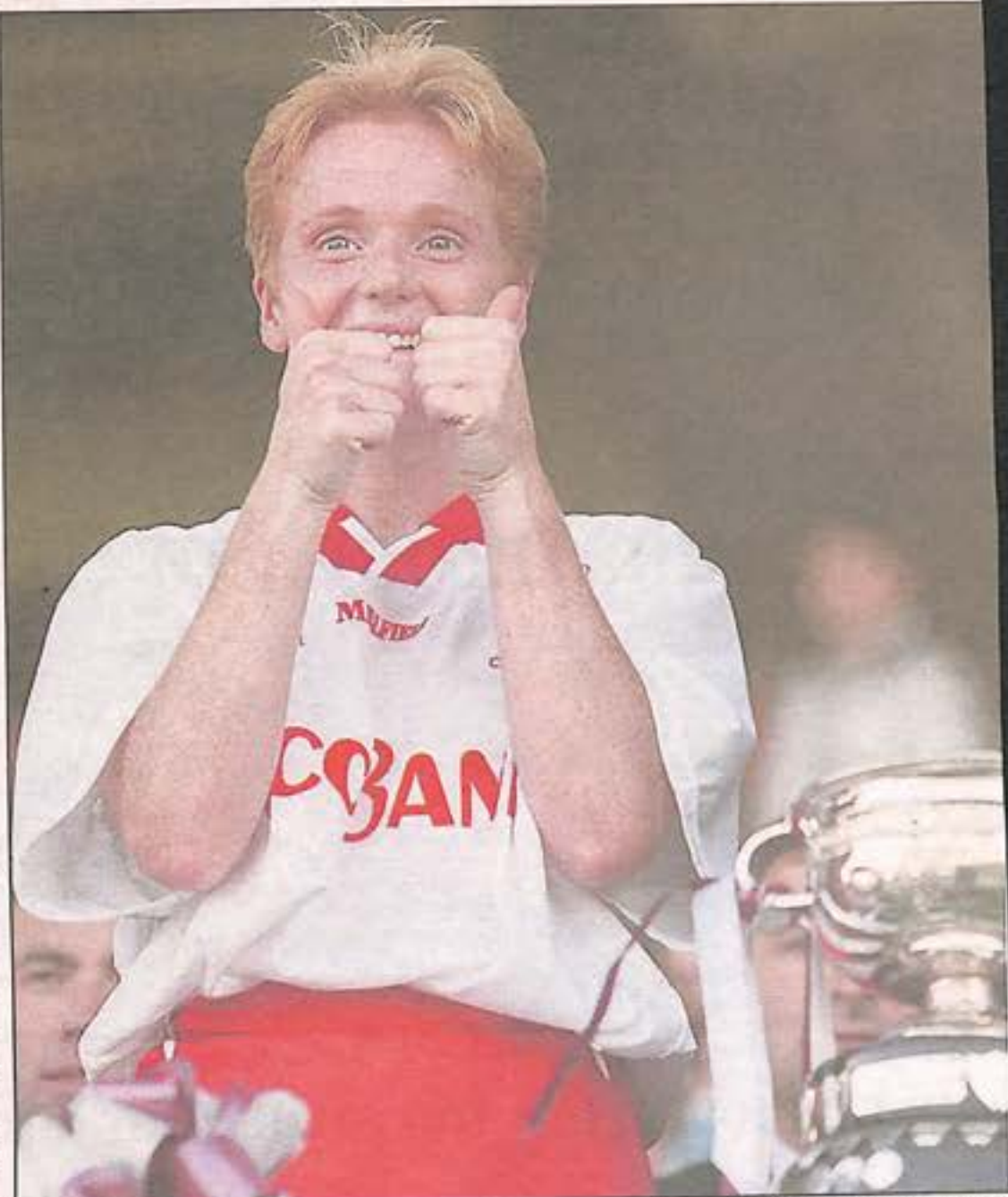
This time the roles are reversed.

It's Cork who are the raging hot favourites. They are in their eight consecutive final, having won four of the last seven.

Kilkenny used the same tactics in the first half last weekend that they did against Cork in July in the group series, i.e. packing their defence and placing players behind the ball.

The tactic could have cost them last Saturday.

For the first 15 minutes of the



Here I am lifting the All-Ireland in 1997 but the final two years earlier against Kilkenny still lives vividly in my mind.

game they had two spare in the full-back line, marking space.

Brenda Hanney and Therese Maher in particular were out around midfield/half-forward picking off majestic points from the 65m mark and beyond.

There were six Galway players out around the middle of the field dominating and Kilkenny found themselves four points down after 16 minutes. It could have been more but for some poor wides by Galway — eight in total in the first half.

Eventually the sides went back to player for player marking and Kilkenny pulled the deficit back to a point within five minutes. Kilkenny will rue that tactic on a pitch like Croke Park. It may have worked in July to some extent but the weather was appalling and the game was

slow.

On September 13, Cork too will pick off points from midfield and the half-forward line. With the open space in Croke Park, they'll relish it.

Once again, Galway collapsed when they needed leaders.

How infuriating are they as a county? They continue to hold just one All-Ireland title — 1996 — and for a county bursting with talent over the years, that is a very poor return.

I said last week that they should just about take Kilkenny but I await their collapse. And collapse they did. They should have been at least seven points ahead at half time. Instead they led 0-9 to 0-7. They stretched their lead to five after 10 minutes of the restart and then started to fade as Kilkenny hit

point after point.

Another couple of Galway wides failed to kill the Cats' momentum and the goal was always going to come.

I believe Galway would have been tougher opposition for Cork in the final from a physicality point of view but take Kilkenny for granted at your peril. They have nothing to lose here. How they approach the final and handle the big day will be crucial for them.

I was disappointed with how easily Wexford folded last weekend once Cork got their noses in front. Cork had a poor first half yet Wexford only led by two points at the break. They wilted once Brieghe Corkery got Cork's goal and I'm beginning to wonder if 2007 will be their only All-Ireland title for a long time.

Ballinhassig oldies show the kids how it's done

THE social side of the Ballinhassig GAA and Camogie club recently held an enjoyable Pitch Party Marquee which lasted four days.

All day Saturday was reserved as a camogie day.

Activities organised by Marion McCarthy got underway with an U7 blitz and this was followed by an U12 blitz.

Saturday afternoon was reserved for the adults, who played two semi-final games and a final. The final was won by the Yellowbellies in an exciting final and we are told the likes of it had not been seen before in Ballinhassig.

More than 50 ladies took part many of whom had never played camogie but got involved for the fun aspect and enjoyed their participation.

It is reported that former great Marion McCarthy only made an appearance after an injury to her sister-in-law, Paula. Paula was playing in her first camogie game, trying to emulate the feats of her famous husband Seanie, the holder of All-Ireland senior honours with Cork and proprietor of the Soho Bar and restaurant.

There were noteworthy performances from winning captain Elaine Lombard Ann Dorney, Noreen Sheehan, Ursula Cullinane, Margaret Cronin, Margaret Butler, Ber Harrington, Margaret Cottrell, Paula Walsh, Ann Murphy, Sandra Russell, Gonnait Bohane, Elaine Goggin, Karen Coleman and Paula McCarthy.

Camogie club chairperson Angela Murphy presented the Aisling Cup to proud captain Elaine Lombard, who made a rousing speech on receiving the cup with the help of their team manager Irene Murray.

Ballinhassig field teams in the Senior B and Junior Shield com-



The winning team at the Ballinhassig Camogie fun Day which was a huge success for the club.

By MARY NEWMAN
Camogie news

petition, but the feeling is with the performances of some of the new players in the club, many of the camogie-playing daughters better watch out of they will be sidelined by the mummies and aunties in the not to distance future!

A great four days was enjoyed and a huge promotion for a very progressive club. Well done to all.

With the return to school just days away, the juvenile county board competitions are swinging back into action and the U14 are first to hit the pitches this afternoon.

It's the U14 C league quarter-finals that get proceedings underway as Enniskeane and Ballinora come face to face in Enniskeane.

The second quarter-final has Mallow meeting Kilbrittain on Tuesday in Mallow.

The U14 D competition is down to semi-final stage, with Carrigrohilly meeting Sarsfields on Monday in Caherlag.

The second U14 D league semi-final has Ballyhea pitted against

Newcestown and this game gets underway in Coachford on Saturday next, August 29.

It will be a very busy day where the board will have two pitches and five games in total down for decision.

The Under 14 A semi-finals are also on the agenda the same day with Cork Féile na nGael and All-Ireland Féile winners Douglas meeting Cloughduv. The second semi-final is sure to be an interesting one as Mid-Cork neighbours Inniscarra and Eire Og battle it out for a place in the final.

The U14 C league will be down to the semi-finals. Na Piaraisaigh will meet the winners of Enniskeane and Ballinora with Sliabh Rua meeting Mallow or Kilbrittain.

The same days it's Barryroe versus Banteer in the U16 Championship, while the previous Thursday, Aghabullgoue and Newcestown meet in the U16 D championship.

The following day is another busy one as the U14 B semi-finals are down for decision.

Buttervant meet Ballinhassig, and Carrigaline play Bishopstown.

So there are plenty of games to look forward to, besides their return to the classrooms for the U14 and U16 camogie players. Full fixture list is as follows:

TODAY
U14C quarter-final: Enniskeane v Ballinora in Enniskeane at 2.30
MONDAY AUGUST 24
U14D semi-final: Carrigrohilly v Sarsfields in Erins Own at 6.30pm
TUESDAY AUGUST 25
U14C quarter-final: Mallow v Kilbrittain in Mallow at 7.30pm
THURSDAY AUGUST 27
U16B league semi-final: Aghabullgoue v Newcestown in Ballincollig at 7.00pm
SATURDAY AUGUST 29
all in Coachford
PITCH ONE
U14D league semi-final: Ballyhea v Newcestown at 11.30am
U14A league semi-final: Inniscarra v Eire Og at 1.30pm
U14A league semi-final: Douglas v Cloughduv at 3.15pm
U16A Championship: Glen Rovers v Milford at 4.30pm
U16C Championship: Barryroe v Banteer in Barryroe at 5.30pm
PITCH TWO
U14C league semi-final: Na Piaraisaigh v winners Enniskeane / Ballinora 12.45pm
U14C league semi-final: Sliabh Rua vs winners Mallow / Kilbrittain 3.15pm
SUNDAY AUGUST 30
in Coachford
Under 14B league semi-final: Buttervant v Ballinhassig 11.30am
Under 14B league semi-final: Carrigaline v Bishopstown 1.30pm
TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1
U16B Championship: Ballincollig v Sliabh Rua venue to be confirmed.

CLUB NOTES

ST FINBARRS

OUR junior team made a great start in the Junior Shield on Sunday morning last they played an attractive brand of camogie to defeat Ballincollig by 6-11 to 2-4.

Five St Finbarr's players — Niamh Cook, Martha Phelan, Katie Collins, Aoife McCarthy and Shirley Burns — found the back of the Ballincollig net.

The team continued their good run of form against Carrigaline on Tuesday night; the Barrs controlled the game but wasted many opportunities in the opening half. They should have been further in front than two points at half-time.

Words of wisdom from coach Gerry Murphy set the attack rolling. A hat-trick of goals from Clara Loughed and some great points from Niamh Cook and Heather Morgan left the Barrs comfortably in front by 3-12 to 1-2 at the final whistle.

Congratulations to our inter-county stars, Gemma O'Connor, Jenny Duffy and Lynda O'Connell on reaching the All-Ireland Senior final. We call on all club members, young and not so young, to plan your day in Dublin on September 13 to cheer on Cork and our girls.

ST CATHERINE'S

JUNIOR B CHAMPIONSHIP

On Tuesday, August 11 we played host to Na Piaraisaigh in a Junior B Championship game. We started the game well and had scored three points by the fifth minute. We were to add a further three points before half-time but the game's decisive score came in the 25th minute when Trish Fitzpatrick goal.

Na Piaraisaigh's first-half scoring amounted to three points, leaving us with a six-point interval lead on a score of 1-6 to 0-3.

Na Piaraisaigh opened the second half in a determined fashion and quickly reduced our lead to two points, goaling in the fifth minute and adding a point a minute later. Andrea Mangin steadied matters with a pointed free shortly afterwards to leave us three points in front. For the next 15 minutes the game moved from end to end with both sides having scoring opportunities, however strong defending on both ensured no score for either side.

We eventually broke the deadlock when Cliona McGovern pointed and the final score of the game fell to Helen Lane in the closing minutes.

This win ensures our advancement to the county semi-final, where we meet Castlemagner.

Team: A Harnett, K Higgins, A Galvin, M Mulcahy, A O'Keefe, S Noonan, J Hurley, M Daly, R O'Callaghan, T Fitzpatrick, E Roynane, C McGovern, K O'Donovan, A Mangin, H Lane.

Subs: S Barry for E Roynane, C Twomey for K O'Donovan, S O'Keefe for A O'Keefe, C Clancy for K Higgins, K Twomey for H Lane, A Burke for R O'Callaghan, V Norris.

Scorers: T Fitzpatrick 1-1, H Lane 0-3, C McGovern 0-2, A Mangin 0-2(1f), R O'Callaghan 0-1.

Under 16B Championship: On Sunday, August 16 we made the short journey to take on our neighbours in the first round of this U16 championship.

We played with the aid of a strong breeze and started brightly, leading after 15 minutes by 1-3 to 1-0.

Killeagh, however, were gradually getting on top, adding 2-2 before half-time, leaving us by five points at the short whistle.

Killeagh, with the aid of the strong breeze, were to dominate the second half and ran out comfortable winners. Killeagh 4-9 St. Catherine's 1-4. Full credit to our girls who never gave up and kept trying right to the final whistle.

Team: R Spillane, C Keniry, S Barry, M Galvin, J O'Keefe, M Mulcahy, C McAuliffe, R O'Callaghan, F Cotter, G Walsh, L Bumster, H Leahy, L Ahern, F Neville, K England.

Subs: A Doyle for L Ahern, E Spillane for C McAuliffe, M O'Connor for K England.

Scorers: F Cotter 1-2(1f), L Bumster 0-1, F Neville 0-1.

U13 Involley League

On Wednesday, August 13, Castlelyons were visitors to Ballyroe for this U13 league game. Our girls played very well on the night and ran out

comfortable winners, St Catherine's 7-3 Castlelyons 0-0.

Panel: N. Clohessy, M. Galvin, L. Harnett, K. England, M. Mulcahy, B. O'Keefe, J. O'Keefe, E. Spillane, A. Fitzgerald, A. Mulcahy, L. Ahern, E. O'Brien, M. T. Leahy, A. O'Keefe

Scorers: E. O'Brien 2-1, E. Spillane 1-1, L. Ahern 1-0, A. Mulcahy 1-0, M. T. Leahy 1-0, A. O'Keefe 1-0, M. Mulcahy 0-1.

All-Ireland Semi-final

With Kilkenny defeating Galway and Cork overcoming Wexford a mouthwatering clash looks on the cards for September 13, when these old rivals will meet in this year's All-Ireland Camogie final.

Cork started slowly but a fine second-half performance ensured their victory.

Well done to Orla Cotter, who lined out at midfield for Cork. Our club are organising a bus to travel to Croke Park for the All-Ireland final on September 13 at a cost of €20 per person. Names with a €10 deposit to Ann Galvin at 058-59271 or Sarah England at 058-59289.

GLEN ROVERS

Minors: It was a busy few days for our girls with several of the senior panel lining out with the minor team on Friday last as they made the journey to Charleville for the third game in the round robin series of championship and a meeting with the home side St Mary's.

From the throw-in we were focused and picking off our scores we had built up a good lead by the half-time whistle. In the second half we were in control and ran out winners.

Juniors: Our junior B team, minus several regulars, faced out their last game in the round-robin series of championship against Sliabh Rua with a young squad but from the throw-in they battled for every ball and at the break were ahead thanks to some fine scores from young Lauren Callanan, Edel O'Connell, Aisling O'Keefe, Alison Dowling and a Barbara O'Mahony goal. Never taking their foot off the pedal, they continued to work hard and despite Sliabh Rua coming close, our young guns held firm to finish the series with a victory and it was no more than they deserved given the heart and determination shown by every player on the night.

Seniors: It's on to round three of the Evening Echo senior championship and on Tuesday we meet Killeagh in Castle Road Camogie grounds Blackrock at 7pm — support is welcome at this game.

U16: Our U16 teams will meet Milford in the championship on Saturday, August 29 in Coachford at 4.30pm. Players are asked to be training tomorrow at 6pm.

Bag packing: We are bag packing on from Thursday September 10 to Saturday September 13 in Dunnes, Ballyvolane. All players are reminded to put their names down with the co coordinator Carol Bridgeman, and we also need adults and parents to lend a hand, please contact Carol immediately if you have not done so already.

Well done: Well done to the Cork senior team on reaching the All-Ireland final and to our own Denise Cronin who is manager with the side. Good Luck to Denise Luby and the Cork Intermediate team as they face Derry today in the All-Ireland semi-final in Dublin.

BISHOPSTOWN

Underage: the U16 championship has been fixed for Thursday, September 3.

Bishopstown play Sarsfields and it's a home venue, so training is well underway for that.

Senior: After a disappointing defeat to Eire Og, next up is Ballincollig in the Senior B Championship. This game is fixed for Wednesday next, August 26. No time or venue yet. Keep an eye on www.bishopstowngaa.com/camogie.html for updates.

Castlemagner survive scares to advance

WITH games in both sections of the round-robin series completed it's down to the semi final stages in the Evening Echo Junior B championship, writes MARY NEWMAN.

Buttervant topped their group as they defeated Sliabh Rua, Glen Rovers and Castlemagner to assure them selves of a semi-final spot.

Castlemagner, who annexed the Junior C Championship title last season, have continued the good form shown last season by qualifying from the same section, but they had some close shaves.

In their opening round game with Glen Rovers they had to be at their best to hold out for a one-goal victory, absorbing huge pressure in the closing seconds when their opposition almost snatched a draw with the last puck of the game.

They went on to record a draw with Sliabh Rua in a close encounter and it was on to the last game where they lost out by four points to Buttervant.

The round-robin series had Sliabh Rua in contention to the last game, but they lost out to the Glen and it was Castlemagner who march on to the semi-final spot.

In Section B, St Catherine's had victories over Bride Rovers, Erin's Own and Na Piaraisaigh to ensure themselves of their spot, while Na Piaraisaigh, with wins over Erin's Own and Bride Rovers, were content with the runners-up spot.

The semi-final pairings are Castlemagner v St Catherine's; Buttervant v Na Piaraisaigh.

Both games are down for decision on August 28.

In the Evening Echo Junior C

Championship, which were also played on a round-robin basis for the first time this year, it's down to semi-final stages, where Ballinhassig meet Kildorrery and Passage meet Castlelyons.

Round three of the Evening Echo Intermediate Championship, takes place on Wednesday, with all clubs still very much in contention.

Out in front are Sarsfields and Clonakilty — each has recorded a win and a draw. Sars had two points to spare over Mallow in cracking first round tie played in atrocious weather, while Clonakilty had a comprehensive victory over Newtownshandrum in their opening round game.

When the sides met in round two they failed to be separated as it ended all square, to give them a share of the spoils.

Mallow are a point behind having regrouped to record a win over Tracton in high-scoring clash. On par with them are Fr O'Neill's who bounced back from their first round defeat by Tracton to record a seven-point victory over Newtownshandrum. Tracton are on two points and are well in the hunt with three games to go.

On Wednesday, Tracton meet Newtownshandrum and Newtown's need to get a victory to keep their hopes alive.

The clash of the night should be Mallow and Clonakilty. Mallow, with Kathleen O'Brien, Katherine Coakley Sinéad O'Connor and Michelle Browne in will battle to get a result again Clonakilty side that will look to Sinead O'Neill, Sharon Whelton Erica Jennings and Juanita Brennan.



Kilkenny minor camogie captain Carol Phelan, who has spent three months in the National Rehabilitation Hospital, above, after a car crash left her paralysed from the waist down.

Pictures: Nick Bradshaw and Billy Higgins



Will I walk? Will I walk? That's all I wanted to know. And they couldn't answer me

"THE first night I had the accident I was so scared to go to sleep. "I was so scared. You know that feeling when you wake up from a deep sleep and think it was a dream? Then it hits you again."

It's the little things that really bring home the reality of what happened to Carol.

The business student could be lying in bed and move to get up, only to realise she can't.

The girl, who as a child "always had a hurl in my hand", could start thinking of her time as the Kilkenny minor camogie captain after watching a GAA game and wonder if she'll ever play again.

The daughter of Wattie and Christina Phelan, sister to five other siblings, could wake in the morning and — for an instant — forget what has happened. Then it all comes back to her.

Aged just 21, Carol may never walk again.

On May 15 the third-year student at the University of Limerick (UL) was out with friends before a Fleadh Ceol weekend in Mullinavat in rural Kilkenny, 16km from Waterford city.

She was home from Dublin, where she was on a work placement with accountancy firm Deloitte & Touche, and hadn't intended to stay out long.

But the night was lively and by the early hours, with no other transport available, Carol opted to take a lift home with friends.

The exact details of what happened in the minutes that followed cannot be detailed as they are the subject of ongoing legal action.

But what can be said is that the car Carol was travelling in that night crashed in a single car collision.

The other passengers were knocked unconscious but recovered relatively unscathed. Carol, who was in the front seat



Fiachra Ó Cionnaith talks to a girl living with the fallout from the injuries she suffered in a road accident

and wearing a seat belt, suffered serious spinal injuries.

She has been paralysed from the waist down ever since.

"I realised straight away how serious it was," the UL student explained in a side-room at the Dun Laoghaire-based National Rehabilitation Hospital, where she has been for three months.

"When I twisted around to unlock the door I didn't feel any pain. But when I went to move, my legs wouldn't. I could see smoke coming out the bonnet, I thought the car was going to go on fire. I was screaming for help, I didn't know if the others were dead or alive or anything."

"People came and I was just asking them to feel my legs. I could feel a bit but it was weird, it was tingly. And then I couldn't reach further down."

"I was screaming, 'I'm paralysed, I'm paralysed'. I was panicking," she says, her voice quickening at the memory.

"The paramedics were there and I was asking them: 'Will I walk? Will I walk?' That's all I wanted to know. And they couldn't answer me."

Despite increased focus on road safety, as a nation we continue to ignore the damage done to those who survive accidents only to suffer serious, life-altering injuries.

According to the Road Safety Authority (RSA), more than 1,000 people are seriously injured on our roads every year, with lifelong spinal injuries or neurological disabilities among the most common damage caused.

The figure is three times higher than the number of deaths during the same period, but despite it happening almost every day, on every road, the fact is rarely given the attention it deserves.

In the hours and days after Carol's accident, once the seriousness of the injuries had been assessed, the 21-year-old's world crumbled.

She was told in Waterford Regional Hospital the L3 bone in her back was broken, there could be complications with her kidneys, and her internal organs had been "squashed and moved around" by the impact of the crash.

She met her mother, Christina, and learned that in the hours after the accident her family was told by a garda to relax, because nobody had died and the incident wasn't considered serious.

She was rushed to the Mater Hospital for further tests and major surgery. Eventually, she was taken to the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) where places are scarce and only the most in need will be admitted.

She was told she "was lucky" a bed had become available at the specialist hospital as quickly as it did.

It goes without saying that Carol didn't exactly feel "lucky".

"When I was in Ardkeen (Waterford Regional) I was just lying on my back, and could see faces over me. It was the worst part. I could see the faces but

couldn't see around me. It was so frustrating because all I wanted to do was sit up.

"Then when I came here (the NRH) it was frightening to be honest, because it was all starting now. It was reality really," she explains.



Carol Phelan, circled, after Kilkenny won the All-Ireland minor title in 2006.

"When I got here I just started crying... I felt so alone.

"It's a good place, the staff are great, but I'm not sure if I've settled even now. I was thinking so much in my head, thinking will I walk again, what if I don't, what will happen? I still don't know."

In the three months that have followed, Carol's time has been spent between strenuous physiotherapy to working on transfers between chairs and her wheelchair.

Despite the image it might give, the muscle-strengthening exercises involved can be exhausting, both physically and mentally.

Then Carol returns to her bed and thinks about what happened in May.

Getting in the car. The crash. The hospital. The operations. Postponing her final year in college. Every minor detail, every little thing.

She thinks about how simple acts, like getting a cup of tea, are now beyond her. Thinks about them again, and again.

For someone who won an All-Ireland minor camogie medal in 2006, it's a nightmare, but one she believes she can

overcome. At the start of this month, Carol had made enough progress to return to Kilkenny for a weekend for the first time since her accident.

Her boyfriend of two years, Patsy Caulfield — who has been a constant support throughout the difficulties — brought her home, her parents travelled home with her the weekend after. It says a lot about Carol's determination that the first place she wanted to see on her return was the scene of the accident.

"I wanted to see the scene of the crash. I didn't think I'd be able to do it that soon, but it's just going over and over in your head. I needed to see it because I couldn't understand how we crashed. I mean, I know that road."

"When I went back home they were all waiting for me, worried. I told them it's surreal, like the whole thing hasn't happened to me," she says.

Coming home for the first weekend was important for Carol, but it also reminded her of what she has lost.

Little things, like tapping a football about when there is nothing on TV or standing on the tiles in the kitchen, warmed by the sun shining through the glass on a summer's day.

She's been robbed of those moments, those finer details that make up life.

Aug. 2009

Kildorrery clinch well-matched battle

Kildorrery 0-12
Ballinascarty 1-7

THE standard of this Evening Echo Junior C championship was of the highest of qualities, as two superb sides battled it out for a place in the final, at Castle Road, on Friday last. On a superb evening for camogie, the sides were evenly matched through the hour and it was always close, as neither side could pull away. In the finish, two points from full-forward, Orla Murphy, was enough to see Kildorrery shake off the challenge of a determined and focused Ballinascarty side.

At the half-time break, just one point separated these sides, as Ballinascarty led 1-4 to 0-6, a goal from Caroline Sugrue a minute from the break giving Ballinascarty a two-point advantage, Orla Murphy getting one back on the stroke of half-time for Kildorrery.

Twice the sides exchanged points early in the second-half, as Ballinascarty maintained their lead.

But with Orla Murphy causing the Ballinascarty defence huge problems, they kept the pressure on. Aoife Hennessy had Kildorrery back on level eleven minutes into the half, and Kildorrery edged ahead with a Valerie McCormick pointed free.

Ballinascarty fought back, Maura O'Brien pointing a free on the 14th minute but it was to be their last score as both sides battled it out for a winner. Both defences were under severe pressure.

With eight minutes to the full-time whistle, Orla Murphy had Kildorrery in the lead, and from here to the full-time whistle they closed ranks as they held their lines against strong Ballinascarty pressure. Orla Murphy pointed a free with two minutes on the stop watch, and they held their lead to the full-time whistle to book their place in the decider.

Kildorrery: J Dawson; H Hennessy, N Hennessy, D Murphy; B Allen, C Lynch, J Hennessy; C Hanley, E McCarthy; L Hanley, V McCormick, M O'Brien (captain), A Hennessy, O Murphy, T Collins. **Scorers:** O Murphy 0-7 (0-2), V McCormick 0-2 (0-1), 0-1 (45-1), A Hennessy, L Hanley, 0-1 each.

Ballinascarty: Marie O'Brien; K Keohane, K O'Donovan, S Walsh; Maura O'Brien, R Nyhan, S Hennessy; C Sugrue, M Condon; E O'Brien, M O'Donovan (c); E Ryan; M Keohane, E Murphy, E O'Donovan, U McCarthy for M Keohane, D Carroll for M O'Donovan. **Scorers:** C Sugrue 1-1, Maura O'Brien 0-4 (0-3), 0-1 (45-1), M Condon, E O'Donovan, 0-1 each.

Referee: Oliver Webb (Tracton).

Cork through to eighth consecutive All-Ireland final

Cork 2-13
Wexford 1-10

DESPITE trailing by two points at the interval, Cork made it through to their eighth, consecutive Gala All-Ireland senior camogie final, as they turned the tides to record a six-point victory over National League champions, Wexford, in Nowlan Park. Having played with the wind in the first-half, Cork trailed 1-5 to 0-6 at the break, after Ursula Jacob had put Wexford ahead in the 19th minute, firing the ball to the Cork net. In the first-half, Cork found the going tough against a strong Wexford defence, but they hung in there with four points from Rachel Moloney and one apiece from their superb midfield duo of Brieghe Corkery and Orla Cotter.

Cork were a transformed side in the second-half, as Brieghe Corkery and Orla Cotter came storming into the action at midfield. Corkery broke through for a goal and it was level at 1-8 apiece.

Emer O'Farrell had Cork's second goal, at the three-quarter stage, and it was the score they needed as they tacked on the points to run out eventual winners.

Cork: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley; J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes; B Corkery, O Cotter; E Dillon, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue; S Burns, E O'Farrell, R Moloney. **Subs:** L O'Connell for J Duffy (22 ml), J White for E Dillon (28), K Mackey for E



Cork's Una O'Donoghue and Lynda O'Connell tackle Kate Kelly of Wexford during the Gala Senior Camogie Championship semi-final at Nowlan Park, Kilkenny on August 15.

O'Farrell (54), E O'Sullivan for U O'Donoghue (62). **Scorers:** R Moloney 0-7 (1), B Corkery 1-1, E O'Farrell 1-0, O Cotter, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue, S Burns and K Mackey, 0-1 each.

Wexford: M O'Arcy; D Codd, C O'Loughlin, C O'Connor; A Codd, M Leacy, A O'Connor

(Capt); C Murphy, M O'Leary; U Leacy, R M Breen, K Parrock; U Jacob, K Kelly, J Dwyer. **Subs:** L Holohan for C Murphy (45), M Hearne for U Leacy (59). **Scorers:** U Jacob 1-2, K Kelly 0-4 (0-2 frees, 0-1 45ml), K Parrock 0-2, C Murphy and R M Breen 0-1 each. **Referee:** U Kearney (Armagh).

Late scores earn us a place in Intermediate final

Cork 4-10
Derry 0-18

CORK got the upper hand late in the day as they defeated Derry to book their place in the Intermediate Gala All Ireland championship final. With the full-time whistle looming the sides was level 3-9 to 0-18, but with Emer Watson grabbing a goal a minute into injury time, and Michelle Browne adding the insurance point, Cork were through.

Derry led 0-9 to 2-2 at the end of the first half, Mary Coleman and

Maria Walsh grabbing Cork goals to keep them in touch with a strong Derry side. Derry, with Grainne McGoldrick to the fore, maintained their lead, but a Mary Coleman goal 16 minute into the second half edged Cork into the lead. Derry battled back to regain the lead striking three points without reply, but Cork dug deep and never gave up the chase, keeping the Derry defence under enormous pressure, and it paid off as Marie Watson had Cork level before Emer struck for the vital goal and Michelle Browne

the insurance point that put four between the sides.

Cork: J Kavanagh; AM Fleming (cl), C O'Neill, R DE Faoite; L Weste, C Dineen, C Motherrway; L Power, M Walsh; M Watson, M Coleman, M Reidy; M Browne, D Luby, E Watson. **Subs:** R Curtin for R DE Faoite (inj 16), H O' Mahony for L Weste (h/1), J Lynch for C Dineen (38), P Buttiner for M Reidy (50). **Scorers:**

Derry: C O' Kane; D Mc Guigan, A Mc Cuskar, S Murphy; E Henry, J Carey, C Cusnahan; A Mc Peake, C Doherty; G Mc Goldrick, K Kieft, K Mc Auley; M Mc Goldrick, M O Kane, B Convery. **Sub:** K Pickering for C Cusnahan (38). **Scorers:** G Mc Goldrick 0-8 (0-2), K Mc Auley 0-4 (0-3), M Mc Goldrick 0-3, K Kieft, M O' Kane, C Cusnahan 0-1 each. **Referee:** Alan Le Grue (Kildare).

Muskerry qualify for county championship

Muskerry 2-12
Imokilly 1-3

MUSKERRY advanced to the first round proper of the Evening Echo Senior County championship when they came through the division side of the championship with a victory over Imokilly.

Muskerry pulled away in the second half after they led by 0-5 to 0-3 at the break, but inside a minute of the restart Patricia Buttiner had the ball in the Imokilly net, and with

the same player striking two points Muskerry widened the gap. A second Muskerry goal, a long range effort from Denise Cronin, helped along by Aoife McCarthy, extended the Muskerry lead.

A Katie Ahern goal for Imokilly did little to revive their challenge as two Muskerry points saw them finish stronger to book their place in the quarter finals against fellow divisional side Cloughduv.

Muskerry: M Gleeson; K O'Donoghue, S Gleeson, K McCarthy; T Roche, Sinead

Buckley, C McKenna; Sarah Buckley, D Cronin; P Buttiner, L Weste, A Twomey, A McCarthy M O'Donoghue. **Subs:** C McCarthy for A Twomey (51), A Coughlan for K McCarthy (IA Cotter for Sarah Buckley C O'Leary (IA McCarthy (all 55)). **Scorers:** P Buttiner 1-3, M O'Herlihy 0-5 (0-1), M O'Donoghue 0-3, D Cronin 1-0, A McCarthy 0-1.

Imokilly: C Murphy; J Murphy, U Day, G Kearney; S Smiddy, C O'Connell, Edel Murphy; K Harrington, E Murphy; A Whooley, K Sloane, M O'Neill; K Murphy, E O'Farrell, K Ahern.

Subs: M O'Sullivan for C O'Connell (39), E Sexton for K Sloane (52), N Nagle for A Whooley (55), C O'Connell for G Kearney (59). **Scorers:** K Ahern 1-0, M O'Neill 0-2 (0-1), E O'Farrell 0-1. **Referee:** John O'Leary (Mallow).

Fixtures

Today

Evening Echo Senior County Championship
Inniscarra v Barryroe, Cloughduv 7pm
Evening Echo Senior B Championship
Glen Rovers v Killeagh, Castle Road 7pm
Kilbrittain v Ballinhassig Brinney 7pm
Evening Echo Junior B Championship
Ballyhea v Blackrock Ballyhea 7pm
Douglas v Brian Dillon's Douglas 7pm

Tomorrow

Evening Echo Senior B Championship
Ballinacollig v Bishopstown Brinney 7pm
Eire Og v Newcestown Brinney 7pm
Evening Echo Intermediate Championship
Clonakilty v Mallow Castle Road 7pm
Fr O Neills v Sarsfields Castleyons 7pm

Thursday

Evening Echo Intermediate Championship
Newtownshandrum v Tracton Venue tba, 7pm

Friday

Evening Echo Senior B Championship
Aghabullogue v Veltay Rovers Ballinacollig 7pm
Evening Echo Junior B Championship Semi-finals
Castlemagner v St Catherines Kildorrery 7pm
Buttevant v Na Piarasigh Venue to be arranged 7pm
Evening Echo Junior C Championship Semi-Final
Castleyons v Passage Castle Road 7pm

Sunday August 30

Evening Echo Senior County Championship
St Finbarrs v Ballygarvan, Castle Road 6pm
Junior A Championship
Blackrock v Douglas Blackrock, time TBA
Ballyhea v Watergrishill Ballyhea, venue and time TBA

Monday Aug 31

Evening Echo Senior County Championship
Cloughduv v Muskerry venue and time TBA

Underage fixtures

Today

U14C Quarter final: Mallow v Kilbrittain in Mallow at 7.30pm

Thursday

Under16D league semi-final Aghabullogue v Newcestown in Ballinacollig at 7.00pm

Saturday, all in Coachford

PITCH ONE:
Under 14D league semi-final: Ballyhea v Newcestown at 11.30am
Under 14A league semi-final: Inniscarra v Eire Og at 1.30pm
Under 14A league semi-final: Douglas v Cloughduv at 3.15pm
Under 16A Championship: Glen Rovers v Millford at 4.30pm
Under 16C Championship: Barryroe v Banteer in Barryroe at 5.30pm

PITCH TWO:
Under14C league semi-final: Na Piarasigh v winners Enniskane / Ballinora 12-45pm
Under 14C league semi-final: Slabh Rua vs. winners Mallow / Kilbrittain 3.15pm

Sunday in Coachford

Under14B league semi-final: Buttevant v Ballinacollig 11.30am
Under14B League semi-final: Carrigaline v Bishopstown 1.30pm

Tuesday 1st September

Under16B Championship: Ballinacollig v Slabh Rua venue to be confirmed

Cork
Derry

4-10
0-18

Intermediates make it through to final

THIS was a victory carved out of sheer grit and determination as the Cork intermediate team defeated Derry to qualify for the Gala All-Ireland Intermediate final after a thrilling contest at Naomh Peregrine GAA grounds, Blakestown, Co Dublin on Saturday.

Derry, fielding their first choice 15, looked to be heading to the decider as they led by a point with the game heading for injury time.

But write of this Cork side at your peril, as Derry found out, as Cork stood up and were counted grabbing the game by the neck to hit four scores without reply in a blistering five minutes spell leaving Derry reeling in shock.

As so often is the case, goals proved vital and Cork's ability to grab four was vital to their cause coming as they did at times when Derry threatened to gain control.

Mary Coleman had two in the first-half while Maria Walsh hit one four minutes to the break to edge Cork ahead, and importantly in reply to three Derry points in-a-row.

Coleman's strike 16 minutes into the second half helped Cork get their noses in front but it was Emer Watson's effort a minute into injury time that finally killed the Derry challenge and gave them no chance to reply. Then for good measure Michelle Browne added a point and it was game set and match to the Rebels.

Derry will justifiably wonder just how they managed to lose this one but in truth they will acknowledge that they simply could not shake off this dogged Cork side who hung on to their coat tails for dear life.

Derry were the physically stronger side and their running game troubled the young Cork side who fielded three minors in their starting 15, but they never allowed their opponents get too far ahead, as their youthful exuberance carried them through. Cork played with the aid of the stiff wind in the opening half but went to the dressingroom trailing 0-9 to 2-2.

Gráinne McGoldrick edged Derry ahead just before the break but they were lucky to be in that position as Maria Watson saw her shot for goal hit the crossbar and bounce back into play on the half-time whistle.

Cork, despite playing with the wind, wasted a lot of first half possession striking five wides to their opponents' one, but it was Mary



Emer Watson got in on the scoring act with Cork to score a crucial goal for the side.

By MARY NEWMAN

Gala All-Ireland intermediate semi-final

Coleman and Maria Walsh with goals in the 18th and 26th minute that kept them in the game as Derry's Katie McAuley and Gráinne and Maebh McGoldrick struck 0-9 to Cork's 0-2 which came from Michelle Browne and Maria Walsh.

Cork had lost the services of defender Rosin De Faoite after just 16 minutes with a leg injury but Regina Curtin proved an effective substitute slotting in at centre-back with Carol Dineen moving to the wing. From the start of the second half, Maebh McGoldrick edged Derry 0-2 ahead but through the half, as play swung from end to end, just a point continued to separate the sides as they swapped points on four occasions.

Gráinne and Maebh McGoldrick had Derry three ahead approaching the quarter hour but Cork battled away as Maria Walsh cut it to two. With their defence holding firm

Cork came at Derry. Walsh linked up with Mary Coleman who fired low to the net to give Cork the lead but from the puck-out, Derry were level as Cushnahan pointed a long range effort but still Cork refused to wilt.

Both defences came under severe pressure and Derry had a chance to go ahead with a free on the 20-metre line dead straight in front of goal but remarkably their free-taker Gráinne McGoldrick opted to go for goal and Cork keeper Jessica Kavanagh saved well with captain Ann Marie Fleming lifting the siege by clearing up field.

Derry recovered well with Gráinne McGoldrick pointing twice as they regained control but still Cork hung on, and from defence to attack they hunted and chased down every ball showing tremendous character.

Michelle Browne pointed a free with two minutes remaining and when Maria Watson levelled with a minute on the stopwatch, both sides

would have settled for a draw.

But this Cork side were not going to be denied and when the ball broke in the square Emer Watson got the last touch to give Cork the lead.

From the puck-out Michelle Browne won possession and as the ball sailed between the posts Cork were celebrating a superb victory to the sound of the full-time whistle. The chase is now on for the double.

Scorers for Cork: M Coleman 2-1, M Walsh 1-3, E Watson 1-0, M Browne 0-5 (0-3f), M Watson 0-1.

Derry: G McGoldrick 0-8 (0-2f), K McAuley 0-4 (0-3f), M McGoldrick 0-3, K Kielt, M O' Kane, C Cushnahan 0-1 each.

CORK: J Kavanagh; AM Fleming (c), C O'Neill, R De Faoite; L Weste, C Dineen, C Mothorway; L Power, M Walsh; M Watson, M Coleman, M Reidy; M Browne, D Luby, E Watson.

Subs: R Curtin for R De Faoite (inj 16), H O'Mahony for L Weste (h/t), J Lynch for C Dineen (38), P Buttner for M Reidy (50).

DERRY: C O'Kane; D McGuigan, A McCusker, S Murphy; E Henry, J Carey, C Cushnahan; A McPeake, C Doherty; G McGoldrick, K Kielt, K McAuley; M McGoldrick, M O'Kane, B Convery.

Sub: K Pickering for C Cushnahan (38).

Referee: Alan Le Grue (Kildare).

Delighted O'Leary believes hard work is key

THERE were contrasting emotions on the field at the full-time whistle as Cork celebrated their victory while a visibly distressed Derry contemplated what might have been.

Cork selector Esther O'Leary was in the middle of the euphoria and was thrilled at her side's victory.

"We are thrilled to have made it to the final. We came up here today knowing it would not be easy.

"Derry are a good side

and it was very tough out there but our girls showed great heart and commitment and they fought for every ball with determination.

"They had to work hard and it was very hot out there making it that little bit harder but they never once complained.

"We needed to keep in touch because if we left them get too far ahead they would have been hard to catch, we always kept them in sight and that was important."

Esther had words of praise for the substitutes Cork introduced.

"Fresh legs were important today and we as selectors were not afraid to bring on subs.

"We used our bench well and the players we introduced brought a bit of freshness especially as it was so energy sapping. It was a great team performance.

"The hard work paid off. It's great to be in the final and we will give it everything to win it now"



Cork selector Esther O'Leary was happy with the side's work ethic.

McGeown, point rescues Armagh

Camogie
Therese
O'Callaghan

ROSCOMMON and Armagh finished all square in the Nancy Murray Cup final at Kingspan Breffni Park on Saturday. The Ulster girls, who started underdogs, looked set for victory when two Collette McSorley goals either side of the break had them leading 2-4 to 0-4. A third goal from Paula Mallon looked set to break western hearts but Roscommon star Claire Curley struck two late goals to swing the game in her side's favour. Ultimately Niamh McGeown rescued Armagh with a late point (3-5 to 2-8).

Elsewhere Cork and Galway's second strings qualified for the Gala All Ireland intermediate championship final following respective victories over Derry (4-10 to 0-18) and Tipperary (0-16 to 0-7).

Cork and Derry played the match of the day at Naomh Peregrine, Blakestown with the Munster side only managing to triumph in the closing moments.

The match was tied 3-9 to 0-18 before Emer Watson grabbed a late goal and Michelle Browne notched the insurance point. The Oak Leaf County led 0-9 to 2-2 at the end of the first half - the Cork green flags coming from Mary Coleman and Maria Walsh. However, Derry, through the outstanding Grainne McGoldrick (0-8) managed to maintain their lead until the three-quarter stage, but with Leah Weste solid in defence, Cork applied the pressure and got their reward through Watson and Browne's intervention.

Meanwhile, Galway incredibly kept Tipperary scoreless for the second-half of the other semi-final at Semple Stadium, helping erase the bitter disappointment of their senior side's exit from the championship a week earlier. Martina Conroy and Caroline Murray totalled 11 points between them in this victory.



STARRING ROLE: Leah Weste impressed in Cork's defence.

Ballincollig keep 100% record intact



Ballincollig's Maria O'Donoghue breaks from Bishopstown's Orla Crowley in their Evening Echo Senior B Camogie Championship match at CIT. Picture: Kieran Boyde

By MARY NEWMAN

Evening Echo Senior B camogie

Ballincollig	2-16
Bishopstown	0-6

BALLINCOLLIG made it three wins out of three as they defeated Bishopstown in the Evening Echo Senior B round-robin championship at CIT last night.

The winners hit the front from the start, Denise Cronin pointing a 45 and when Cronin sent a 20 metre free to the net inside the 10th minute Bishopstown were in trouble.

With Maria O'Donoghue, Patricia Buttimer and Denise Cronin adding points, Ballincollig raced into an eight points lead before Ciara Healy had Bishopstown on the scoreboard.

From here to the break, the Town came more into the game and with Healy striking four points in reply to three for Ballincollig from Cronin, O'Donoghue and Leah Weste,

Ballincollig led by 1-8 to 0-5 at the break.

On the restart, Bishopstown went in search of an early score but they were denied by Ballincollig keeper Elmeor O'Sullivan who brought off an excellent save to deny Rhian Noonan. Boosted by this, Ballincollig tacked on three points before Healy pointed a 45 metre free for Bishopstown.

Bishopstown battled to get something from the game but they met stern resistance from a well-marshalled Ballincollig defence that held firm, with Alison Coughlan, Kate O'Donoghue and Aoife Cotter to the fore.

Any hopes Bishopstown held of getting something from the game were quashed when Ashley Lovett finished to the net from close range.

Ballincollig added a further five points without reply to run out convincing winners.

Scorers for Ballincollig: D Cronin 1-7 (0-4f 0-1 45"), M O'Donoghue, P Buttimer, L Weste 0-3 each, A Lovett 1-0.



Ballincollig's Leah Weste scores a point as Bishopstown's Sinead Kelly closes in at their Evening Echo Senior B Camogie Championship match in CIT. Picture: Kieran Boyde

Bishopstown: C Healy 0-6 (0-3f 0-1 45").

BALLINCOLLIG: E O'Sullivan; B O'Callaghan, A Kieley, A Coughlan, C Irish, K O'Donoghue, A Cotter, S Buckley, S Coomey, A Lovett, D Cronin, L Weste; P Buttimer, M O'Donoghue, C Ryan.

Subs: H Coomey for S Coomey (42), S Coomey for P Buttimer (60).

BISHOPSTOWN: J O'Sullivan; P Finn, O Crow-

ley, B Sheehan; S Kelly, A Corcoran, J Crowley; J Browne, E Foyle; M Scannell, M Crowley, R Nunan; O Ni Dhornhaill, C Healy, M Egan.

Subs: L Flood for S Kelly (39), A Noone for J Crowley (inj 49), N Butler for O Ni Dhornhaill (58), G O'Riordan for R Nunan (59).

Referee: John Kirby (Aghada)

Corkery's goal proves the difference between the sides

Éire Óg	1-8
Newcestown	0-8

A GOAL from Erin Corkery with five minutes remaining secured victory for Éire Óg and made it three wins on-the-trot in the Evening Echo Senior B Championship in Brinny last night, writes Mary Newman.

Éire Óg led 0-7 to 0-4 at the interval after Margaret O'Herlihy had fired over six points and Erin Corkery one

in a first half where points from Colleen Long, Grainne Cronin and Tracy Mc Carthy kept Newcestown in contention.

Erin Corkery stretched the Éire Óg lead with an early second-half point but they came under severe pressure as Newcestown picked off four points in-a-row without reply to draw level.

Colleen Long pointed a free while Colette Desmond with two and Grainne Cronin with one helped

Newcestown keep the pressure on the Éire Óg defence.

With five minutes remaining it was level pegging and as the sides battled it out for a winner, Éire Óg hit the front with Erin Corkery grabbing the game's only goal and, crucially for Éire Óg, the important one as the Muskerry side held on for a deserved victory despite strong Newcestown pressure for an equaliser in the closing stages of an entertaining tie.

Scorers for Éire Óg: M O'Herlihy 0-6 (0-2f 0-1 45"), E Corkery 1-2.

Newcestown: C Long 0-4 (0-3f), C Desmond, G Cronin 0-2 each, T McCarthy 0-1.

ÉIRE ÓG: M Gleeson, C O'Keeffe, S Gleeson, L Murphy, C McKenna, A Mc Kenna, K Mc Carthy, C Meaney, E Kelleher, E Corkery, C O'Connor, C O'Leary, M O'Herlihy, C Mc Carthy, A McCarthy.

Subs: A Mc Carthy for E Kelleher (55), R Murray for C O'Leary (60).

NEWCESTOWN: L O' Sullivan; M Crowley, R Desmond, F Deasy; A Coughlan, F Crowley, C O' Mahony; E Crowley, E Coomey; T Mc Carthy, C Long, A Crowley; G Cronin, C Desmond, A Crowley.

Referee: Anthony Cummins (Slabh Rual).

Last year's defeat will be a motivation for Barryroe

TONIGHT,
Senior Championship,
Inniscarra v Barryroe,
Cloughduv, 7pm

By LINDA MELLERICK
Camogie

the injured Rosalie Holland and her return to the team for this season's championship is a boost.

Jennifer O'Leary continues her travels and the star forward is most certainly the one player that Barryroe could do with.

Clubs like Barryroe miss star players more than most but at this point they are familiar with planning without Jenny.

Inniscarra's younger brigade of Katie O'Mahony, Joanne Casey and

Niamh Dilworth picked off some important scores for Inniscarra last year; Dilworth in particular confident with placed balls.

Inniscarra's goalkeeper Sinead Uí Riain was excellent between the posts and three crucial saves in the second half denied Barryroe.

Had Barryroe managed to find the net the result may have been different and for that reason they'll go this game with confidence.

Both sides at this stage will want to go one step further in the Cork championship.

Barryroe suffered a heavy defeat

to Muskerry in round two, 5-16 to 1-2, and exited the championship in 2008. Muskerry went on to lose the semi-final to eventual champions Douglas so there was no shame in that defeat but the margin must be a concern to Barryroe.

Inniscarra advanced to the quarter final after their first round defeat of Barryroe only to lose out to Ballygarvan, 2-14 to 1-3.

Both sides have talent. Elmeor White, Louise Gannon and Ger Collins are others that Barryroe will turn to tonight for inspiration in a bid to reverse last year's result.

INNISCARRA will go into this evening's Cork County Championship fixture against Barryroe as favourites after their first round 2-10 to 0-7 victory over the same opposition 12 months ago.

The margin of nine points possibly flattered Inniscarra on the night but there was no denying that they were the superior team.

However Barryroe were without

Clon come out on top in exciting contest

Clonakilty 5-10
Mallow 4-10

A GOAL separated the sides in a high scoring Evening Echo Intermediate Championship game played in Castle Road as Clonakilty kept their unbeaten run intact as they head into round four.

Mallow led by a point at the break. Goals from Faye O'Donoghue and Shona Fitzgerald giving them the slight edge as Michelle Browne showed her accuracy firing over seven points.

Clonakilty kept in touch with four first-half goals coming from Aoife Deasy, Hannah Coughlan, Susan Forristal and Sharon Whelton while Aileen McCarthy and Sharon Whelton were on target with three points as Clonakilty matched Mallow score for score.

The second half was nip and tuck as the sides battled it out again Michele Brown was to the fore for Mallow firing a free to the Clonakilty net while she added three further points to the Mallow tally.

Clonakilty picked off their points with Sharon Whelton striking three, Maire O'Donovan contributing two and Aoife Deasy one before a goal from Erica Jennings was the score that divided the sides at the end of a tough contest.

Scorers for Clonakilty: S Whelton 1-5, S Forristal, A Deasy 1-1 each, H Coughlan, E Jennings 1-0 each, M O'Donovan 0-2, A McCarthy 0-1

Mallow: M Browne 2-10, S Fitzgerald, F O'Donoghue 1-0 each.

CLONAKILTY: L Daly, N O'Donovan, S O'Brien, A McCarthy, C O'Regan, C O'Mahony, L O'Flynn, H O'Regan, S O'Neill, M O'Donovan, E Jennings, J Brennan, C O'Connell, A Deasy, S Forristal, Subs: H Coughlan for C O'Mahony (inj), A Kearns for L O'Flynn (inj), C Nagle for C O'Regan.

MALLOW: S O'Connor, E Lenihan, S Ducey, K McAuliffe, K Healy, A O'Rourke, M Byrne, B O'Sullivan, E Forde, J Fitzpatrick, K O'Brien, S Fitzgerald, E Coakley, M Browne, F O'Donoghue.

Kildorrery hold out to claim final spot

By MARY NEWMAN

Camogie news

Kildorrery 0-12
Ballinascahy 1-7

THE standard of this Evening Echo Junior C Championship was of the highest order as two superb sides battled it out for a place in the final at Castle Road.

On a superb evening for camogie, the sides were evenly matched through the hour and it was always close as neither side could pull away, in the finish two points from full-forward Orla Murphy was enough to see Kildorrery shake off the challenge of a determined and focused Ballinascahy side.

At the half-time break just one point separated these sides as Ballinascahy led 1-4 to 0-6. The goal from Caroline Sugrue, a minute after the break gave Ballinascahy a two-point advantage, Orla Murphy getting one back on the stroke of half time for Kildorrery.

Twice the sides exchanged points early in the second half as Ballinascahy maintained their lead but with Orla Murphy causing the Ballinascahy defence huge problems they kept the pressure on.

Aoife Hennessy had Kildorrery back on level terms 11 minutes into the half and Kildorrery edged ahead with a Valerie McCormick pointed free.

Ballinascahy fought back with Maura O'Brien pointing a free in the 14th minute but it was to be their last score as both sides battled it out and where both defences stood firm.

With eight minutes to the full-time whistle Orla Murphy had Kildorrery in the lead and from here to the full-time whistle they closed ranks as



The U11 players from Youghal camogie club.

they held their lines against strong Ballinascahy pressure, Orla Murphy pointed a free with two minutes to go and they held their lead to the full-time whistle to book their place in the decider.

Scorers for Kildorrery: O Murphy 0-7 (0-2f), V McCormick 0-2 (0-1f, 0-1 45*), A Hennessy 1-1 Hanley 0-1 each.
Ballinascahy: C Sugrue 1-1, Maura O'Brien 0-4 (0-3f 0-1 45*), M Condon 0-1 each.
KILDORRERY: J Dawson, H Hennessy, N Hennessy, D Murphy, B Allen, C Lynch, J Hennessy, C Hanley, E McCarthy, L Hanley, V McCormick.

Ballinascahy: Marie O'Brien, K Keohane, K O'Donovan, S Walsh, Maura O'Brien, R Nyhan, S Hennessy, C Sugrue, M Condon, E O'Brien, M O'Donovan (c), E Ryan, M Keohane, E Murphy, E O'Donovan, Subs: U McCarthy for M Keohane, D Carroll for M O'Donovan.
Referee: Oliver Webb (Tracton).

Camogie club notes

YOUGHAL

OUR U11s are having a great run in the Imokilly league they played two games last week resulting in two wins for the girls. Great effort is put in each week by Janette Power and Carmel Dempsey in helping the girls train for this league.

U11 team against Cobh as follows: Chloe Landers, Laura White, Elizabeth Brennan, Amy Herlihy, Louise Dempsey, Shauna O'Connell, Catriona O'Keefe, Clara Crowley, Aoife O'Neill, Fidelma O'Connell, Erin Galvin, Clara Whyte, Lucie Sheehan.

Scores in the Cobh game came from Erin Galvin, Aoife O'Neill, Catriona O'Keefe, and Clara Crowley. All the girls played very well.

Our U13s have also been in action over the last week; they played two games also, but were unlucky that the scores didn't come their way. They played Castletyons and then Sars.

U13 team as follows: Janice Daly, Amerah Hickey, Laura Daly, Aoife McCarthy, Cheyanne Lewis, Pamela Lewis, Sophie Monaghan, Aoife Siobhra, Clara Flavin, Chloe Landers, Aisling Cremin, Phoebe Whelan, Amy Quirk, Tara Clohesy, Laura O'Donoghue, Emily Roche, Aoife Daly, Niamh Crowley, Jane Walsh, Aoife Daly.

U13 training every Monday night 6.30pm. Thanks must go to the U13s trainer Kelma McCarthy for all the effort that she has put in with the girls.

fort that she has put in with the girls.

The U15s played a great game against Dungourney. The had a strong breeze against them in the first half but still in all put up a great fight against their opponents to come back and make all the play in the second half, the score ended with Youghal being narrowly defeated by four points.

Huge thanks to Ken Bulman for all his hard work throughout the year with the girls, training every Wednesday night 6.30 pm.

All help is greatly appreciated and welcomed from the club when training the Underage. And all support is also welcomed by the girls when they play their matches.

BRIAN DILLON'S

Junior A Championship 2009

Huge congrats go to the Brian Dillon's girls who gave a great skillful performance in the Junior A Championship. The team started well and in the first 20 minutes had three points from Claire Dooley and Therese Deane.

Douglas were winning by three goals but in the last 10 minutes of the first half Therese Deane got two super goals within two minutes of each other and was aided by Jane Dooley and Amanda Dorgan both scoring two points just before the whistle blew.

What a comeback for Dillon's who were only down by a point at half-time. Dillon's fought back

strongly to take the upper hand in the second half. The back line was strong in defence and there was great play from Lucy Bradfield, Christine O'Mahony, Anthea O'Brien, Emma Burns, Deirdre Ring and Sara Attridge. Susan-Kate Brosnan and Claire Dooley was very strong in the second half, the equaliser and created an opportunity for another. The forwards Therese Deane, Emma Lane, Jane Dooley, Donna Carroll, Therese Drummond and Amanda Dorgan fought hard, Emma Lane, Amanda Dorgan, and Jane Dooley scored a point each. Donna Carroll scored a point after a quick pass from Susan Brosnan and got a great goal after a superb pass from Megan Kelly.

Donna took another opportunity to score another point in this half. Dillon's were blocking down any opportunity for Douglas to score in the second half and their score of only two points tells it all. Goalkeeper Aoife Finnegan had a very strong presence. A well deserved win.

Full time Score: Brian Dillon's 3-12

Douglas: 3-5

Scorers: Therese Deane 2-1, Donna Carroll 1-2, C Dooley 0-4, Jane Dooley 0-2 Amanda Dorgan 0-2, Emma Lane 0-1

TEAM A Finnegan, A O'Brien, C Kearney, L Bradfield, E Burns, D Ring, S Attridge, S Brosnan, C Dooley, J

Dooley, A Dorgan, D Carroll, E Lane, T Drummond, and T Deane.

Subs: M Kelly for E Lane, O Ni Shuilleabhain for S Attridge.

BALLINHASSETT

Senior B Championship: Ballin-

hassett 5-7 Kilbrittain 1-5

Team: G O'Callaghan, D O'Brien, M O'Reardon, E O'Donovan, J Cullinane, C Collins, H Cullinane, A Coleman, M Kelleher, L Jordan, D Coomey, E O'Sullivan, S O'Callaghan, A O'Brien, E Jordan. Subs: C Holland for D O'Brien, A O'Leary for A Coleman

Declan Crowley Memorial Tournament:

Today we will host our annual Declan Crowley memorial tournament for our U10 team starting at 10.30 and running through the day.

ST CATHERINE'S

All-Ireland intermediate semi-final: Well done to Cork on their four-point victory over Derry. Congratulations to our own players involved with this team, Liz Power, Carolyn Motherway and Denise Leahy. They now go on to meet Galway in the final on September 19.

U16 Championship Killeagh 4-9 St.

Catherines 1-4

Team: Rachel Spillane, Carol Keniry, Shauna Barry, Mary Galvin, Joanne O'Keefe, M Mulcahy, Clodagh McAuliffe, Rachel O'Callaghan, Fiona Cotter, Grainne Walsh, Leanne

Bumster, Helen Leahy, Laura Ahern, Finola Neville, Katie England. Subs: Emma Spillane for Clodagh McAuliffe, Aisling Doyle for Laura Ahern, Melanie O'Connor for Katie England.

JUNIOR B CHAMPIONSHIP

St Catherine's 1-9 Na Piarasigh 1-4

Team: Aisling Hartnett, Karen Higgins, Ann Galvin, Mary Mulcahy, Aisling O'Keefe, Sandra Noonan, Jill Hurley, Maria Daly, Rachel O'Callaghan, Trish Fitzpatrick, Evelyn Roynane, Cliona McGovern, Karen O'Donovan, Andrea Mangan, Helen Lane.

Subs: Shauna Barry for Evelyn Roynane, Christina Twomey for Karen O'Donovan, Sinead O'Keefe for Aisling O'Keefe, Clara Clancy for Karen Higgins, Kathleen Twomey for Helen Lane, Amy Burke for Rachel O'Callaghan, Vicky Norris.

Junior B County Semi - Final

Our junior B team will play Castle-magner in the county semi-final which is scheduled to take this weekend updates on this next week.

GLEN ROVERS

Our senior team played the third game in the round-robin series of the Evening Echo Senior Camogie Championship on Tuesday last and despite turning in a superb performance, lost out by just a goal to Killeagh. This was a thrilling contest with the result in doubt to the final whistle and indeed we were unlucky not to

snatched a draw, well done to everyone on superb effort, we look forward to our next championship outing which is against Carrigaline the date pencilled in for this is October 3 as we have a bye in the next round which is round four.

Our U16A team travel to Coachford today Saturday to meet Milford in the championship throw in is at 4.30pm support welcome at this game.

Our second U16 team will meet Castletyons on Wednesday next in the first round of the championship, venue to be announced.

Our U10 team are travelling to Ballinacorney today to participate in the Declan Crowley invitation tournament which starts at 10.30am.

Reminder that as schools reopen in the coming week our under age training and coaching on Tuesday and Sunday is at the usual times of Sunday at 11.45 and Tuesday 6pm, everybody reminded to get back into the action after the summer break.

Well done to Denise Luby and the Cork Intermediate team who recorded a superb victory over Derry to book their place in the All-Ireland final against Galway which will take place on Saturday Sept 19th at the Gaelic Grounds Limerick.

Sars and O'Neill's share the spoils

By MARY NEWMAN
Camogie news

Sarsfield's 3-5
Fr O'Neill's 1-11

SARSFIELD'S recorded their second draw in the third round of the round-robin series of games in the Evening Echo Senior B Championship in Castleyons.

Fr O'Neill's were quick off the mark and raced into a four-point lead with Gearoidin Kearney and Nicole Nagle, prominent on the scoreboard as Fr O'Neill's set the pace of the game. Sarsfields gradually got to grips and settled into the contest Emer O Farrell notching up a goal and two points from frees before grabbing a goal from play to give Sarsfields a 2-2 to 0-5 interval advantage. Sarsfields extended their lead from the restart with a superb goal from Rita Crowley and with Emer O Farrell pointing it extended their advantage.

Fr O'Neill's had to work hard to get back into the game but with Kate Harrington, Nora Ahearn, Gearoidin Kearney and Katie Ahern picking off points, they kept pace. Nora Ahearn sent a penalty to the Sars net to give O'Neill's the advantage but Emer O Farrell pointed as Sarsfields refused to lie down, Gearoidin Kearney helped O'Neill's keep pace and both sides were at their best and gave it everything they had as they battled for the points on offer. With the full time looming Fr O'Neill's held a slender one-point lead but with Emer O Farrell hitting a long-range point from a free it gave Sars a share of the spoils after a close contest.

Scorers for Sarsfield's: E O Farrell 2-5, R Crowley 1-0.
Fr O'Neill's: G Kearney 0-6, N Ahearn 1-2, K Ahearn, N Nagle, K Harrington 0-1 each.
SARSFIELD'S: O Butler, A Griffin, S O'Leary, C Barry, D Murphy, J Murphy, G Donohoe, E Murphy, M Kelleher, A Whoolley, E O Farrell, S Crowley, R Crowley, C Holland, N Hickey.
FR O'NEILL'S: C McGrath, Y Murphy, U Day, C Day, S Harrington, V O'Sullivan, M O'Brien, K Harrington, F Wiggins, L Sweetnam, N Ahearn, K Ahearn, D O'Leary, N Nagle, G Kearney. Sub: E Rohan for N Nagle.



Members of the Youghal U13 team before their match with Castleyons.

Kilkenny are trying to play down hype

THE countdown to the All-Ireland Camogie final is on.

There's always an All-Ireland feel this time of the year and with the nights getting darker that bit earlier than usual, September has crept up on us.

With just two weeks to go, the momentum has started. Kilkenny held their press night in Nowlan Park last Wednesday evening.

Cork hold theirs in Castle Road on Friday, September 4. The public are invited and it is hoped many clubs will bring along their underage players to soak up and enjoy the atmosphere.

It'll be the perfect opportunity for young players to meet the current stars and get photographs and autographs if they so wish.

Cork camogie jerseys can be purchased on the night and promotional material will be distributed.

Kilkenny have opened a bank account and requested contributions from their city towards their All-Ireland quest.

They may not have looked that far ahead back in January and the cost of an All-Ireland weekend is huge, outside



of the build-up cost. That is why the Cork supporters club formed first day — to assist intercounty teams in the build up to championship games, particularly All-Ireland finals.

The 'add-ons', so accepted as par for the course in GAA, such as masseuses, physiotherapists, etc. at training sessions, are costs that camogie boards cannot afford.

They are crucial and it's nice to be able to contribute in this way.

Cork's preparations have been somewhat interrupted this week with a number of club games down for decision.

St Finbarr's and Ballygarvan meet tomorrow evening and Muskerry and Cloughduv are scheduled for Monday. Hopefully, the players will come away injury free and that should be the end of the distractions as far as the Cork

mentors are concerned.

It's full steam ahead then for the remaining 13 days.

While at this point all the hard work is done it is critical that as a unit Cork are together, that they bring out the best in each other and mentally tune in as one on the mission ahead.

The Kilmacud All-Ireland sevens once again features the day before the final — September 12. Glen Rovers played in that once in 1990 and it was a fabulous occasion. It was like a mini All-Ireland in itself. We won it that year and it made up somewhat for the disappointment of not reaching the All-Ireland final.

Cork and Glen Rovers had a successful 90s and we never got back there but it was nice to do it once. I'm not sure if there are Cork clubs participating this year but if you are then the best of luck.

I smiled when I read Ann Downey's interview after their semi-final victory over Galway. She really played it down saying that they are "just delighted to be in the final".

Believe me that Ann will not be going to Croke Park merely to participate. She will leave no stone unturned in a

bid to re-capture the O'Duffy Cup, last won by the Cats in 1994.

The camogie match is on this year prior to the All-Ireland U21 hurling final. From a player's point of view I think they will welcome this as the morning of an All Ireland can be horrendous for some.

The waiting around is a killer and it seems to get worse as you get older. The puck around is great as the nerves disappear but as soon as that's over the stomach starts to flip again until you're out on the pitch for the warm up.

However I also feel that the hurling game on last will increase the number of Kilkenny supporters for the camogie game.

Whereas some might have left and headed home, were the hurling on first, they'll surely come in early with the hype surrounding this Kilkenny team and their first All-Ireland final appearance in eight years.

Let's hope that Cork will travel in great numbers and counteract that. Once again there are senior hurling championship games pencilled in for the same day and families and supporters will be divided. It happens year after year.

Sunday, 23 Aug 2009

EVEN though Roscommon had to dig deep in order to fight another day in the Nancy Murray Cup final at Kingspan Breffni Park, Cavan on Saturday, they could still have stolen the show only to see a late free agonisingly tail wide. It took two second half goals from Claire Curley to get them back into contention, and in the end they forced Niamh McGeown to grab the equaliser for Armagh, 3-5 to 2-8.

The Orange County who came into this game as slight underdogs took the game to their opponents with two Collette McSorley goals either side of the half putting them in a strong 2-4 to 0-4 position early after the restart. A third goal from Paula Mallon put it up to the Rossies, but Curley came good hitting 2-2 to edge them in front, before being sensationally denied by McGeown at the death. The replay is set for Sunday next August 30th.

Elsewhere Cork and Galway's second string qualified for the Gala All Ireland intermediate championship final following their respective victories over Derry (4-10 to 0-18) and Tipperary (0-16 to 0-7).

Cork and Derry played the match of the day at Naomh Peregrine, Blakestown with the Munster side only managing to triumph in the closing moments. The match was tied 3-9 to 0-18 before Emer Watson grabbed a late goal and Michelle Browne notched the insurance point.

The Oak Leaf County led 0-9 to 2-2 at the end of the first half – the Cork green flags coming from Mary Coleman and Maria Walsh. However, Derry, through the outstanding Grainne McGoldrick (0-8) managed to maintain their lead until the three-quarter stage, but with Leah Weste solid in defence, Cork applied the pressure. They got their reward through Watson and Browne's intervention.

Meanwhile, Galway incredibly kept Tipperary scoreless for the entire second half of the other semi-final at Semple Stadium, helping erase the bitter disappointment of their senior side's exit from the championship a week earlier. Martina Conroy and Caroline Murray totalled 11 points between them in this victory.

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL, NANCY MURRAY CUP

Armagh 3-5, C Mc Sorley 2-4 (0-2f, 0-1'45), P Mallon 1-0, N Mc Geown 0-1
Roscommon 2-8, C Curley 2-2, K Hopkins 0-5 (0-3f), A Mc Geaney 0-1. (Replay, next Sunday, Aug. 30th)

GALA ALL-IRELAND INTERMEDIATE CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINALS

Cork 4-10, M Coleman 2-1, M Walsh 1-3, E Watson 1-0, M Browne 0-5 (0-3f), M Watson 0-1
Derry 0-18, G McGoldrick 0-8 (0-2f), K Mc Auley 0-4 (0-3f), M McGoldrick 0-3, K Kelt, M O'Kane, C Cushnahan 0-1 each

Galway 0-16, M Conroy 0-7 (0-2f, 0-1'45), C Murray 0-4, T Rutledge -3 (0-1f), C Bowes, G Kelly 0-1 each
Tipperary 0-7, A Mc Loughney 0-5 (0-1f, 0-1'45, S Ryan, D Ryan 0-1 each

SHARE



Charlene Hamill (Antrim) gets in front of Derry's Grainne McGoldrick

CAMOGIE MEETING IN WHITFORD HOUSE ON FRIDAY

Help sought in research for national history

THE NATIONAL Camogie Communications and Website committee - whose members include Wexford's Alan Aherne - plan to publish a history of the Association.

The committee is keen to ascertain what written historical material already exists. Some counties may have completed their history while others may have contributed a section to the county G.A.A. history.

There may be articles of interest that appeared in annuals, programmes or special

publications in your county.

In order to facilitate the gathering of this information, Mary Moran from Cork will be visiting Wexford on Friday next and she would be delighted to meet anyone who may have stories, articles or any interesting information about camogie in Wexford.

It is really important while compiling the history that it will be as comprehensive as possible and all inputs would be most welcome. Mary will be in Whitford House Hotel, Wex-

ford, on Friday at 7.30 p.m., and this is an open invitation to anyone who would like to come along and share their stories with her.

You may have photographs that have never been seen before or interesting articles that may have documented your club's early history.

If you are unable to come along to meet Mary in person, please contact her on 086-0526710, e-mail marymoran@iol.ie or contact Barbara Ryan, Co. PR.O., on 087-6529601.



Ellis Kavanagh (Chairperson) presenting the Under-12 camogie trophy to Fethard captain, Cora Cullen, after they beat Davidstown-Courtnacuddy in the final.

SENIOR COUNTY FINAL (Sponsored by Butlerstown Camogie Club) ST. ANNE'S 1-8 LISMORE 1-6

The Senior County final took place on Saturday evening last August 22nd in a somewhat dull and over-cast Kilgobinet GAA Grounds. The teams taking part in this years County Final were 2009 League winners Lismore and eastern runners-up St. Anne's. This game was set to be a thriller as Lismore was all out to capture the championship title after an eight year gap. This game was a game of two halves with Lismore dominating the first half scoring 1-4 to St. Anne's 0-2. Saying that, St. Anne's kept up with the play but were unable to capitalise in their scoring as there was a strong cross wind which had a huge factor in the game.

The second half was dominated by St. Anne's scoring 1-6 to Lismore's 0-2. As was in the first half the wind was a factor along with the fading light of the wet and damp night. Lismore were well in the game with fifteen minutes of normal time to go when St. Anne's Mairead Murphy hit the back of the Lismore net. This gave the St. Anne's girls great confidence which drove them forward holding Lismore scoreless for the rest of the game. Ending the game on a score line of St. Anne's 1-8 Lismore 1-6.

St. Anne's Panel: C. Ahearn, E. Fitzgerald, L. Mooney, L. Behan, A. Dunphy, A. Maher, S. Kavanagh, M. Murphy, K. Rockett, C. M. Maher, J. Simpson, S. Cummins, K. Kelly, Z. O'Donoghue, N. Rockett, T. Gallagher, R. Ahearn, A. Drohan, R. Kavanagh, C. Whyte, S. Casey, D. Phelan,



Michelle Gahan, Captain Butlerstown Senior Camogie Team, pictured accepting a set of jerseys from Peter Jones, Proprietor Foot Solutions Michael St Waterford Co-Sponsors. Also in picture are Mark Cooney, trainer and Aishling Kelly, Chairperson Butlerstown Camogie Club. Photo: Jim O'Sullivan.

E. Fitzgerald, N. Behan, M.C. Dunphy, P. Cunningham.

LISMORE PANEL: A.O'Brien, J. Houlihan, P. Broderick, M. Russell, K. Hannon, N. Ryan, G. Kenneally, S. Curran, S. Kiernan, R. Whelan, C. Ormonde, N. Morrissey, R. Geoghegan, T. Morrissey, C. McGlone, S. Prendergast, A.M. O'Gorman, G. Tobin, C. Kearney, K. Heneghan, M. Murphy, S. Fenton

U10 GO-GAME

Well done to all the U10 girls who took part in a mini-game at half-time. The teams that took part were Lismore V Butlerstown and St. Anne's V Gaultier.

COUNTY JUNIOR FINAL

The County Junior final is down for decision on Friday evening next August 28th. The teams taking part in this years final are neighbouring rivals Tallow and Lismore. Both teams had a good run up to the final as Tallow were

qualified after playing three games having beaten Butlerstown and Cappoquin and were beaten by Lismore in the third round, but were table toppers by score difference. Lismore however, drew with both Butlerstown and Cappoquin as well as beating Tallow, thus qualifying them for the semi-final which was once again against Butlerstown in which they came out winners.

Tallow would be hoping for a win as it would make history for them as they didn't win a junior County Championship game since the 1970's. But Lismore will not let this happen if they have their way as they also would like to add to their tally of Junior Championship wins having won their last one in 2006, and having won their previous one in 1990. This Championship is sponsored by An Rinn Camogie club.

Time and venue for this game to be arranged at the time of going to press.

President's August Blog

President's August Blog

I had intended to write this two weeks ago after the All Ireland Minor Finals. Then I thought I'll wait to see how the Gala All Ireland Senior Semi Finals work out. Then last week I thought I'll wait and see how the Gala All Ireland Junior final for the Nancy Murray Cup, between Roscommon and Armagh, worked out. That was a stirring draw in Breffni Park, Cavan on Saturday so I thought I better get on with it!

August/September is the business end of the season and I've had the pleasure of witnessing a series of very exciting and skilful Camogie national championship games at all levels. The standard of Camogie has been very competitive. All the games were outstanding with very exciting finishes to three of them – the Kilkenny v Galway senior semi final; the All Ireland minor B final where Limerick edged a memorable victory and the Nancy Murray Cup final. Not surprisingly, the Gala All Ireland Senior semi finals stand out. There was great sporting action, a great crowd, a great venue in Nowlan Park and great participation from young Kilkenny club players and from a number of the Collette Development Squads. They all participated in a tribute to the GAA 125th year at half time in the second senior game.

Promoting Underage Camogie in the US

I also had the privilege of attending the Continental Youth Championships in San Francisco in July. Hosted at San Francisco GAA's new facilities on Treasure Island in the bay, this is a fantastic Gaelic Games tournament involving American born players from under 8 to under 18. In 2010, the Championships move to the New York and Camogie will feature for the first time.

County Boards Visits Ongoing

I have undertaken a further series of county board visits including Tyrone, Dublin, Meath, Carlow, Offaly, Antrim and Tipperary. This is a total of 17 County Boards to date. Visits are scheduled for Donegal, Cavan, Mayo, Armagh and Monaghan. A few issues are common to all meetings – fixtures, relationships within the Gaelic Games family, public recognition of players and playing gear. The playing gear issues raised include:

- mandatory helmet for all players
- shorts or shorts debate continues – interesting one this. Varied opinion on both. Shorts, I would say slightly ahead, but only slightly. God, comfort and 'look' all in the pot as discussion points
- need for more leisure wear that is specifically Camogie merchandise e.g. jerseys in range of styles and colours.

Camogie Going To The Dogs

Lastly, our great fundraising night is happening on 5th September in Shelbourne Park. Support your sport by purchasing a €50 ticket (provides entry to the race night for two people) and you and/or your club has a chance of winning a €5,000 cash prize. Contact 087 9030755.

All Ireland Finals

Check out the website for All Ireland final details – keep 13th September free for a great family day out in Croke Park with national Camogie and hurling titles at stake.

Slán go fóill
Siobhán & Pádraic
Joan O'Flynn
Uachtarán



Cork camogie player Sarah Hayes, who will be playing in the All-Ireland final on September 13, keeping in practice with team members following her wedding in Ballinspittle yesterday. Picture: Richard Mills

Sarah has to cut short honeymoon for All-Ireland final

SARAH HAYES celebrated her wedding yesterday — but her honeymoon with new husband Michael Walsh will have to be cut back in the name of sport. When Cork's camogie selectors sit down to pick their team for next month's All-Ireland final against Kilkenny, they can be sure the half-back will be available. Despite tying the knot with her fiancé Michael Walsh yesterday, the pair will be cutting short their honeymoon to make sure Sarah is back in Cork for training the week before the final. Sarah, from Ballinspittle, and Michael, from Ballinascarthy, got married in Ballinspittle Church yesterday afternoon and the reception took place in the Dunmore House Hotel. The pair head off tomorrow on a luxury cruise around the

Mediterranean. However, it will not be for the two weeks they originally planned because Cork's ambitions for another All Ireland title got in the way. "We have been planning the wedding for the past two years, but I knew we would have to be flexible for the honeymoon," said Sarah. "We had booked the first week, but once we won the semi-final I had to book the flights home to get back in time for training on Monday night. Our trainers said I have to be home and that's it," Sarah said. Asked about Michael's reaction to coming home a little early from their honeymoon, Sarah said that as a GAA player himself he understood. "He knows that's the way it goes in a team. He plays with Courcey Rovers himself, so he understands the situation."



SEALED WITH A KISS: Cork camogie player Sarah Hayes and her husband Michael Walsh after the wedding yesterday. Picture: Richard Mills

SARAH SWAPS CAMÁN FOR WEDDING DRESS



Cork camogie player Sarah Hayes, who will be playing in the All-Ireland senior final on September 13, and her husband Michael Walsh getting a guard of honour following their wedding in Ballinspittle yesterday. See page three for more. Picture: Richard Mills



Antrim's Orlagh McCall pulls away from Ceara Cushnahan during the 2008 Ulster camogie final

Camogie

HALIFAX
Always giving you extra



Summit battle ahead of semis

By Niall Scully

NAOMH MEARNÓG and Good Counsel can relax tonight. But there's not a ghost's chance of them putting on the carpet slippers.

They'll meet in their final fixture in Group 2 of the Dublin Senior A Camogie Championship. Both are already in the semi-final.

They'll be playing for the distinction of topping the group. And it should be a worthy duel.

"We'd like to think that we'll be able to give Counsel a good match," muses Pádraig Gilligan, Mearnóg's co-manager with Donie Power.

"Counsel are an excellent side and it's a good test for us. All the girls are looking forward to it."

Going into the last four with a positive performance will be a boost, especially when either Ballyboden St Enda's or St Vincent's are your likely opposition.

Mearnóg recorded a fine result against Erin's Isle last week to secure their semi-final berth. The Portmarnock club had seven points to spare.

It was their second win from two following their opening victory against St Jude's, a

triumph that Pádraig considers fortunate.

"To be honest, we were far from our best against Jude's, and we really stole that one," he admits.

"But it was a much improved display against Isles. The girls played very well."

Nobody more so than Laura Twomey who had the biggest job of all, marking the Dublin skipper and her county colleague, Louise O'Hara.

A tall order at the best of times, and Laura earned the praise sticking so well to her task, and her opponent.

Miriam Twomey's return from The Gaeltacht was also a huge plus. Miriam made a handsome contribution.

So did all of Mearnóg's Dublin contingent - Andrea Fitzpatrick, Catriona Power, Niamh Taylor and Clodagh Cooney.

Teresa McConnell wore down the studs. Teresa is also a fabulous footballer.

After two wins each, Mearnóg and Counsel now have the perfect rehearsal for their respective semi-finals.

Bringing the best out of each other would be the perfect recipe as the big two, Ballyboden and St Vincent's, come into view.



NEW APPROACH: Sinéad O'Connor, Ard Stiúrthóir of the Camogie Association and Fingal Co Council's Rafe Costigan were in Tyrrelstown Park to launch a Camogie Social Inclusion Project in conjunction with the newly formed Tyrrelstown GAA Club. The social inclusion project entitled 'Camán Camán Lets Stick Together' has been rolled out in two other areas of Dublin, namely Blanchardstown and Lucan, where there are high concentrated numbers of new communities. Pictured at the launch of the was Rafe Costigan, Sinéad O'Connor, and children from Tyrrelstown GAA and Camogie club (clockwise from left) Ibraheum Bradru, Cillian Whelan, Luke Fox, Matthew Nugent, Eniola Bradru, Paddy Cleary and Alice Fox.

DUBS ON TOUR: The Dublin U13 A (right) and B squads were in action over the weekend in a blitz in Tipperary.



Fundraiser at the dogs

SHELBOURNE PARK of a Saturday night. One of the great traditions of old Dublin town, writes Niall Scully.

The proud stadium of Raytown has hosted many a Saturday spectacular. And this week it will welcome the camogie folk. It's Derby semi-final night at the track and the event is a benefit night for the Camogie Association as they seek to raise funds to carry on their work at all levels of the sport. Camogie now has 100,000 players and over 550 clubs.

And the countdown has already started to the All-Ireland final in Croke Park on September 13.

Saturday is, of course, the eve of the All-Ireland Hurling final. There's sure to be a good buzz in Shelbourne, and even a few Cats watching the dogs.

Among the attendance will be the Cork and Offaly players from the 1984 Centenary Hurling final in Thurles. And there could even be a ticket or two for Sunday's big match floating about.

A Night at the Dogs is always enjoyable. The bit of grub, a couple of jars, meeting friends and watching the races in comfort. Many sponsorship options are available for the night. €20 gets you admission, a meal and drink voucher and a bet on the Tote.

Then there's the €50 ticket which admits two and gets you in the draw for the Buster Draw of €5,000. There's also other options like race sponsorship and buying a greyhound. You can sponsor a race for €1,000 and buy a dog for €300.

More information on the packages available from Therese O'Callaghan at 087-9030755 or e-mail pr@camogie.ie

ELECTRIC EIGHTIES... Dublin lit up the decade. They had a cracking team. They won the All-Ireland Senior title in 1984. A reunion of the 80s Dubs will take place on Saturday, September 12, the eve of the All-Ireland Camogie final. It will be held at The Croke Park Hotel (formerly Jurys Croke Park Hotel). All camogie folk are welcome. A barbecue will be provided. Details from 087-6973520.

NOTES

- WELL done to the Dublin U13 teams who enjoyed an excellent trip to Thurles for the Tipperary Blitz.
- Speedy get well to U16 manager Tom Humphries.
- Congratulations to Anne Griffin who has been nominated for a Gala Performance award. See website for details on how to vote for Anne.
- Camogie Fundraiser on Saturday night in Shelbourne Park Greyhound Track. Please support.
- Adult championships progressing well with Ballyboden St Enda's, Naomh Mearnóg and Good Counsel through to semi-finals of senior A; in Senior B the race is still open. In Junior, St Oliver Plunkett's/ER, CBC, Clanna Gael and Faughs/Celtic are through to the semi-finals while in Intermediate Naomh Jude, St Vincent's, Crumlin and Good Counsel have made it to the last four.
- Minor and Senior Board meetings on Monday 14 September.

Brid's quarter bid piles pressure on Ports

By Niall Scully

A MATCH to get the pulses sprinting. It's on in the Phoenix Park tonight.

Portobello against Naomh Brid in the Senior 'B' Championship. Victory is the common currency.

The Ports have to win to stay in the Championship. If they do, it could be a three-way play-off.

"We are also looking for the win in

order to top the group and cement our place in the quarter-final," reveals Declan Powell of Naomh Brid.

The sides met in the Park on the opening day of the league.

"We got a last-minute goal to pinch a draw," recalls Declan.

"This is going to be a difficult assignment for us.

"It's sure to be a good tussle. And there'll be nothing easy."

Willie Tyrell, Thelma O'Mahony and Keith Doyle complete the managerial structure.

IMPETUS

"There's been a good impetus to training," says Declan.

"We have beaten Ballinteer St John's and also Kilmacud Crokes in the group, and the girls have been going well.

"We have been very pleased with the efforts of the players. They have shown good commitment.

"Our problem all season has been the lack of numbers.

"We have had a couple of injuries, people on holidays, players in the Gaeltacht, as well as girls taking the year out to travel.

"Some of the U16s have come on board.

"It's a big step up for them, but they have coped well.

"We have had to rotate the team because of players being unavailable. But the players have all been excellent."

So the stage is set in the President's front garden.

And it's a game that would even have Lance Armstrong advising you to Get on your Bike to make it to the Park on time.



Ballygarvan full-forward Sarah O'Donovan tries to block down a clearance by Trish Doyle of St Finbarr's during their Evening Echo Cork County Senior Camogie Championship game at Cork Camogie Grounds yesterday.

Picture: Larry Cummins

St Finbarr's
Ballygarvan

2-7
0-11

BALLYGARVAN suffered once again at the hands of St Finbarr's in this *Evening Echo* Cork County Senior Camogie Championship game in Castle Road last evening.

The difference in the end was St Finbarr's ability to get goals, something Ballygarvan never looked like doing.

A riveting game in, at times, heavy rain had the crowd on edge right up to the final whistle.

The game took on the same pattern of play as 12 months ago.

Ballygarvan did the majority of the early attacking with Emer Dillon and Catriona Kelly playing storming roles, ably assisted by Deirdre Daly at left half-back.

With wind advantage Ballygarvan led by 0-3 to 0-1 after four minutes. However their efforts were nullified by the experienced Viv Harris, who, with a 25-metre free, seized her opportunity against a sleeping defence to hit the net.

Three points, two from play, by Kelly had Ballygarvan two in front again with just 10 minutes gone on the clock.

With Dillon and Kelly doing all the running they were struggling to get more of a contribution from their team mates up front.

At the other end, despite wides from Harris, Niamh Cooke and Orla O'Sullivan, it was obvious that the Barrs were getting through and an-

Goals prove to be crucial for the Barrs

By LINDA MELLERICK
Senior camogie

other goal was always on the cards.

It came with 31 minutes on the clock as Ballygarvan led by 0-8 to 1-3. A cross ball was superbly met in the air by Niamh Cooke and her overhead strike rocked the net. With the goal came the half-time whistle with St. Finbarrs now enjoying a one-point advantage.

Scores were limited in the second half but despite this and a plethora of needless frees two fully committed teams kept the crowd enthralled.

Viv Harris fell back into a sweeping role and Gemma O'Connor moved in-

to half-forward.

Sarah O'Donovan pointed to bring Ballygarvan back on level terms. A great save by Mary Ellen O'Donovan denied Gemma a certain goal as play went end to end. By now too much was expected of Dillon, who was running herself to a standstill.

With two minutes left of normal time the Barrs led by one. O'Connor stretched it to two but five minutes of additional time gave Ballygarvan every chance to snatch an equaliser, if not a winner. Two frees were lobbed into the square by Dillon.

A square goal was blown for number one while Lynda O'Connell held her nerve to clear off the line for num-

ber two. The resultant 45 was struck wide as the final whistle blew and St Finbarr's deservedly advanced to the quarter-final.

Scorers for St Finbarr's: V. Harris 1-31, N Cooke 1-0, G O'Connor 0-2 (0-11), O O'Sullivan, B Maher 0-1 each.

Ballygarvan: C Kelly 0-7 (0-21, 0-1 45), S O'Donovan 0-2, E Dillon, R Murphy 0-1 each.

ST FINBARR'S: B A Corcoran, C Myers, T Doyle, M McCarthy, L O'Connell, J Duffy, C Spellman, B Maher, G O'Connor, R Myers, V Harris, N Varian, N Cooke, O O'Sullivan, H Morgan. **Subs:** N Goulding for N Varian (27).

BALLYGARVAN: M E O'Donovan, A Moynihan, A Murphy, S A O'Halloran, L Kennefick, J Browne, D Daly, L Browne, E Dillon, C Murphy, C Kelly, S Lynch, R Murphy, S O'Donovan, M Hallahan. **Subs:** V Browne for C Murphy (39), R Keohane for M Hallahan (39).

Referee: Walter Cole (Buttevant).

Cork stars should help Cloughduv over line

TONIGHT
Evening Echo Cork County
Senior Camogie Championship,
Cloughduv v Muskerry,
Brinny, 6.45pm

THE *Evening Echo* senior camogie championship continues this evening with Cloughduv and Muskerry in action before club games are put on hold until after Cork's involvement in the All-Ireland final on September 13, writes LINDA MELLERICK.

Muskerry go into this with numerous championship games behind them, the advantage of participating in the 'divisional championship' ahead of the championship proper.

Fresh from recording victories over Carrigdhoun, Seandun and Imokilly Muskerry are at this stage comfortable and in their stride. Linda Dorgan remains an absentee due to an ankle injury and her loss is significant to the divisional side that face their

toughest opponents to date in Cloughduv. Margaret O'Herlihy is their scorer-in-chief along with Patricia Buttimer, who scored 1-3 last time out.

Cork stars Joanne O'Callaghan, Breige Corkery, Aoife Murray and Una O'Donoghue along with Marie, Catherine Corkery and Sinead Corkery ensure Cloughduv go into the game as favourites.

Cloughduv suffered by the narrow-

est of margins for the second year in a row at the hands of St Catherine's in round one in June.

For a side that oozes talent, they should be reaching the latter stages of the championship and victory against Muskerry is a must for them.

With the game the 'last-chance saloon' for both sides, they will go down fighting but expect Cloughduv to have just that bit too much strength in depth.



Mairead Graham, Orla Donnelly, Michaela Convery and Chrissie Doherty

CAMOGIE
Ulster Senior B Club Championship
Semi-Finals: Lavey 1-9 Clonduff 0-7;
Keady 4-4 Eglis 2-7

Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael announces referees for All Ireland finals

Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael has announced the details of their referee appointments for the forthcoming Gala All Ireland senior and junior camogie finals which will take place in Croke Park on Sunday, September 13.

Both referees this year are from the Orchard County.

The senior final between Cork (holders) and Kilkenny will be under the control of Una Kearney who is a member of the St Brenda's Ballymacnab club in Armagh. Una, a teacher by profession, previously took charge of the All Ireland senior final in 2004, and she also handled the junior finals of 2005 and 2008. Una is Chairperson of the National Referees Committee and has been officiating since 1999.

Una's umpires are Paula McGuigan, Conor Dodd, Bebe Devlin and Ann O'Hare. The line umpires are John Morrissey (standby referee) and Ciarán Quigley, while Karl O'Brien and Eadhonn MacSuibhne are the fourth and fifth officials.

Pat Walsh is the man in the middle for the junior final between Offaly (last season's beaten finalists) and Waterford who are appearing in their first decider. Pat, who is a supervisor with Quinn Brothers Construction Company, is a native of Cappawhite in County Tipperary but now lives in Portadown. He played senior hurling with Killeady in Armagh. He also spent some time in London where he hurled with Glen Rovers. Pat refereed the 2008 Nancy Murray Cup final and numerous county championship finals.

Pat's umpires are Michael McNabb, Vincie McErlan, Malachy McToal and Derek McNabb. The line umpires are Alan Lagrue (standby referee) and John O'Leary, while Julie O'Neill and Owen Elliott are the fourth and fifth officials.

Following the announcement Camogie Association President Joan O'Flynn said,

"Congratulations to Una Kearney and Pat Walsh on the achievement of being selected as referees for this year's Gala All Ireland senior and junior camogie championships finals in Croke Park. Refereeing is a vital part of our sport and in any game the referee's performance is as important as the players. For any referee, the opportunity to be in charge of the whistle on All Ireland Final day is a career highlight. That it should fall to two Armagh referees is a unique coincidence.

"Camogie All Ireland Final Day showcases the skill, speed and athleticism of our sport. I am looking forward to two very competitiveness finals with Kilkenny hoping to spoil Cork's party in the senior final and Waterford looking to deny Offaly the silverware in their first ever trip to Croke Park. The club and family base of camogie, as part of the Gaelic Games community, will also be much in evidence. I am delighted that this year the All Ireland programme will again unite the camogie and hurling families. Kilkenny in particular will have an interest in the Gala senior camogie and the Bord Gaís U21 hurling finals."

The junior camogie final is at 12.45pm, senior camogie final at 2.45pm while the U21 hurling final takes place at 4.30pm.

Roscommon claim the Nancy Murray Cup

Roscommon claim the Nancy Murray Cup

Roscommon claimed the Gala All-Ireland Junior Nancy Murray Cup title with a three point win over Armagh today in the replay at Drumlane in County Cavan, 1-7 to 0-7. A week ago after a sluggish start they almost nicked the win, but at the second time of asking they were not going to be denied.

After suffering heartbreak in the 2008 final the Rossies finally captured the All-Ireland title and it is sure to provide a massive shot in the arm to camogie within the county.

There was little between the sides at Drumlane but a first-half goal from Claire Curley proved decisive as Armagh could not claw back the deficit. Curley was the hero again last week - her double green flags critical at a stage when Armagh looked to be in the driving seat.

The Orchard County, who were looking to get back to the New Ireland Cup grade, battled well with Laura Gribben and Emma Farrell unrelenting. Bernie Murray worked tirelessly at midfield, getting on the score-sheet with a well taken point.

Sharp-shooter Colette McSorley got six of the Armagh total but despite their excellent play and determination they could never undo the first-half damage.

Once again Kelly Hopkins was in inspirational form, playing a key role in Roscommon's historic victory.

Meanwhile, Cavan emerged victorious in the Máire Ní Chinnéide Cup following their one point win over Wicklow in the Monaghan Harps grounds on Saturday, 0-5 to 0-4.

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL REPLAY, NANCY MURRAY CUP

Roscommon 1-7, C. Curley 1-0, K. Hopkins 0-2 (0-1'45), A. Mc Geaney 0-2, C. Regan, C. Kenny, N. Coyle 0-1 each. Armagh 0-7, C. McSorley 0-6, B. Murray 0-1.

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL BLITZ, Máire Ní Chinnéide Cup

Cavan 0-5, L. Day 0-2, L. Mc Guran, M. Mc Bride 0-1 each, M. Brady 0-1f. Wicklow 0-4, N. O'Neill, S. Byrne 0-1 each, P. Maher 0-1'45, N. Keddy 0-1f.

Croydon Camogie Club enters Guinness Book of Records
Croydon Camogie Club' Guinness World Record Title

Croydon Camogie Club set themselves a massive challenge to play a continuous camogie match for 24 + hours on the 23rd (24th) August 2008. To somewhat scary one.

A huge amount of organisation went into preparing for this challenge and the personnel involved, stretched beyond the players on the pitch and to acquaintances of the club members, volunteered their services for the weekend, thus enabling the organisers to draft up a comprehensive list of medical personnel were allocated 4 hour shifts and the referees and umpires were allocated 2 hour shifts. Tribute must be paid to all the volunteers the commitment they had made. The club is indebted to all the volunteers who turned up at various times throughout the challenge and many who and the players could concentrate on the massive endurance test they were undertaking.

The teams were named Croydon Magpies and Croydon Exiles and were 7 aside with 3 subs available to each team. Each panel was made up of watching, the pace seemed a little fast for the start of a marathon, but the girls needed to adjust to the idea of slowing down a game that is normal in the pace. However, instinctive play was very hard to resist and the competitive nature of the game was very evident throughout. The weather was good, anticipation and an element of disbelief that we were actually doing this, even 4 hours into the challenge. The physios had a little work to do and it felt as though time was moving along nicely.

At 7:30pm the challenge was over 9 hours old and it started to feel like something big was already achieved. The scores were clocking up and even the daylight was disappearing so the floodlights had to be illuminated. The view emanating from the floodlights created a surreal atmosphere but really positive and everyone was simply getting on with their tasks - as players, stewards, witnesses, referees, and medics. By 10:17pm on Saturday night there was jubilation that we had reached the half way mark towards achieving a World record. The announcement The weather at this point was mild but it was getting chilly.

3am on Sunday morning and it looked like all dreams could be shattered. Torrential rain soaked the tired participants and conditions were far from favourable weather as well as mental and physical tiredness. The rain was so heavy it was actually difficult for the sideline staff to see individual challenges with only a few dry spells. The length of time that had passed combined with the adverse conditions meant it was going to be inevitable suffered a couple casualties in those early hours but the consensus of all concerned was to continue for the record.

And so it was - the challenge went on, daylight was returning and spirits were lifting. At 10:24 on Sunday morning Niall Murphy blew the final whistle. The final score was Magpies 247-236 Exiles 227-232.

No single word could describe the atmosphere when the final whistle was blown. However, the following array of words should give some indication.

The commitment, camaraderie, spirit and determination of everyone involved made it possible to make this dream a reality. It was a truly amazing being launched on September 17th.

This is a fantastic achievement for the game of Camogie and the quest of the overseas players to keep the game alive.

The Maureen Haughey memorial tournament is launched
Maureen Haughey

The members of St. Mochua's Camogie Club were deeply saddened at the death of their founder member Mrs. Maureen Haughey in March 2009. To honour her memory and her devotion to the sport of Camogie we are pleased to host as an annual event **The Maureen Haughey Memorial Tournament**.

In the course of her Camogie career Maureen had the distinction of playing for three different clubs in the Derrynoose Parish. Firstly St. Joseph's Madden at full back and in the same year Maureen had won a Senior Championship Medal. She also won a Junior Championship Medal with Madden in 1971. She joined Keady Camogie in 1979 and was on the winning team in 1981 when the Keady girls won the prestigious Feilé na nGael competition.

In 1984 Maureen moved to Derrynoose with her husband Frank. Maureen missed Camogie and after meeting with teachers and other interested people in the area formed a Camogie Team in Derrynoose. **That was 25 years ago this year.**

Her love for Gaelic tradition was evident in the amount of time she gave to the development of Camogie in the area. Maureen served as a Player, Referee, Chairperson and Treasurer. After a few years the St. Mochua's Club was able to field a strong Camogie team and were subsequently placed in the first division section in the county.

The club progressed from year to year under Maureen's direction and today there is a strong senior team and three under-age teams partaking in the county competitions. St. Mochua's Camogie Club will always remember Maureen's warm and kind personality. Her devotion to our club will never be forgotten.

Go ndeana Dia Trócaire ar an h-anam

A day to remember as Roscommon

All-Ireland junior camogie championship - Nancy Murray cup final replay

Roscommon 1-7 Armagh 0-7

Report: John Mulligan

Pictures: Lorraine Teevan

IT was a moment that will always be remembered. That moment when Donna Kelly made her way to the podium and received the Nancy Murray cup, raising it high over her head to the joy of several hundred Roscommon supporters.

It was a moment that made the heart glad and only the coldest of souls would not have felt the outpouring of joy and celebration that surrounded a pitch that only twelve months earlier was a place of sadness and disappointment.

What happened on Sunday afternoon last brought to an end twelve months of wondering what might have been. When referee Karl O'Brien, a Dubliner, blew his whistle for the last time, the scenes of celebration were unforgettable. People hurdled the fence with a skill that would have put those who took part in the world championship to shame. Young boys and girls in Roscommon jerseys watched wide eyed in the excitement.

Even battle hardened reporters with years of experience of games won and championships lost looked at each other and just nodded. Words were not needed. This was special.

For the team themselves, this was not just an All-Ireland crown. It was the culmination of a year of hard work. Produced by panel of determined, focused individuals gelled into a wonderful team by a talented management who were not going to leave the beautiful surroundings of Drumlane without the Nancy Murray cup.

This was earned the hard way: Armagh were formidable opponents. They had the same aim as their primrose and blue foes. The first day showed the hands of each team to a degree. The replay would show which team had that extra ace up their sleeve. Roscommon would prove to be that team.

From the word go Armagh were up for this

final. Roscommon tactically got it right early. Annette McGeeney going back to mark Armagh's star Collette McSorley. However it was McSorley who had the opening salvo in anger. Everytime she had the ball she was dangerous and both McGeeney and full back Niamh Connolly had their hands full from the start. Following what happened a week previously, much interest was angled at the officials and again the wrath was aimed at the referee for a decision that looked as it was going one way but was awarded to the other. The decision in question a line ball that had hit an Armagh player but awarded to the Orchard county.

Thankfully that was as far as the controversy went and in credit to the referee and his officials, they had a good game overall. As far as the game was going no score would go on the board until the 7th minute when Armagh opened the scoring. A free from McSorley splitting the posts.

The game started to open up from that moment. Roscommon started to come back at their opponents but basic skills were difficult in the heavy mist and strong wind that favoured Armagh in the opening half. Armagh on the other hand was taking it in their stride. Playing with a confidence that would have destroyed other teams. McSorley added a 45' and could have got a killer goal was it not for a brilliant Caroline Connaughton save on twelve minutes. Connaughton would be busy in the first half and her saves certainly kept Roscommon in the game as Armagh and McSorley in particular, pushed forward. Other players like Bernie Murray and Grainne Kelly were causing problems but they were facing tough foes in Donna Kelly and the outstanding Niamh Coyle.

As the clock hit eighteen minutes Armagh was four points up. McSorley

with all scores and Roscommon were fortunate that two of those points were touched over the bar by Connaughton and McGeeney. Things were also getting slightly heated with a few challenges going in that were not seen by the referee. Of those he did see, Yellow cards were dispatched to Donna Kelly and to Ciara Donnelly. This also led to Roscommon's first real chance. Gertie Dowd's cross goal shot being shovelled out for a 45' despite the best efforts of Cait Kenny and Claire Curley in trying to deflect the ball into the net. Armagh was the team

on form and going well. McSorley had scored her side's fifth point following the yellow card to Kelly and Roscommon were in need of a point. Step forward Kelly Hopkins. Her 45' sailed high and true and Roscommon were finally on the board. The game was starting to swing slightly and Roscommon grew in confidence. However they still needed scores or the second half would be a very difficult job. It came and oh, what a score it was. Hopkins send in a 45' that fell to Claire Curley. The Oran star looked and fired a rasping shot into the back of the

net. Two minutes of injury time had been played at the end of the first half and Roscommon were now just a point behind. It would be the final score of the half and despite Kelly Hopkins getting a yellow card for jumping in front of the Armagh keeper, Roscommon were certainly the happier of the teams going in at the break.

With both teams coming out for the restart it was clear that tactics were again in use. McGeeney was back in her familiar position, McSorley was now at centre half forward for Armagh where a mouth watering battle with Kelly now awaited.



A delighted Joanne Beattie of Roscommon celebrates with her team mate Niamh Connolly after overcoming the Armagh team to win the 2009 Junior Camogie Championship at Drumlane, Co. Cavan on Sunday afternoon. Sr3543



Roscommon's Claire Curley keeps her eye on the sliotar as she slams it away from Armagh's Patrice Murphy during a thrilling GALA All Ireland Junior Championship Final which saw Roscommon take home the Nancy Murray Cup. Sr3546

The atmosphere was now electric as the referee got the second half underway. The question was who would bite first? The answer? Armagh.

McSorley with yet another free. The gap now four points and Roscommon needing to lift their game again. This they did with Coyle in inspirational form and the Roscommon backs unflinching in the face of pressure.

Two points in two minutes would turn the game in Roscommon's favour permanently. Cait Kenny with an excellent point after Caitriona Regan had done the hard work and then two minutes later Coyle herself with a wonderful score after Donna Kelly and McGeeney created the chance. Roscommon were level and flying. Three minutes later they were ahead for the first time. Hopkins taking advantage of the space to fire over. Still Armagh kept fighting and Bernie Murray restored the lead but it would be the final score for the Orchard county as Roscommon lifted their game again. Caitriona Regan was now becoming the star as she fought and harried her way all over the pitch and with six minutes left in the match that work produced a point that had the Roscommon support on their feet. Roscommon were ahead again and this time they would not let it slip. Marie Glennon, Niamh Connolly

and Caitriona Morris were going for everything while Catherine Rogerson and Grainne Egan were taking on all comers. Patrica Lennon was now ruling midfield with Coyle while the forwards were running to a standstill. Armagh had one more chance but Donnelly's effort went wide. Roscommon were on the verge of greatness but they still needed the so-called insurance points. Those came as the game entered injury time. Two chances for McGeeney, two points. Roscommon were ready to celebrate and when Cathy Smith was penalised and Roscommon won a free as the four minutes of injury time elapsed, the celebrations had already begun. Cue the full time whistle and the unconfined joy.

For the players it was a special occasion. But for one young girl it was a day that will bring memories that will stay with her for the rest of her life. Little Onagh Kelly from Four Roads, daughter of Marie Glennon and just seven years old, let out the county on their historic day and the moment that she joined the girls as they celebrated is one that will stay with this reporter forever. It summed up the togetherness and the unity that this team possessed.

To sum up this win is an impossible task but all that can be said from one and all is just two words -

Well Done.

camogs takes Nancy Murray home

All-Ireland junior camogie championship - Nancy Murray cup final replay



Roscommon's Niamh Coyle was delighted to be presented with the Player of the Match award by Siobhan Ni Fhloinn, Yachtaran Chumann Camogaíochta na nGael for her fantastic performance during the 2009 Junior Championship All Ireland Final. Sr3542

Roscommon - Roll of Honour

Caroline Connaughto	Kelly Hopkins
St Dominic's	Athleague
Marie Glennon	Claire Curley
Four Roads	Oran
Niamh Connolly	Paula Daly
Athleague	Athleague
Caitriona Morris	Sharon Finneran
Oran	Four Roads
Catherine Rogerson	Ciara Moran
Four Roads	Athleague
Donna Kelly (Capt)	Carmel Killeen
Four Roads	Padraig Pearces
Grainne Egan	Sinead O'Brien
Four Roads	Four Roads
Patricia Lennon	Fiona Connell
Four Roads	Athleague
Niamh Coyle	Audrey Morris
Four Roads	Oran
Gertie Dowd	Joanne Beattie
Four Roads	St Dominic's
Annette McGeeney	Nileen McCormack
Athleague	Oran
Caitriona Regan	Nicola Crean
Oran	Four Roads
Cait Kenny	Elaine Daly
Four Roads	Athleague

Player of the match - Niamh Coyle - Roscommon

WHAT can be said today that was not said last week. Niamh had a game that will be remembered for her determination, skill and coolness that brought her team through what was a tough game. But she was not alone. Caroline Connaughton was her team's heroine in the first half with several stunning saves. Caitriona Regan produced an incredible display, especially in the final ten minutes. Donna Kelly was captain fantastic throughout the game and Annette McGeeney got the points that mattered in the final moments. But to be fair to the whole team and subs this was a wonderful performance from all the team and they should be honoured as such. Again McSorley was Armagh's best player by a long mile but this is Roscommon's day.

Player Ratings

Caroline Connaughton - Outstanding. Her saves kept Roscommon in the game in the first half and her puck outs were accurate and long - 9

Marie Glennon - A wonderful performance by the corner back, held her own against all comers - 8

Niamh Connolly - Again had a tough job to do but won the battle this time. Brilliant at full back - 8

Caitriona Morris - Kept her marker scoreless and never let her out of her sight. Worked for the full hour - 8

Catherine Rogerson - Gave all she could and more. Produced several important blocks under pressure - 8

Donna Kelly - Captain Fantastic was simply that. Yellow card blotted her copy book a little but lead from the first whistle - 8

Grainne Egan - An unsung heroine if ever there was one. Was everywhere during the hour and never gave her marker a sniff of the ball - 8

Patricia Lennon - Had a great battle again with McGeown and this time had the upperhand. Was outstanding in the second half - 9

Niamh Coyle - Just one word - Outstanding - 10

Gertie Dowd - Was forced back to defend a couple of times but no job was too big or small. Threw her body into everything - 9

Annette McGeeney - Had to cover acres in her marking job on McSorley. Scored the two points that sealed the game - 8

Caitriona Regan - Another All-Ireland winners medal for this star. Was the architect of several of Roscommon's scorers. - 8

Cait Kenny - Ran herself into the ground and fully deserved her point. Was unlucky not to get a goal in the first half - 8

Kelly Hopkins - Her work rate never dropped below 100% and those two points came at very important times - 8

Claire Curley - Once again Curley find the net and what a goal it was! A great performance - 9

Sinead O'Brien - Came on for Dowd in the second half. Did an excellent job - 8

Carmel Killeen - Came on for Rogerson. Did the job well - 8

The Teams and Scorers

Scorers:

Roscommon: Claire Curley (1-0), Kelly Hopkins (0-2 1 45"), Annette McGeeney (0-2), Caitriona Regan, Niamh Coyle and Cait Kenny (0-1 each)
 Armagh: Collette McSorley (0-6 4f 2 45"), Bernie Murray (0-1)

Teams

Roscommon: Caroline Connaughton, Marie Glennon, Niamh Connolly, Caitriona Morris, Catherine Rogerson, Donna Kelly (Capt), Grainne Egan, Patricia Lennon, Niamh Coyle, Gertie Dowd, Annette McGeeney, Caitriona Regan, Cait Kenny, Kelly Hopkins, Claire Curley.

Subs Used: Sinead O'Brien for Dowd, Carmel Killeen for Rogerson

Armagh: Colleen Comiskey, Bronagh Keenan, Ann McGuigan, Patrice Murphy, Emma Farrell, Laura Gribben, Caoimhe McKenna, Bernie Murray, Niamh McGeown, Ciara Donnelly, Grainne Kelly, Joanne Mallon, Cathy Smith, Collette McSorley, Paula Mallon.

Subs Used: Michaela King for Mallon.

Referee: Karl O'Brien (Dublin)

Match Stats

First Free: Roscommon - 36 seconds
 First Wide: Roscommon - 1 minute 12 seconds
 First Score: Collette McSorley (Armagh) - 7 minutes 01 second
 Last Score: Annette McGeeney (Roscommon) - 62 minutes
 Top Scorer: Collette McSorley (Armagh) - 0-6

Wides	1st	2nd	Total
Roscommon	2	3	5
Armagh	4	2	6

Yellow Cards:
 Roscommon: Donna Kelly, Kelly Hopkins
 Armagh: Ciara Donnelly, Michaela King

Red Cards: None



Siobhan Ni Fhloinn, Yachtaran Chumann Camogaíochta na nGael presents Donna Kelly, Roscommon Captain with the 2009 All Ireland GALA Junior Championship Nancy Murray cup. Also pictured is Joanne Mallon, Captain Armagh & Patricia Patten, Finance Manager GALA. Sr3545



A delighted Donna Kelly, Captain of the GALA All Ireland 2009 Junior Champions Roscommon team hoists the Nancy Murray cup much to the delight of her team mates after overcoming Armagh at Drumlane ground on Sunday afternoon. Sr3544

GALA ALL IRELAND SENIOR & JUNIOR CAMOGIE FINALS

& BORD GAIS GAA U-21

HURLING CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

CROKE PARK • SUNDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER

CORK V KILKENNY

2.45 p.m.

JUNIOR FINAL

OFFALY V WATERFORD

12.45 p.m.

ADMISSION PRICES

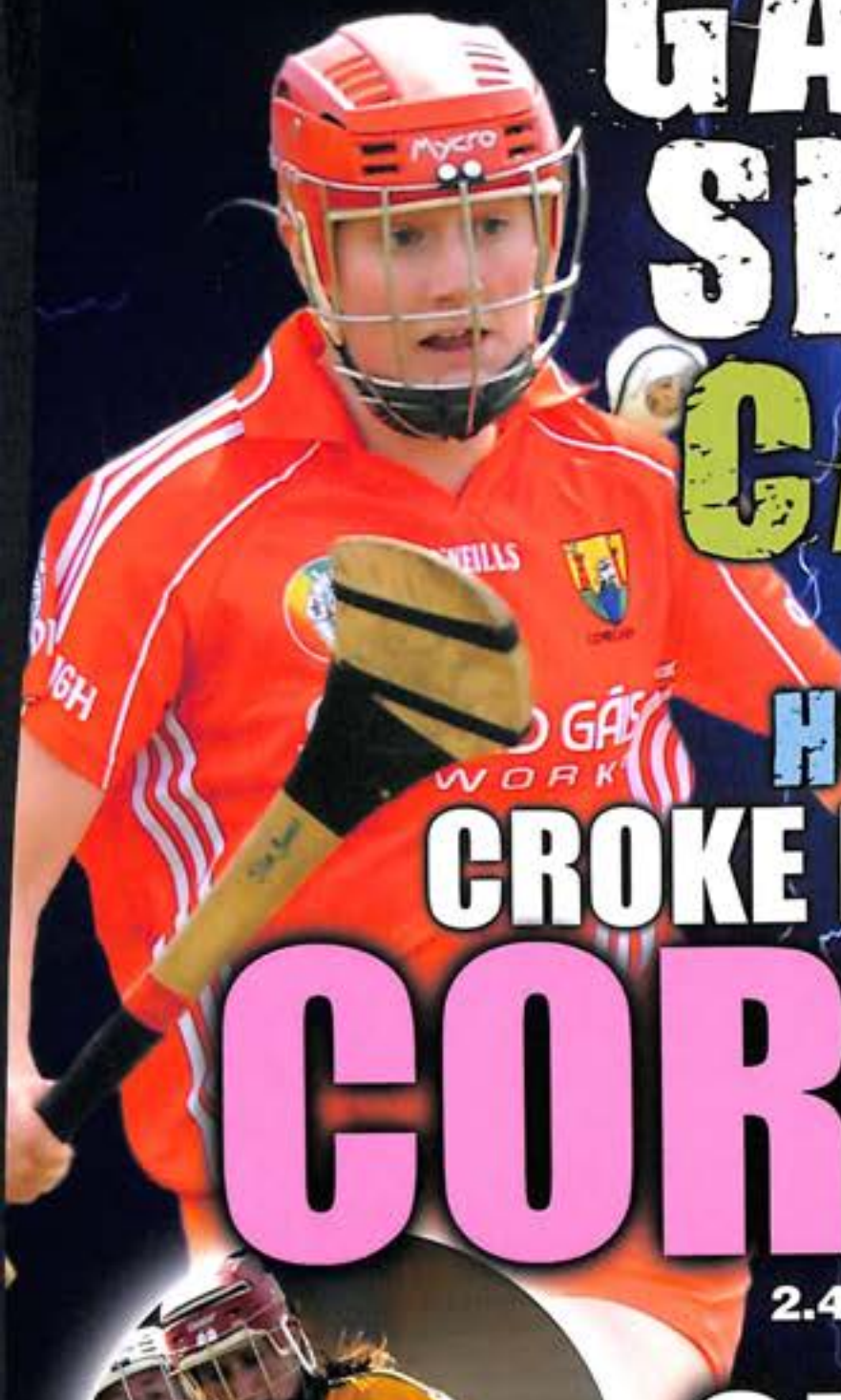
ADULTS €30 STUDENTS / OAPS €10

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O'Regans aim to make an impact

MICK O'REGAN from Douglas has been involved with camogie at club level for over 35 years having started coaching in the early 70s.

Yet in all that time he has never been involved at county level. So I asked him why this was and how he now finds himself as part of the Cork senior management team preparing for the All-Ireland final on September 13.

"Back in the early 80s my wife Christina was involved with Cork and I felt it would not be appropriate for me to get involved. In the 90s my daughter Amanda was on the U16 team and went on to play Junior and Senior and again I was happy to watch from the sidelines.

"However when Douglas won the senior county championship for the first time in 2008 the club had the honour of nominating a selector. While there are many experienced coaches in Douglas I was asked if I would go forward and I accepted the challenge."

What is the key difference between club and county? "In Douglas we have a very strong under-age structure especially over the past 10 years. We have won the All-Ireland feile on four occasions since 2000. Some of these players have made their way into the senior team. Club teams have a nucleus of strong players, many playing at inter-county level, supported by good club players.

"The Douglas club is fortunate to have a large squad



Cork Camogie coach Frank Flannery and management team of Lilian Zinkant, Mick O'Regan and Denise Cronin. (Inset) Cork captain Amanda O'Regan, Mick's daughter.



LINDA MELLERICK

of girls who train as hard as any men's team. Four Douglas girls are on the panel for the All-Ireland final. At inter-county level the teams are very well organised and train very hard. There are four or five counties who could win the All-Ireland. While Cork have been very successful, the last few years has seen a major improvement in the standard with Tipperary, Wexford, Galway and now Kilkenny making it to the final. All these teams have strong panels that put a huge effort into their pre-

parations. There are no weaknesses in these panels so the result can come down to a few chances taken or missed."

How have you found this experience? "So far it has been a mixed bag. In the league we failed to qualify for the final although we were only narrowly beaten in a few games. We went on to win the Munster championship, beating Tipperary in the final. I was especially pleased for my daughter Amanda when she was presented with the trophy — as county champions she was nominated as captain by Douglas. Amanda has been a great role model for the Douglas girls and has put in a huge effort this year. She dropped off the

Glanmire Senior basketball team who were going for three in-a-row cup wins to prepare for this campaign. In the championship we are unbeaten although I think it is fair to say we have been lucky on a few occasions."

What do you think of meeting Kilkenny in the final? "In the championship 'round-robin' series we played Kilkenny and they gave a very good account of themselves. They are very well organised with a lot of young players who have won All-Ireland titles at U16 and U18 as well as being on Asbourne (third level colleges) winning teams. They play a defensive game but can take their scores on the break. I am sure they will have no fears coming to

Croke Park especially as their U21 hurlers are also there on the day. Cork will have to show a big improvement on their recent form if we are to be successful. However, the girls have trained very hard and are very determined to bring back the O'Duffy Cup to Cork. When Douglas won the county last year we had great celebrations. I can only imagine the homecoming if we can pull off this victory."

It certainly will be a great occasion in the Douglas club on Monday evening if Cork retains the O'Duffy cup and captain Amanda returns with the Silverware as the very first Douglas player to Captain Cork to an All-Ireland senior title.

Blow for Dillon as O'Sullivan in to face Cats

By LINDA MELLERICK

Cork team news

CORK have made one change to the team which beat Wexford in last month's semi-final for Sunday's All-Ireland final showdown with Kilkenny.

Emer O'Sullivan replaces Emer Dillon at right half forward. It's a blow for Dillon who started last week in Ballygarvan's club game with St. Finbarr's.

Her long range accuracy is something Cork could miss on Sunday should Kilkenny pack their full-back line and restrict Cork to shoot from outfield. However, O'Sullivan is reported to be playing very well in training and is rewarded with an All-Ireland final start.

To have Dillon's ability on the line adds hugely to Cork's subs bench as it becomes more and more obvious how important the role of a strong panel is.

O'Sullivan is fast, a good striker and, having started last year's All-Ireland final, she won't be found wanting and will be eager to grab the opportunity with both hands.

There is one positional change sees Rachel Moloney move to full-forward and Emer O'Farrell switching out to left corner.

There are a number of changes in personnel to the team that started the 2008 final. Lynda O'Connell, Amanda O'Regan and Elaine O'Riordan are named on the bench while Gemma O'Connor, who lined out at right-half back, now lines out at centre forward. Lynda O'Connell has been called upon during the last couple of games when Cork have been in need and fared well on both occasions. Cork have not been afraid to make use of their bench this season.

Aoife Murray, Joanne O'Callaghan, Catriona Foley and Rena Buckley are at this stage as seasoned as one could hope their entire full back line to be. Kilkenny will drop each line back in the hope of dragging Cork out and taking them with the breaks of their defensive play.

Cork got turned fairly easily in the half back line against Wexford and this is a concern.

Jenny Duffy was replaced that day, possibly unfairly as she did a lot of covering, but retains her place. Sarah Hayes returned from her shortened honeymoon to pass a fitness test and take the number seven jersey while Mary O'Connor holds the centre.

Orla Cotter and Breige Corkery regularly contribute to the scoreboard from centre field and it is a big plus for Cork who need to show a great improvement up front.

Sile Burns grabbed two excellent goals in last year's final. She hasn't found the net too often in '09 but the threat is always there. Emer O'Farrell is Cork's top scorer from play with 5-1. Her threat maybe somewhat diminished playing in the corner, however.

The team to face Kilkenny and bring glory to Cork for the second year in a row is: A Murray, J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley, J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes, B Corkery, O Cotter, E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue, S Burns, R Moloney, E O'Farrell.

Cats need to show fighting spirit says captain

By LOUISE BROWN

Kilkenny news

"WE HAVE to beat them if we want to win" said Kilkenny's captain Ann Dalton yesterday in the corridors of Croke Park.

In a somewhat tongue in cheek remark, the young Cats captain sees Sunday's final against the reigning All-Ireland camogie champions Cork as a big stepping stone for a squad with an average age of 22, but not an impossible one.

"We're going in as underdogs I presume but we do have nothing to lose, only go out and play, do our best and see what happens."

"We're looking forward to the Cork game, a very experienced team and a very good team but we'll just go out and do our best."

Kilkenny management, led by Ann Downey a winner of 12 All-Ireland championships medals, have a huge pool of underage successful and highly talented players to pick from and with more experience at senior level their future looks bright.

"We've all grown up from U14 together on county teams, but compared to Cork we're a very inexperienced team."

"We do have a fear of losing but we're in an All-Ireland and we're not going to throw it away." Kilkenny last won the O'Duffy Cup by beating Cork in 1995 with present manager Downey claiming her final championship title before they lost out to Tipperary in 2001.

For many of this year's panel it will be their first taste of an All-Ire-

land senior final while memories of their 1995 success are pretty slim among the present team.

"We're the next generation, I'd say most people can't remember that that'll be on the team, new game now."

The Cats faced tough opposition in the championship group stage taking on Tipperary, Cork and Dublin.

They narrowly defeated Tipperary, then, lost out to Cork before an emphatic win over Dublin booked an All-Ireland semi-final spot against Galway.

According to the St Lachtain's club player the Galway game

brought the best out of the young chargers.

"We had a tough draw with Tipp, Cork and Dublin but we came through it."

"In the semi-final we had a difficult game against Galway where we pulled through winning by two points in the end."

"I think it's the game that has stood to us we just kept fighting in the semi-final even though we went four points down."

Kilkenny will need to show that same fighting spirit again on Sunday to give them any chance of dethroning the reigning champions.



Kilkenny captain, Ann Dalton.

Downey confident of victory

09 September 2009

Kilkenny manager Ann Downey is confident her young side can cause an upset against Cork in Sunday's Gala All-Ireland senior camogie final.

The Cats haven't contested a final since 2001, while their most recent victory was in 1995 when Downey won her 12th and final All-Ireland medal.

"We're up against it, but we certainly won't be intimidated by the occasion," the camogie legend said in Croke Park yesterday.

"Cork are a brilliant team but it all really comes down to the day. Our girls have really come on this year and they are looking forward to it."

"The girls all look up to the hurlers and we have had great support from the county board and all the hurlers, from Brian Cody himself right on down."



Kilkenny manager Ann Downey



Cork Camogie coach Frank Flannery with management team members Lilian Zinkant, Mick O'Regan and Denise Cronin during the league game against Limerick in Mallow. Picture: Richard Mills

A Frank approach has Cork prepared

By MARY NEWMAN
Camogie coach

SO FAR there have been many twists and turns but to date the job has been an enjoyable for Cork camogie coach Frank Flannery in his first season at the helm.

"My aim as I explained to you when we spoke in March is to help this team retain the O'Duffy cup and so far we are on course to achieve that. We have taken every game as it came and despite a few hiccups along the way things have gone well and we are in the final."

Flannery comes from a strong GAA background, and having won an intermediate county championship medal with Carrigtwohill in 2007, he knows only too well the commitment needed to succeed.

And while his involvement with camogie was limited he did help guide the fortunes of the Ballygarvan club last year and he was also involved with CIT during their Ashbourne Cup campaign in 2007 and that gave him an insight into the game.

"I saw the commitment that the camogie players at club and colleges level were willing to put in."

"While I have did not have any real experience in camogie other than that I had watched intercounty camogie over the years and I knew the standard was very high and certainly it is and it continues to be a

huge challenge to be involved with the Cork senior team — but it is one I have enjoyed immensely."

Despite having failed to make any impression in the national league, where they lost out to Galway and Wexford in the group series, the season got better as Cork got back to winning ways with a superb Munster final victory over Tipperary in a game that was played at a tremendous pace.

"This was a game that helped the new coach find his feet with the squad."

"That game showed us the spirit and determination in our camp, we upped our game in the second half and put Tipp under pressure."

"We went on to win and take the Munster title and certainly it did boost the mood in the camp after the league not having gone so well for us and it was something to work with as we got down to the business of championship preparations."

I put it to Frank that in a lot of games this year it has been in the second half that Cork have upped the ante and pulled away:

"It is a source of concern that we have not played to our potential for the full hour yet this year."

"I suppose in the Dublin game we were firing on all cylinders from the throw-in but against Tipperary and Wexford it was in the second half that we upped our game."

"This is something we have been working on in training and please god, fingers crossed, we will get it

right against Kilkenny. We just cannot afford to give them any leeway at all"

Frank has a good backroom team in the three selectors he has been working with and they are looking ahead to the final with confidence.

"Denise Cronin has done it all as a player she was one of the best. "I am only the coach, Denise is the manager and last year she proved just how good she is at the job."

"Lillian Zinkant and Mick O'Regan are two very experienced camogie mentors, with years of experience, and again they have been through it all before and know the drill."

"We will do everything in our power to ensure Cork remain All Ireland champions."

Cork and Kilkenny met during the group stages where Cork fashioned out a victory but even then Frank felt come close of business they would still be around and posing a huge threat:

"They posed us problems when we met them in Nowlan Park in the second last game in the group."

"They were a big threat we were lucky to come away winners. They had a goal chance but didn't take it and we swept down the field and grabbed a goal that effectively turned a close game in our favour."

"We know they will be determined to go one better after losing out that day. Kilkenny have had huge success at underage level but I think maybe they could be a bit young yet

but I suppose never write them off."

Wexford posed a huge threat but it was one which Cork dealt with efficiently despite not performing well in the opening half.

"After losing out last year they were very focused to make it to this year's final and they really put us to the pin of our collars but we showed tremendous character to come from behind to make it through."

"Since the start of the year our aim has been to retain the title and to do that we had to beat Wexford — anything else and we were out."

I put it to Frank that this Cork side has enormous strength in depth as was proved in the semi-final with several young players breaking on to the squad and pushing for inclusion.

"From a complacency point of view there is none of it in the panel there is always someone biting at your heels ready to grab a place on the starting 15 and indication of this is that so far we have used 23 players in championship campaign and that shows the competitiveness for places."

With just days to go, Frank is busy putting the last touches to preparations:

"We are looking forward to it immensely, we have great faith in our team's ability and they will not be found wanting."

A huge vote of confidence from their coach one which I am sure the players will repay come September 13.

Neary is looking to go a step further

AOIFE NEARY is looking ahead to Sunday's Gala All-Ireland senior camogie final and hoping that her third trip to headquarters will yield her first senior All-Ireland medal writes MARY NEWMAN.

Steeped in hurling and camogie tradition she comes from a family that has contributed hugely to both games in the Marble City lining out with the famed James Stephens club.

Father Paddy was a member of the 1982 and '83 All-Ireland winning Kilkenny senior teams, her aunt Catherine holds All-Ireland club medals with the famed St Paul's and both have helped enormously as Aoife has progressed in her chosen sport.

"I suppose with dad's involvement it was only natural we would all play."

My brothers Michael and Patrick play with the club, as does my sister Orla. Catherine has a huge involvement and when we were small we followed her around so it was a natural progression to play camogie. She is current chairperson of the county board and is totally dedicated to promoting camogie. I don't know how she does it all she is always on the go."

The 24-year-old cardiac technician in Waterford regional hospital has a junior All-Ireland medal to her credit, won in 2002 when Kilkenny got one over on Cork. Neary was marked by current Cork full-back Cathriona Foley.

"That was a tough clash and I expect next Sunday will be no different. Cork are formidable opponents and they are champions. We know it's a huge task but we are ready for it."

Aoife is one of the five survivors since Kilkenny's last senior final appearance in 2002 when they were defeated by Tipperary, but she says the attitude in the competition is a different this year, thanks in no small way to Ann Downey.

"Ann is a great motivator and when she speaks everybody listens."

"She has absolutely nothing to prove; she has done it all her record speaks for itself. Everything she says is relevant and you just want to get out there and do it for her."

The Cats defeated Galway with an injury-time goal to secure their place in the final. Aoife felt they were always going to win it:

"I felt we were going to win, time was almost up but we have a kick in us and we hit them, and they didn't have time to react and hit back."

She feels Sunday's game will be close, but is a bit worried about how the younger players will react.

"Croke Park is a daunting place on All-Ireland day."

"I was only 16 when we played the 2001 senior final and everybody in the camp was a bundle of nerves."

"Even the following year in the junior final it was nerve-racking."

"Sunday is a big occasion for Kilkenny camogie. We are hoping it all goes well and we play to our potential."

"There was only five points in it when we met in the earlier stages of the championship and we are hoping to go one better this time."

Lavey to face Keady in Ulster final

By Niamh Archibald

LAVEY and Keady will compete for the Ulster Senior B Club Championship title after both sides came through tough semi-final tests.

The first of Saturday's matches saw Lavey take on Clonduff, at Lavey.

Mary O'Kane opened the scoring with a finely taken point but Clonduff responded through Sarah Louise Carr.

Lavey then found themselves in front with a well-taken O'Kane goal.

Once again Clonduff responded with three points of

their own. It was, however, the home side that went into the break with a one-point lead.

Fionnuala Carr had a fine game in the heart of defense, clearing her lines well and springing attacks, as the Lavey forwards struggled to penetrate.

As the game went on, both sides looked to their free-takers to keep them in contention. Clonduff battled hard, but in the end Lavey were able to hold out for a five-point win, 1-9 to 0-7.

Keady came through the other semi-final despite an excellent display from Tyrone champions Eglis.

It was the Tyrone side who came

out the stronger, scoring four unanswered points in a row (three from frees). Their dramatic start continued when Leona Gallagher raised the green flag with a well taken goal.

Keady soon found themselves further behind when Claire Jordan pounced for Eglis's second goal.

The Tyrone side seemed to be in full control as they went into the interval with a 2-4 to 0-0 lead. It was once again Eglis who came out the stronger team, Susan McCann pointing from a free. The Tyrone side were then dealt a blow when county captain Julie Lagan had to retire injured.

In the second half, Keady were 11 points down but Colette McKeever landed a goal to start a comeback.

A Kelly-Ann Comiskey point and two from Kinsella came before McKeever once again raised the green flag for Keady.

Eglis fought back, Shauna Jordan slotting over a point.

But Keady pushed on for the win and, with two minutes left the sides were level.

But Laura Comiskey, who had won the U18 championship player of the match award earlier in the week, spotted her chance and found the net to cap a tremendous Keady fightback.



President of the Camogie association Joan O'Flynn and Gary Desmond, CEO Gala, with senior captains Ann Dalton (Kilkenny) and Cork's Amanda O'Regan, with the O'Duffy Cup. Right are junior captains Aine Lyng, Waterford and Offaly's Marion Creen, with the New Ireland Junior Cup, at a photocall ahead of the Gala All-Ireland Camogie Championship final at Croke Park on Sunday.

Picture: Pat Murphy/SPORTSFILE

Cork lament final fixture clash

by Daragh Ó Conchúir

CORK camogie captain Amanda O'Regan is disappointed the county's GAA board has organised the semi-finals of the county senior hurling championship to clash with the Rebels' All-Ireland final against Kilkenny at Croke Park on Sunday.

This is the second successive year that such a clash has occurred, while in the past, the county final has taken place while Cork have been competing in the All-Ireland decider.

This inevitably causes problems of allegiance, which invariably affect the camogie attendance.

In 2002, Paula O'Connor couldn't even count on her family being able to show up, as her brothers Ben, Jerry, John and Eamonn were playing for Newtownshandrum in the Leaside hurling decider, while dad, Bernie, was

managing the team.

"It is disappointing," says O'Regan. "It's disappointing for the girls whose clubs are playing in those semi-finals. For the Barr's girls in particular, there's no bus coming up because (St Finbarr's) are playing in the senior hurling semi-final so it's tough enough."

"They lose a bit of support and for us it is disappointing but there's nothing we can do about it."

She is still hoping that there will be a sizeable support however and reckons that it will be needed against the might of Kilkenny.

"When you're at the top, you're there to be knocked so you go in with that bit of fear in you. We know it's a great occasion and it's a privilege to play up here. We know if you get too nervous you lose the occasion so we'll be just focused on the job in hand."

O'Regan was awarded the captaincy

as a result of Douglas winning the county title at the first time of asking last year. Sometimes the tradition of awarding such a vital honour to the local champions looks suspect, but O'Regan has proved to be an inspired choice.

She recently lost her place in the team, just as Michael Fennelly and Willie Ryan did for Kilkenny and Tipperary, but continues to inspire with her dedication, honesty and talks in the dressing room.

A holder of three senior All-Ireland medals already, as well as minor and junior mementoes, the Kanturk secondary school teacher holds the upper hand on her father, Michael, a selector of this team who won an All-Ireland minor football medal in 1974. Her mother Christine was a member of the Cork panel that won three junior camogie All-Irelands

in the mid-80s.

Having her father involved will make it an extra special occasion for her, she reckons. Even if she does have to look on from the dugout — and there is no doubt that if this happens, it will be very tough to bear — O'Regan will always be about the team.

"This is the strongest squad that we've had in a long time and everyone is battling for every position on the pitch. It is very tough for everyone concerned but we have the young players there as well this year. We're bringing them through. They should get a run on Sunday, all going well."

"We got a few players back that took last year out (Anna Geary and Emer Dillon) and with the young players coming through, they're unbelievably talented. It makes us stronger as a squad. Everyone has to fight, there's no complacency and no one's safe."

CAMÓG-AEROBICS A BIG HIT!

CAMÓG-AEROBICS is a programme organised by the Camogie Association. It is being piloted in Sylane camogie club, a newly-formed club in Galway.

This programme was organised for adults who have never played camogie, many of whom have a daughter playing the game.

The Camóg-aerobic sessions consist of the basic skills of the game combined with aerobic fitness work. Due to the success of the programme and the 'craic' enjoyed by all, the group continued to play outdoors all summer.

It is hoped that this initiative can be run in other new clubs to increase volunteers and interest in the game.

The following Sylane club members will participate in a Camóg-aerobics exhibition at half-time in today's Junior final:



Ann Donnellan, Ann Ronan, Caroline Ronan, Marie McCabe, Mags Hughes, Ann Higgins, Caroline Lynch-Brady, Helen Roche, Jacinta Melia, Therese Quinn, Máire Meenaghan, Susan Lynch, Assumpta Meenaghan, Orla Purcell, Patricia Conroy, Anne Marie Lardner, Caroline Bodkin, Fionnuala Bodkin, Karen Lowry, Fiona Lardner, Jacqueline Rutter-Murphy.

Donegal Camogie Academy

THIRTY TEENAGERS from four clubs attended a three-day camogie academy in Burt, Co. Donegal. Specifically aimed at young teens, these 11-, 12-, 13- and 14-year-olds enjoyed a variety of skills and thrills from camogie coaches.

Gavin De Craig presented a health and nutrition seminar on the first day to ensure they will partake of correct foods and drinks, pre-, during and post training and matches.

Camogie All Star and Director of Camogie, Mary O'Connor, took all the players for an intensive indoor and wall-ball session. Specialist skills and drills were on the agenda for the third day of the academy. John Crossey, former Antrim hurler, was in attendance and watched the session in action.

All girls declared that the most important detail learned from the three intensive days was to practice at home, not just at training.

Manus O'Donnell, Chairperson of Donegal County Board, was delighted with the numbers attending and is looking forward to bringing the majority of these players to Croke Park in October for Coillte



CAMOGIE FINALS PREVIEW ON TG4

Join Dara Ó Cinnéide on Seó Spóirt on Friday @ 9.50pm for their preview of the camogie finals. Interviews include Amanda O'Regan (Cork Captain), Ann Dalton (Kilkenny Captain), Joan O'Flynn (President) and Sinead O'Connor (Ard Stiurthoir).

The junior camogie final is between Offaly v Waterford is at 12.45pm. The senior camogie final is between Cork v Kilkenny is at 2.45pm. while the U-21 hurling final between Clare and Kilkenny takes place afterwards at 4.30pm.

Left: Amanda O'Regan (Cork Captain)
Below: Joan O'Flynn (President)



Above: Sinead O'Connor (Ard Stiurthoir).
Right: Ann Dalton (Kilkenny Captain)



Una takes command

Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael has announced the details of their referee appointments for the forthcoming Gala All Ireland senior and junior camogie finals which will take place in Croke Park on Sunday, September 13.

Both referees this year come from the Orchard County.

The senior final between Cork (holders) and Kilkenny will be under the control of Una Kearney who is a member of the St Brenda's Ballymacnab club in Armagh. Una, a teacher by profession, previously took charge of the All Ireland senior final in 2004, and she also handled the junior finals of 2005 and 2008. Una is Chairperson of the National Referees Committee and has been officiating since 1999.

Una's umpires are Paula McGuigan, Conor Dodd, Bebe Devlin and Ann O'Hare.

The line umpires are John Morrissey (standby referee) and Ciarán Quigley, while Karl O'Brien and Eadmonn MacSuibhne are the fourth and fifth officials.

Pat Walsh is the man in the middle for the junior final between Offaly (last season's beaten finalists) and Waterford who are appearing in their first decider. Pat, who is a supervisor with Quinn Brothers Construction Company, is a native of Cappawhite in County Tipperary but now lives in Portadown. He played senior hurling with Killeady in Armagh. He also spent some time in London where he hurled with Glen Rovers. Pat refereed the 2008 Nancy Murray Cup final and numerous county championship finals.

Pat's umpires are Michael McNabb, Vincie McErlean, Malachy McToal and Derek McNabb. The line umpires are Alan Lagrue (standby referee) and John O'Leary, while Julie O'Neill and Owen Elliott are the fourth and fifth officials.

Murray hungry for more Rebel success

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR C'SHIP FINAL



Cork v Kilkenny

Sunday: Croke Park, 2.45pm
Referee: U Kearney, Armagh
TV: RTÉ Two

by Fintan O'Toole

SHE may have stockpiled a slew of honours in the last few years, but Aoife Murray's appetite for success has not been sated. Gazing ahead to Sunday's All-Ireland camogie decider against Kilkenny, the Cloughduv goalkeeper finds the same levels of feverish anticipation building up.

"It almost feels like it's your first time involved. I'm as excited as ever. Probably more so, as I'm a little older and you're never guaranteed to be there again next year. The second Sunday in September is the aim for us every year and the possibility of what's in store has made this so exciting."

Cork's outlook at the year was always focused towards this juncture. The league had its uses but in terms of mining new talent rather than success.

"The league is a great honour, but it's not the be all and end all," says Murray. "We used this year's league to blood new players and try out players in different positions. The Mackeys, Julia White, Jennifer Lynch, all these young girls have showed up during the league. That'll stand to us on Sunday, competition for places. When things are going against us, we know we've girls to bring us on."

When the championship route manoeuvred past the group stages this summer, Cork were still standing. In

the semi-finals, they found old foes Wexford, who toppled them in the 2007 All-Ireland final, lying in wait.

"You'd be lying if you said you hadn't thought about the 2007 game beforehand," remarks Murray. "I took that defeat very personally. We said let's put a few things right here but when the game started, we soon realised that it wasn't about settling scores. With the way they started, we'd to concentrate on just winning the game and realise that 2007 was gone."

"The first half against Wexford wasn't impressive, but the second half against Wexford showed what we've learnt this year. People didn't give us the credit we deserved for those tight wins against Kilkenny and Dublin. In winning these games, we learnt an awful lot about ourselves."

Cork's set-up has been tweaked this season, with Denise Cronin still at the helm and Frankie Flannery installed as the squad's new trainer.

Murray raves about Flannery's input: "The best thing about Frankie is he's a very young guy who plays hurling himself and you can't get enough of that in camogie. I'd come early to training myself and he'd take shots on me, and he hits them as hard as he would if any guy was in goal. He's a hurling brain, his enthusiasm, his attitude, his willingness to listen to the players is brilliant. The way he has approached training is fantastic, it's so different but it's very enjoyable."

Cork's final opponents Kilkenny are embracing the novelty of an appearance at this level for the first time since 1995 and their numbers in the crowd should be swelled due to the county's U21s featuring in the All-Ireland final on the same day. But Murray feels Cork can cope.

"The Cork crowds are always able to make their presence felt."

"We'll lose some support because of



Aoife Murray: the Cork star says there is fierce competition for places.

the Barrs-Newtown match. Personally that's splitting my family down the middle, I'd love to be watching my brother Kevin and vice versa.

"But we'll just have to get on with it. We'd new opponents last year in Galway and it's the same this year against Kilkenny. All that matters is that we win that game."

Cats' Aylward keen to seize the day

by Fintan O'Toole

KILKENNY defender Elaine Aylward is hoping to continue her club Mullinavat's golden age in Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final in Croke Park.

Willie O'Dwyer represented the south Kilkenny outfit in last weekend's historic four-in-a-row success at GAA headquarters and on Sunday Mullinavat will again have a notable presence on the sacred sod with Leanne Fennelly, Amy Butler, Michelle Quilty and Claire Aylward alongside Elaine on the panel.

A three-time Leinster winner and an All-Ireland junior medal winner back in 2002, Aylward has had to be patient for the wait for a marquee senior final appearance. The Cats' progression to this stage in the senior grade has been aided by a rich assembly underage line of talent that has produced a four-in-a-row, All Ireland minor winning outfit.

"It's brilliant to have all the underage success have had in recent times, from U16 and U18 to second-level colleges and in the Ashbourne Cups," admitted

Aylward.

"All of that brings extra experience to all the players on our team, and helps to create plenty belief in the team."

"We have a panel with a real winning mentality which is crucial to being successful."

"It is evident in training amongst ourselves and that carries onto game which is most important."

A third of the Kilkenny panel are still in their teens and the experience Aylward is well placed to gauge the progress. Still, a Cork team that has already defeated Kilkenny once this year will provide a stern test on Sunday.

"They've really raised the bar and that's proven by the fact that this is their eighth final in a row."

"They have the experience of winning All-Ireland titles and that's a fabulous track record which speaks for itself."

"We are under no illusions as to just how tough the game is going to be against Cork."

"But we are determined to give everything in Croke Park on Sunday. It's a huge occasion for us."

Cork turn to O'Sullivan for Gala final clash

CHAMPIONS Cork make one change ahead of Sunday's Gala All-Ireland senior camogie championship final against Kilkenny in Croke Park (2.45pm).

Eimear O'Sullivan from the Ballinhassig club replaces Emer Dillon at wing-forward.

Kilkenny, back in their first All-Ireland final since 2001, are unchanged from their All Ireland semi-final win over Galway.

In the Gala All-Ireland junior final (12.45pm), last season's defeated finalists, Offaly line out as they did against Meath in the All-Ireland semi-final.

Waterford show one alteration from their penultimate victory over Laois with Aine Breathnach securing her starting place at the expense of Jenny Simpson.

CORK: A. Murray; J. O'Callaghan, C. Foley, R.

Buckley; J. Duffy, M. O'Connor, S. Hayes; B. Corkery, O. Cotter; E. O'Sullivan, G. O'Connor, U. O'Donoghue; S. Burns, E. O'Farrell, R. Moloney.

KILKENNY: C. Ryan; L. Fennelly, C. Doherty, J. Frisby; L. Lyng, A. Butler, E. Aylward; C. Doherty, A. Dalton (Capt); T. Muldowney, K. Power, E. Keane; M. Quilty, D. Gaule, A. Neary.

OFFALY: A. Kennedy; K. Brady, L. Keena, F. Stephens; L. Sullivan, M. Crean (Capt), S. Sullivan; K. Nugent, M. Morkan; A. Kelly, T. Hannon, M. Davis; S. Flannery, E. Darnoddy, A. Watkins.

WATERFORD: A. O'Brien; V. Gaffney, S. O'Grady (Capt), K. M. Hearne; G. Kenneally, M. O'Donnell, S. Kiernan; M. Murphy, C. Maher; S. Curran, A. Lyng, N. Morrissey; P. Jackman, K. Kelly, A. Breathnach.

Subject: Gala All Ireland final camogie teams announced & teams for All Ireland 7's
EMBARGOED UNTIL 9PM WEDNESDAY SEPT 9

Champions Cork make one change ahead of Sunday's Gala All Ireland senior camogie championship final against Kilkenny in Croke Park (2.45pm). Eimear O'Sullivan from the Ballinhassig club replaces Emer Dillon at wing-forward. Kilkenny, back in their first final since 2001, are unchanged from their All Ireland semi-final win over Galway.

Cork: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley; J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes; B Corkery, O Cotter; E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue; S Burns, E O'Farrell, R Moloney.

Kilkenny: C Ryan; L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby; L Lyng, A Butler, E Aylward; C Dormer, A Dalton (Capt); T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane; M Quilty, D Gaule, A Neary.

In the Gala All Ireland junior final (12.45pm) last season's defeated finalists, Offaly line out as they did against Meath in the All Ireland semi-final. Waterford show one alteration from their penultimate victory over Laois with Áine Breathnach securing her starting place at the expense of Jenny Simpson.

Offaly: A Kennedy; K Brady, L Keena, F Stephens; L Sullivan, M Crean (Capt), S Sullivan; K Nugent, M Morkan; A Kelly, T Hannon, M Davis; S Flannery, E Darmody, A Watkins.

Waterford: A O'Brien; V Gaffney, S O'Grady (Capt), K M Hearne; G Kenneally, M O'Donnell, S Kiernan; M Murphy, C Raher; S Curran, Á Lyng, N Morrissey; P Jackman, K Kelly, Á Breathnach.

Meanwhile the following teams are taking part in the All Ireland camogie 7's in Kilmacud on Saturday.

Antrim: Ardoyne, Creggan, Portglenone, Gort na Mona, Loughgiel, St. Johns, O'Donovan Rossa

Armagh: St. Brigids, St. Mochuas

Carlow: Myshall

Clare: Clooney Quin, Bodyke, Kilmaley

Cork: Ballinhassig, Ballincollig, Sarsfields

Derry: Eoghan Rua, Ballinderry, Bellaghy, Castledawson, Newbridge

Down: Liatroim Fontenoys, Atticall, Ballycran, Ballyholland, Clonduff

Dublin: Na Fianna, Lucan Sarsfields, Portobello, Good Counsel, Kilmacud Crokes Raheny

Galway: Athenry

Kilkenny: St. Martins, James Stephens, Blacks & Whites

Laois: Camross

Limerick: Newcastle West

London: Fr. Murphy's

Offaly: Kilcormac/Killoughey, Naomh Brid, Shinrone

Tipperary: Drom/Inch, Toomevara, Cashel, Shannon Rovers, Moneygall

Tyrone: Derrylaughan, Doiretreasc

Waterford: Ardkeen

Westmeath: Delvin, St. Munnas

Camogie captains look forward to the big day

08 September 2009

The Gala All-Ireland Junior and Senior Camogie Championship Finals take centre stage in Croke Park Sunday next 13th September. The captains and managers of the competing counties Offaly, Waterford, Cork and Kilkenny joined Joan O'Flynn President of the Camogie Association and Gary Desmond CEO of Gala today in Croke Park.

Offaly play Waterford in the junior final while Cork meet Kilkenny in the senior decider. Marion Crean captains Offaly for the second year in a row. Waterford are led by Sally O'Grady. Amanda O'Regan is the Cork supreme while Ann Dalton leads Kilkenny.

Cork, appearing in their eighth successive final, will be looking to put back-to-back titles together. They are bidding for their 24th All Ireland senior title bringing them to within two titles of Dublin who top the table with 26 All Ireland Senior Camogie titles. This year the Rebels won all of their three games in the round robin stage of the Championship.

Cork Captain Amanda O'Regan is in confident mood ahead of Sunday's clash, "Training has gone well and the competition for places is very strong," she said. "But, we know Kilkenny will be very hungry, they are a young team coming through."

Kilkenny last contested the All Ireland in 2001 when they fell to Tipperary. Their most recent victory was in 1995 when today's manager Ann Downey came head to head with current Cork boss Denise Cronin.

Kilkenny Captain Ann Dalton is excited to be back in this year's final: "It is the first All Ireland final for many of our players and we have worked hard. It was great to see the hurlers do the four-in-a-row on Sunday, it would be massive if we could bring another cup for the second week in succession."

Offaly will be hoping to bring a first title to the Faithful County while Waterford are appearing in their first All Ireland junior final.

Joan O'Flynn President said, "Every Camogie player's dream is to win an All Ireland in Croke Park. So in next Sunday's Gala All Ireland finals dreams will come true in the biggest day in the sporting lives of the players of Cork and Kilkenny, Waterford and Offaly."

"The All Ireland finals are the showcase of Camogie. The skill, speed, athleticism and artistry of the game's finest players will be on display. The club and family base of Camogie, as part of the Gaelic Games community, will be much in evidence."

"I am delighted that this year's All Ireland programme continues to unite the Camogie and hurling families when the All Ireland 21 hurling title will also be decided. A great day of action is in prospect."

This is the fourth year of Gala's sponsorship of the Camogie Championship and Gala CEO, Gary Desmond, is delighted to be involved again this year.

"In Gala's fourth year partnering the Camogie Association, we are thrilled with how the relationship has developed. As an Irish company, with over 200 stores, we are proud to be the title sponsors of this iconic sport's Championships."

"The Gala All-Ireland Senior and Junior Championship Finals are the pinnacle of the Camogie season. Cork, Kilkenny, Offaly and Waterford have all showed tremendous talent, spirit and determination to get this far. On behalf of Gala, I would like to wish Cork's Amanda O'Regan, Ann Dalton from Kilkenny, Marion Crean of Offaly and Waterford's Sally O'Grady the best of luck on Sunday. We're all looking forward to a thrilling day of Irish sporting action."

Ticket Giveaway

WIN Two Premium Level tickets

All-Ireland Camogie Finals

Cork v Kilkenny

Sunday
13th September
Croke Park



For your chance to win two premium level tickets to the All-Ireland Camogie Final at Croke Park on Sunday 13th September simply text your answer to the question below along with your name and address to 07624 802490 by 12 noon on Tuesday 8th September

Q Name the current All-Ireland Camogie champions?

Normal Irish News Rules and Standard Network Charges Apply

Cronin relishing familiar

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR C'SHIP FINAL



Cork v Kilkenny

Sunday: Croke Park, 2.45pm
Referee: U. Kearney, Armagh
TV: RTE Two



Fintan O'Toole

FOURTEEN years on, but the memories still shine as clearly as ever.

The prospect of an All-Ireland camogie decider between Cork and Kilkenny has a novel ring to it yet for Cork manager Denise Cronin it is a matter of renewing acquaintances. Back in 1995, Cronin captained Cork in a cracking showdown with Kilkenny when they prevailed 4-8 to 2-10.

On Sunday she'll patrol the sidelines for Cork, while the legendary Ann Downey dons the bainisteoir bib for Kilkenny in the first final clash between them since 1995.

"It'll bring back some great memories alright," laughs Cronin. "Back 14 years ago I was the captain and we won which was brilliant. This will be a very close game. Kilkenny have the talent and are the up-and-coming team. They showed great hunger against Galway, to beat them is no main feat."

"They've been tremendously strong in recent years. They've put in great work at U16 and minor. They won the minor there last month, and even now Denise Gall has been added to the starting team. Ann Downey wouldn't put anyone out unless they know their stuff, and she did great damage against Galway. So I don't think they've any fear of us and they've All-Ireland final experience."

Cronin hailed the achievement of her players in reaching their eighth consecutive All-Ireland final, a statistic that is a testament to their astonishingly high standards of performance throughout this decade.

"It's an amazing achievement to get to the final again. There has to be still hunger. Eight-in-a-row All-Ireland finals isn't easy to get to. But Cork always manage to get to semi-finals and the next step then is to reach the final. They've done tremendous work over the last eight months. Our focus has always been to get to the All-Ireland final."

"We



Denise Cronin: captain of Cork when they last met Kilkenny in a final; 1995's All-Ireland success.



Opposing captains Amanda O'Regan and Ann Dalton ahead of Sunday's Gala All Ireland Senior Camogie final.

Picture: INPHO/Morgan Treacy

weren't too worried about anything else. There are real leaders on the field for us that will drive us on and have a tremendous will to win."

Cork have had to endure some tight battles to reach this stage. During their semi-final triumph against Wexford, their prospects were balanced pre-

cariously at half-time while earlier in the summer their games with both Kilkenny and Tipperary were close affairs. It wasn't looking good for us in the Wexford match," admits Cronin.

"But it was just a matter of talking to the girls at half-time and explaining what we weren't doing right. It just comes down to getting them focused, they went out and took it on board for the second-half. The girls showed tremendous character and drive to pull through. There was big motivation there."

"The girls knew in 2007 that they didn't live up to their potential going for the three-in-a-row. The new kids Wexford

knocked them off the park. They weren't ready for the physicality of the game and were well prepared this year to make amends. I think the tough group really prepared us for the semi-final. We had to dig deep in our two games against Kilkenny and Tipperary."

"It wasn't looking good against Kilkenny, but we won out. Then Tipperary put us to the pin of our collars as well." Meanwhile, Cork attacker Sile Burns believes their 2007 All-Ireland final loss to Wexford was a key factor in motivating them in the recent semi-final clash with the Model County.

"The loss to Wexford was the main spur to push us on last year. We felt we hadn't got our revenge, until this year's semi-final. So it was very important for us psychologically then to win

this. It was worrying in the first-half against Wexford."

"It was a strong wind that day in Nowlan Park. At half-time some harsh words were said but at that stage leaders step up, the likes of Bríge Corkery and Una O'Donoghue really stepped up there in the second-half."

Burns also reckons that their group victory over Kilkenny earlier in the summer will have no relevance on the outcome of next Sunday's final.

"That group stage match was a long time ago. It's insignificant now as a result."

"It was a fairly miserable day then and not a lot of hurling came into it."

"Psychologically I suppose it was important that we'd get on top of them and would beat them. But a final is a final and past form doesn't matter."

Challenging Cats hope to make it a twin All-Ireland celebration

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

CHALLENGERS Kilkenny will be aiming for 'twin glory' when they tackle gifted Cork in the All-Ireland senior camogie final in Croke Park on Sunday.

The last time the Cats won the Duffy Cup their current manager, Ann Downey, who just happens to be a twin, captained the team.

On Sunday another twin, Ann Dalton will skipper the side as the Noreiders chase what would be their first 13th victory overall, and first since 1994.

"If Ann can lead the team to victory it would be something that would be just a little different," suggested the manager, who skipped two winning sides (1989 and 1994) during a distinguished career that saw her claim 10 All-Ireland wins.

While the Cats are young, hungry and skilful, the former star knows they are up against it facing a team that will be featuring in its eighth successive final.

Cork have six super forwards, with Jemma O'Connor the brightest star, while the likes of Aoife Murray, Mary O'Connor, Brid Corkery (camogie and

football star) and Orla Cotter are all massive players, with a huge amount of experience.

"I would be a bit concerned that our team is very young, but then the young people of today are not phased by things as we were in our time," suggested the manager. "Croke Park on All-Ireland final day can be an intimidating place. All the girls have to remember is that it is just another pitch."

The oldest member of the team is 25, but all have won under-16 or minor All-Irelands in the past, so they have proven themselves on the big stage.

Ms Downey, a fierce competitor in her day, said Kilkenny had enjoyed a good campaign, with the wins over Tipperary and Galway especially thrilling, but she knows there is more in the team.

Complete performance

"I am waiting for the day when the six forwards click together," she admitted. "The day that happens we will be a match for anyone. We are nearly there with this team. If we get the complete performance we will be hard to beat."

Last season Cork gave Kilkenny an awful trimming in the championship. The difference was in the order of 19 points. When

the counties clashed this time, the difference was back to four.

"We are getting close, we know that," the Kilkenny boss insisted. "Traditionally Cork hold their best for the final, but we will be ready."

The challengers won the National League last season, and the experience gained there, plus the boost in confidence taken from this strong championship, has left all in the camp with a good feeling entering this final. The management team of Ms Downey, John Loneragan and Paul Murphy know they have a team with a bright future.

"We are ready," the manager insisted. "We have no fear. There would be no point in that. While we are delighted to be back in the final, merely being there is far from the height of our ambitions."

Tipperary man, John Loneragan is a selector. He classed the Cats as a very good team.

"They are an excellent bunch of girls," he insisted. "We may have waited until the fourth minute of injury time to score the goal that beat Galway in the semi-final, but we were creating the chances and it was only a matter of time before we got the break."

Not surprised

He said he wasn't at all

surprise by that win over highly rated opponents. Cork would be a different challenge completely.

"We will be climbing Everest against them," was the way he put it. "The pressure will be on Cork. This is their eighth final in a row, and they will be expected to win. Some have said we have reached our expectations having qualified for the final."

"I would like us to take another step. This is now a two horse race. One team can win. Why shouldn't it

be us? I am hopeful."

John reckoned Kilkenny took one step further up the ladder last year when they won the National League. Ambitions were far from fulfilled, however.

Disappointed

"When we took on the job two years ago the ambition was to win an All-Ireland," he continued. "We were disappointed not to reach the semi-finals last season. After the League we might have taken our foot off the pedal thinking

we would make the semis.

"We changed things a bit this year. We didn't place as much emphasis on the League so we could put more into the championship. Under-age camogie in Kilkenny is very, very strong. There is a nice flow of players through the system."

"If Kilkenny don't win the All-Ireland this year, they will during the coming years. There is a huge pool of talented under-age players coming through the ranks."

The squad, he insisted, has been training three nights a week since February. The commitment from the players has been enormous.

"They are very fit, very skilful," John continued. "Good teams make their own luck. I think we are a good team. Hopefully there won't be much in it in the end, but if we are close to them at the finish I would really fancy our chance. I am going to Croke Park to win an All-Ireland."



Caption

Coach Jimmy decided against double jobbing on Sunday

KILKENNY GAA coach, Jimmy Meagher has decided against double jobbing on Sunday. The St Lachtain's (Freshford) clubman happens to be coach to the Kilkenny under-21 hurling team contesting the All-Ireland final at Croke Park, and he is also part of the management team with the senior camogie side facing Cork in the All-Ireland showdown at the same venue.

But the county GAA coach has decided that he can serve only one master. He will put all his energy into the hurlers attempt to retain the title by downing Munster champions, Clare.

"It wouldn't be fair to either team if I worked

with them both. Sadly, I had to make the choice, so I will stick with the hurlers," explained Jimmy. Meagher will be with the camogie squad for a get together on Saturday afternoon, but he won't rejoin the group until Sunday night.

Every chance

"Hopefully I will be leaving one All-Ireland final celebration to join another," smiled Jimmy. "The camogie team has every chance of winning."

"They may have pulled off a great escape with the semi-final win over Galway, but these girls have some talent. When Marie O'Connor got the chance to score the clinching goal late in

the match she took it. It was a typical final whistle game."

"Galway left us hanging there when two points down. The ball broke to Elaine Aylward and she went through and laid it off to Marie. That sort of move was worked on in training; creating the angle and laying-off the ball to a supporting colleague. To see that coming out on the day of the game was fantastic."

The Kilkenny County Board coach said the All-Ireland final was a huge occasion, but the girls have already had a dry run to help them cope. They travelled to Croke Park last week for a training run on the pitch, and every aspect of the day was replicated

as it will unfold on Sunday.

"When is the right time to win an All-Ireland," Jimmy asked. "When you are in it. This may be a young team, but they can play. We lost to Cork earlier in the championship, but the girls felt they could have won. They know if they work hard, victory is not beyond them."

The team will win, eventually

"No matter how Sunday's game goes, this team is not going to go away," he continued. "The game that changed the season for us was the win in the first championship match against Tipperary in Thurles. We had 11 weeks to prepare for that. They

had beaten us in the League and they beat us well."

Ann Downey (team manager) had games arranged every week after that be it against boys under-age teams or whatever. All the time the girls were improving nicely. That day in Thurles they knew that if they trained well, they could turn the year. They did!"

Catherine Neary, chairperson of the Camogie Board felt Kilkenny now had a great chance to build on last year's National League and intermediate successes. There was nothing bigger than the senior All-Ireland, she insisted.

"We are there now, so hopefully we can take the

next big step," she said. "The players have come through at under-16 and minor level. Most of the players would be 25 and under, so this is a young team."

"Youth can work either way for you. It has to be every players ambition to play in Croke Park, but it can be a tough experience. The support in Nowlan Park for the semi-final was huge, so hopefully we will have great support in the final."

"This is a formidable Cork team. They have been in the previous eight final. That is phenomenal in the modern game. If the same was achieved in hurling, there would be statues to the players all over the

place."

An on the day thing

Catherine said that every team was there to be beaten. The final was all about what happened on the day.

"We have character, skill, determination, fitness and skill," she insisted. "We need all those things to get on the day to beat a great team like Cork. We will be the underdogs, but we are optimistic."

Camogie is at a good place in Kilkenny at the moment with 32 clubs registered with the County Board. A senior All-Ireland win would push things on nicely.



Meet the **Kilkenny** players

Photography: Eoin Hennessy/www.ehp.ie



Catherine Doherty



Catriona Ryan



Claire Aylward



Colette Dormer



Deirdre Delaney



Denise Gaule



Edel Maher



Edwina Keane



Eileen Fitzpatrick



Eimear Lyng



Elaine Aylward



Emma Staunton



Jacqui Frisby



Julie Ann Woodcock



Kate McDonald



Katie Power



Keeva Fennelly



Ann Cotterall



Laura Kavanagh



Leanne Fennelly



Lizzie Lyng



Marie O'Connor



Michelle Quilty



Siobhan Murphy



Therese Muldowney

Déise girls on the verge of first All-Ireland title

ROUND 1

Off to an Offaly flyer

WATERFORD
OFFALY

3-11
0-7

A VERY promising first outing for Waterford in this year's All Ireland Championship on June 20th in Kinnitty as they overcame last year's beaten finalists with 11 points to spare. What a difference a year makes, in the semi-final last year Offaly were victors in rain soaked Cashel by the exact same margin.

The visitors opened strongly and registered three unanswered points from Aine Lyng, Karen Kelly and a superb Mairéad Murphy effort but Offaly were shaken further when soon after when a speculative shot from the in form Kelly travelled all the way to the net.

What a start.

Indeed Offaly had to wait until the 19th minute to register their first score as Michaela Morkan pointed free. As it turned out they were not to score from play in the first half, adding two further points from placed ball before the break but a great Jennie Simpson point on 29 minutes ensured that Waterford led by five at the break.

Offaly returned to the pitch determined to things around but Waterford maintained their outstanding work rate, and with astute use of the hand pass were constantly finding a free player to clear their lines. The sides exchanged points leaving the score 1-7 to 0-6 with fourteen minutes left to play.

There was to be no way back for the home side as the Déise girls struck late with two great goals through Trish Jackman and Aine Lyng to kill off the Faithful County's challenge in the process.

A flurry of points brought the final tally to 3-11 an excellent return.

WATERFORD: Aisling O'Brien, Kate Marie Herne, Sally O'Grady (Capt), Vicky Gaffney, Jennie Simpson (0-1), Mary O'Donnell, Pauline Cunningham Mairéad Murphy (0-2), Charlotte Raher, Aine Lyng (1-3), Nicola Morrissey (0-1), Trish Jackman (1-1) Shona Curran, Grainne Kenneally, Karen Kelly (1-3), Shauna Kiernan, Niamh Ryan, Deirdre Fahey, Marie Russell, Lisa Prendergast, Aileen Cummins, Aisling Kelly, Aine Breathnach, Roisin Heylin, Rachel Whelan, Margo Heffernan, Lorraine Whelan.

ROUND 2

Battling Déise win out

WATERFORD
DOWN

2-8
0-11

Waterford and Down renewed camogie rivalries in a crucial Gala All Ireland group qualifying match in Ashbourne.

This game really went all the way to the wire with the referee ruling out a Mourne goal four minutes into injury time due to an infringement of the square.

Waterford's ability to raise green flags ultimately decided the encounter. They scored two classic goals of contrasting styles. The first was a superb individual effort by Lismore's Nicola Morrissey, in the tenth minute of the first half, the other the product of brilliant teamwork finished by Karen Kelly in clinical style.

The game commenced in hectic fashion with Down's Nicola Branniff recording their first point within thirty seconds of the throw in but on the tenth minute Nicola Morrissey cleverly intercepted, beat her player and goaled

with aplomb.

Down responded well and rattled over three points to level the match on a score-line of 1-2 to 0-5 midway through. For the next five minutes Waterford moved into the ascendancy. Karen Kelly restored their three point advantage converting a succession of frees. The sides exchanged two further points before the break.

Down started the second-half strong but a wonderful team move split the defence wide open and Karen Kelly was at the end of the move to get a great goal, the same player added a further point on the 14th minute.

Down never threw in the towel and got points from captain Lisa McCrickard and Karen McMullen. It was now the turn of the Waterford defence to be tested. They passed with flying colours.

Moving into injury time Waterford lead by three points, the sliothar seemed to have established permanent residence in their half. With supporters whistling for time Down's Catherine McGourty, who had a tremendous joust with Pauline Cunningham all through, struck from the right wing. The ball finished in the Waterford net but an attacker had arrived in the square in advance of the ball.

The score was ruled out and Waterford held out for a fine victory.

WATERFORD: Aisling O'Brien, Kate Marie Herne, Sally O'Grady (Capt), Vicky Gaffney, Jennie Simpson, Trish Jackman, Pauline Cunningham, Mairéad Murphy, Charlotte Raher, Aine Lyng (0-3), Nicola Morrissey (1-0), Aine Breathnach, Shona Curran, Grainne Kenneally, Karen Kelly (1-5), Shauna Kiernan, Niamh Ryan, Deirdre Fahey, Marie Russell, Lisa Prendergast, Aileen Cummins, Aisling Kelly, Roisin Heylin, Rachel Whelan, Margo Heffernan, Lorraine Whelan.

ROUND 3

Waterford run riot

WATERFORD
DUBLIN

5-11
0-4

Having defeated Dublin seniors earlier in the month, in a challenge game, the Metrolipian's second string team should not have presented a problem to high flying Waterford. But after twenty minutes of Saturdays game in Dunhill supporters were reassessing the home teams credentials.

Dublin were first to score, a terrific line ball straight over the bar from corner forward Gillian McClosky. Waterford looked distinctively uncomfortable and out of sorts. The much vaunted attack were wasteful and profligate, in twenty minutes they had 3 points on the board and two of these were from placed ball. But the final ten minutes were better, scoring 2-3 in response to a solitary point. Half time Waterford 2-6 Dublin 0-3.

Some honest well-placed words from team mentors during the break had the desired effects. The second half was much better, crisper striking, increased work rate, intelligent play. The defence tightened up and the forwards started to play as a unit.

Victory ensured Waterford finished top of the group, they now face Laois in the semi-final on August 8th. Offaly play Meath in the semi-final. Offaly's elimination of Down was the big surprise of the weekend.

The Faithful County, last year's losing finalists look certain to be eliminated but comprehensively defeated Down and booked their place in the final stages.

Next up was all systems go for the semi-final meeting with Laois.



Waterford midfielder, Mairéad Murphy gets her shot in despite the best intentions of her Down opponent in Ashbourne.

SEMI-FINAL

All-Ireland final at last

WATERFORD
LAOIS

1-13
1-7

This semi final played in Nowlan Park will not go down as a classic although some delightful camogie was played at times, particularly in the first half. But it will be remembered as the one where "losing semi finalist" tag was ultimately shed.

An excellent first ten minutes was the corner stone of victory. A goal and four points to a solitary white flag from Laois with ten minutes elapsed gave the Déise a lead they never relinquished. The goal was a classic, designed and finished in Lismore, with Nicola Morrissey sending in a brilliant pass to find club-mate, Grainne Kenneally who billowed the net in style. The four points all came from open play as the midlanders struggled to get into their stride.

Controversy reigned on 12 minutes when Laois were awarded a penalty which was initially saved but after a melee the ball somehow ended up in the Waterford net and the goal was given.

Waterford added a further five points before the break bringing their first half tally to 1-9, four of those points coming from Aine Lyng, to Laois' 1-4.

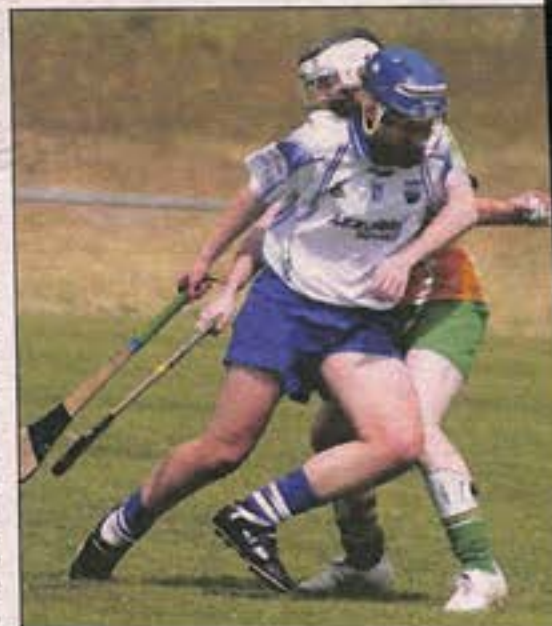
Waterford continued as they finished bringing their tally to 1-12 with points from Karen Kelly, Trish Jackman, Nicola Morrissey and Kelly again to open up an eight point lead for the Déise girls. But Laois refused to give in.

A season's work now depended on courage, and all were playing their part. Shona Curran fielded and ran, it was imperative not to concede a goal.

Laois earned a series of twenty metre frees as they searched for the goal needed to bridge the gap but Waterford's defence refused to yield and that all important Laois goal never arrived and

Waterford held on for a memorable result to make this one of Waterford camogie's greatest ever days.

WATERFORD: Aisling O'Brien, Kate Marie Herne, Sally O'Grady (Capt), Vicky Gaffney, Jennie Simpson, Mary O'Donnell, Shauna Kiernan, Mairéad Murphy (0-1), Charlotte Raher, Trish Jackman (0-2), Aine Lyng (0-5), Shona Curran, Nicola Morrissey (0-2), Grainne Kenneally (1-0), Karen Kelly (0-3), Niamh Ryan, Deirdre Fahey, Marie Russell, Lisa Prendergast, Aileen Cummins, Roisin Heylin, Rachel Whelan, Margo Heffernan, Lorraine Whelan, Aine Breathnach, Aisling Kelly, Pauline Cunningham.



Waterford's Trish Jackman drives at the Offaly defence.



Shona Curran shows that defence begins in attack as she helps out her backs against Laois in the semi-final.

Déise girls stand on the brink of All-Ireland history



**Gala All-Ireland
Junior Camogie Final
Next Sunday - Croke Park, 12.45
WATERFORD v OFFALY**

GER LAWTON looks ahead to Waterford's attempt to win the county's first ever All-Ireland junior camogie title on Sunday next when they take on Offaly in Croke Park.

THIS week last year everyone with a GAA bone in their body in this county were attempting to come to terms with what happened in Croke Park on Sunday, September 7. That now infamous day when Kilkenny romped to a third All-Ireland hurling title in a row against a Waterford team who never performed on the day.

Little did we think coming out of Croke Park on that awful day that 53 weeks later, Waterford would be back in GAA headquarters on All-Ireland final day.

Well my friends on Sunday next that will become a reality when the Waterford camogie team take on Offaly in the Gala All-Ireland Junior Camogie Final - with the Déise girls bidding for the county's first ever All-Ireland title at this grade.

Indeed, since this competition (junior) began back in 1968, this will be the first time that Waterford have appeared in the final, although a Waterford team did play in an All-Ireland camogie final way back in 1945, only to be defeated by Antrim.

For many years camogie in this county played a distant second fiddle to Ladies Football as Waterford dominated that game on the National level for a long period of time but in recent years the fortunes of the two ladies' GAA sports in this county have very much leveled out, with camogie enjoying more than its fair share of success in the past decade.

YEARS OF HARD WORK

In truth, next Sunday's All-Ireland final appearance is a culmination of many years of hard work and determination that has been put into the sport in this county over the past number of decades, both at a county level and at club and schools levels and all this effort and commitment

have borne fruits in recent years with the continued rise of Waterford camogie's star, with All-Ireland underage success at league and championship level at many grades, as well as the success at Munster and All-Ireland level of a number of this county's schools and clubs and also at third level, with WIT here in Waterford and also with many of this current Waterford panel being involved with successful Ashbourne Cup winning teams in other colleges.

All these things, along with the mix of a very young and very talented group along with older more experienced players with a very dedicated and diligent backroom team, are the reasons why on Sunday next Waterford will stand just sixty minutes away from the county's first ever adult All-Ireland camogie crown.

Of course this All-Ireland final appearance hasn't come out of the blue, just like their senior male counterparts, the Waterford camogie team too had to go through their own share of semi-final heartache before they finally made it to the Promised Land of All-Ireland final day as they lost three semi-finals in recent times.

That though was all banished this year when that semi-final hoodoo was finally broken and the girls gave themselves the chance to compete for that first All-Ireland title and in the process play on the hallowed turf of Croke Park.

But before the All-Ireland junior camogie championship, which is played out in groups without any provincial championships, began this Waterford team laid a very significant marker in the ground.

STEPPING STONES

In 2008, they claimed the Munster Junior Championship title (a stand alone

title from the All-Ireland) before going on to lose out at the All-Ireland semi-final stage. That victory meant that this year they played in the Munster Intermediate Championship this year and the step up in class only seemed to bring out even more in the Waterford girls and they went on to lift that title with a great victory over Cork.

Indeed they also played Cork in the senior grade and only narrowly lost out to the side who on Sunday go into their All-Ireland senior final with Kilkenny as hot favourites.

Those games really brought the girls on and more than anything boosted their confidence ahead of their opening All-Ireland junior championship match with Offaly.

The match was played in Kinnitty and on the day Waterford came out on top by an impressive 13 points.

Next up was a hard-fought three point triumph over Down in Ashbourne before the group stages were completed with a 22 point drubbing of Dublin in Dúnhill. Those impressive group stage performances sent Waterford through to the semi-finals as group winners, with Offaly filling the other berth. Meath and Laois emerged from the other group.

In the semi-finals though it was Waterford and Offaly who emerged victorious with the Déise girls coming out on top by six points over Laois in Nowlan Park to book their place in Croke Park for Sunday next.

They say behind every good team is a strong and determined backroom team and that is certainly the case with this Waterford set-up. Former Waterford and Tipperary senior hurler, Andy Moloney is the team manager and he is joined by fellow selectors, Carolyn Ahearne, Niall Dunphy and physical



The Waterford Junior Camogie team who, on Sunday next, will attempt to win this county's first All-Ireland title at this grade.

trainer, Shay Fitzpatrick and Gordon Ryan, sports psychologist.

Together they have formed a very formidable backroom setup and their attitude and commitment as well as their professional approach and ideas have gone down a treat with the girls. One too on this occasion must not forget the great work put in by the previous manager, Paul Lyng and his selectors who have also played a big part in getting the team to Sunday's final.

ALL TO PLAY FOR

So what of Offaly?

There's no doubt that the big advantage that they will have over Waterford on Sunday next is that they played in last year's All-Ireland final where they looked set for

victory only to be denied by a dramatic last minute goal which handed Clare the title. But there is no doubt that that appearance in the final will stand to them. They know what to expect on Sunday whereas most of this Waterford team has never played a competitive match on HQ (although the panel was in Croke Park last week for a look around - which won't do them any harm at all).

They will be all out to atone for last year's heart-breaking defeat and also for the heavy defeat they suffered at the hands of Waterford in the opening round of this year's championship. Offaly are also looking for their first title at this grade.

Offaly are managed by former hurling great,

Joachim Kelly. In an aside, the Offaly team who played against Cork in the centenary All-Ireland final of 1984 were paraded before last Sunday's All-Ireland final and no less than five of that team have daughters on next Sunday's Offaly team. They are: Mark Corrigan (Aoife), Joachim Kelly (Aoife), Brendan Birmingham (Claire), Noel Bergin (Kate) and Paddy Kirwan (Orlagh).

So who'll win? Well if I could tell you that, I'd be off making millions, but from a Waterford point of view I know the girls are extremely well prepared, focussed on looking forward to the challenge that lies ahead, and speaking to many of them this week I find it hard to think that the

occasion will faze them or get to them. They are a very balanced outfit, which is shown by the fact that they have only conceded one goal in their four championship matches to date this term and at the other end they have scored eleven goals.

Yes, they face a very stiff challenge on Sunday (much stiffer than the scoreline from the pair's meeting earlier this year suggests - draw a line through that) but are they capable of winning it? Yes they are, no question. Best of luck girls and all involved.

P.S - It would be brilliant to see and hear as many Waterford supporters in Croke Park as possible on Sunday to help cheer the girls hopefully on to history. Up the Déise.

Raher ready to be in middle of things

BY GER LAWTON

DESPITE being only 21, Waterford midfielder, Charlotte Raher, is far from one of the youngest players on this Waterford panel and when you look at her profile on page three, you'll see that she's a hugely experienced and already successful player for her age.

But despite all she's won and achieved in her career to date, this coming week promises to be like nothing she's ever experienced before. The week leading up to the county's first ever appearance in the All-Ireland Junior Camogie final. So how is it?

"It's great to be honest. Preparation is going really well and the most important thing is that we're staying injury free, we're fit and raring to go come Sunday."

Despite the fact that this panel came together last November and many of them also played colleges and club camogie all year, there is no sense that there is any fatigue or tiredness setting in.

"I think the credit for that

most go to the management team who have kept us fresh and done everything to ensure that we are peaking at the right part of the season and hopefully the legs will be ok for another sixty minutes, I'm sure they will."

SHUTTING OUT THE HYPE

Is it hard to keep concentrated on the game amid all the hype as the game gets ever closer?

"It's definitely building now ok, with people talking to you about it but personally I'm doing my best to keep the head down and just concentrate on the game and leave the buildup go over my head the best I can. We've been building for this for the last four years and the fact that it's in Croke Park all adds a bit of extra pressure but we've been in different finals before and we'll try to approach this as we did them and try not to get too caught up in the buildup."

Charlotte believes getting into Croke Park last week was a big help for next Sunday.



Waterford midfielder, Charlotte Raher, in action versus Offaly.

"It was great to get in there to see the dressing rooms and to walk on the pitch and I think it will get us over any awe factor that might otherwise have been there on the day, so the concentration levels should be right for the game."

Whatever about Croke Park, the opposition certainly won't be strange come Sunday.

"Certainly not. We've played Offaly many times

over recent years and they've always been great battles. We were very disappointed to lose to them last year but they were the better team on that day and then this year when we met we got the upper-hand but we know they've improved from then and we know just how well we'll need to play to beat them on Sunday but we're looking forward to the challenge," says the Waterford midfielder.

Nine years on and Mary's back in Croke

BY GER LAWTON

ON Sunday next at 12.45, the vast majority of the Waterford team will line out on the Croke Park pitch for the first time. Not so centre-back, Mary O'Donnell.

For those of you who thought to yourselves that the name sounds familiar, then it's because Mary is one of the best Ladies footballers that this county has ever produced, recognised by the fact that she has no less than four All-Star awards for that sport. She also won an All-Ireland with Waterford nine years ago but despite all that experience and success, Mary is a relative newcomer to the camogie ranks, at this level anyway, but it's a challenge and experience that she's absolutely loving.

"I got involved a few years back with the camogie but then due to almost full time studying for my accountancy qualifications, I had to put sport on the back-burner but thankfully I got those exams and this year I've been able to fully commit and thankfully, so far at least, everything is going well.

"I've really enjoyed getting

involved with this group of players, they're all young and fresh and so eager to achieve and it really has given me a fresh lease of life and I'm loving it to be truthful.

"I remember hearing about a lot of these girls when they were starting to come through at U-14 and U-16 level and now it's great to be playing with them and also it's great to play against them for our clubs and in training, especially Aine Lyng, we have some great battles in training and I think it brings the best out in all of us."

GRAB THE CHANCE

As one of the most experienced players on the panel, Mary will be doing her best to help the younger players as they prepare for the biggest day of their sporting lives.

"We were up in Croke Park last week having a look around and we were talking and I was surprised but delighted by how many of the girls had played there in mini 7's and the primary game and things like that and all that helps come the big day.

"What I'll be saying to the younger girls this week before the

game is to get plenty of rest and to think about the game and visualise what you're going to do in different situations, but above all to try as best as you can to enjoy the day because it goes so fast and you never know if or when you'll get the chance to play there again.

"I'm 27 now so I probably won't get another chance to play there but even for the younger girls, you never know - the last time I played their with the footballers was nine years ago and at the time everyone was saying that you'll be back here next year but we weren't so that's why you have to make the most of the chance when you have it because you never know when you'll get the opportunity again."

Having seen Offaly at close hand, Mary is certain that Sunday's going to be a tough and tight match.

"I can't see it being anything else but very tight and tough. We'd an awful lot of work put in this year before we played them and I don't think they had but I know they've improved a lot since then and as the old cliché says it really is going to be all on the day.



Waterford centre-back, Mary O'Donnell, gets her clearance away under pressure in the semi-final win over Laois.

'Day we've planned for is finally here'

BY GER LAWTON

DUNHILL man, Niall Dunphy, may be new to the role of selector, especially at inter-county level but he has really taken to the role with aplomb and has enjoyed the season which began last November, but even back then Niall, Andy and co. believed that it was quite possible that come the start of September that they would be preparing for an All-Ireland final.

"To be honest we knew that we had a great bunch of players and they had been unlucky to lose three semi-finals in a row in recent years and we knew that if we could instill a bit more belief into them that we'd be there or thereabouts and thankfully things have gone from strength to strength since then and now it's all systems go for Sunday.

Niall believes that their side's involvement and ultimate victory in the Munster Intermediate championship at the start of the year played a big part in instilling belief and a fresh confidence in the team before the start of the junior championship.

"Yes, we played a lot of teams in the league and Munster championship who are playing at a higher level than us and to beat a lot of those teams and eventually Cork in the Munster final really instilled a lot of confidence in the girls and then also we went really close to beating Cork in the senior grade, so when the girls see results like that they know then that they are playing

really well and that they are capable of beating anyone and that has stood us well in our own junior championship, there's no doubt about that."

MASSIVE RELEASE

Having lost three semi-finals in a row, there's no doubt that the win over Laois at that juncture this year was the biggest performance of the year as they finally got that monkey off their backs.

"Yeah, we got off to a great start but then we let it slip a bit - we conceded a goal before half-time which brought them back into it but having said that we were still five up with a few minutes to go so barring a complete collapse we were going to hang on and thankfully that's what we did. But I think we're there on merit, as are Offaly as I think we're the best two junior teams in the land this year."

Next weekend will be five weeks since that semi-final win over Laois, has that lengthy gap been a help or a hindrance to Waterford's preparation?

"They way we look at it is that our performance against Laois gave us plenty to work on, we decided not to bother with any challenge games and instead the county board played off the semi-finals and final of the county championship and that meant that when the girls came back to the county panel they were fresh again and ready to go with three weeks to the final and since

then everything has gone really well in our preparation."

"On the injury front we have no fresh injury worries, we've known since the Dublin game that Pauline Cunningham would be out for the rest of the year due to a cruciate ligament injury and while Pauline is a huge loss, we've had to get on with it and thankfully we've plenty of girls fighting for places which is what you want as a management team.

"There's a good buzz around now so hopefully we'll have a big following on the day and that we can give the supporters a day in Croke Park to remember," concluded Niall Dunphy.



The Waterford camogie team conclude their preparations this week ahead of Sunday's final.



Waterford selector, Niall Dunphy is happy with preparations.

All-Ireland Junior Championship - Roll of Honour

YEAR	WINNERS
1988	Galway
1989	Kildare
1990	Kildare
1991	Down
1992	Tipperary
1993	Armagh
1994	Galway
1995	Limerick
1996	Cork
1997	Antrim
1998	Galway
1999	Cork
2000	Derry
2001	Tipperary
2002	Kilkenny
2003	Galway
2004	Cork
2005	Dublin
2006	Dublin
2007	Derry
2008	Clare

Some interesting facts about Waterford Camogie

- The first record of a Camogie match was in 1904 in Meath between Craobh a'Cheimneigh and Cúchulainn.
- The first Camogie final was played in Croke Park in 1934, it has taken Waterford 75 years to reach Croke Park.
- Waterford featured in the 1945 All Ireland final losing to Antrim in Cappoquin on a scoreline of 5-2 to 3-2.
- Gráinne Kenneally won Munster Intermediate Football and Camogie championships with Waterford this year.
- Centre Back Mary O'Donnell has four Gaelic Football All Star Awards to her credit, her first in 2000.
- Goalkeeper Aisling O'Brien has a Bouncy Castle for hire business!
- One of the most influential players over the last number of years, Pauline Cunningham misses the final as a result of a knee injury sustained in the group section of the championship against Dublin.
- Selector Carolyn Ahern recently got engaged.
- Midfielder Mairéad Murphy captained the Mercy Convent team in 2002 when they won the All Ireland Senior B Championship - the first All Ireland Camogie title for a Waterford Secondary school. Other players on the current panel that were part of that success - Róisín Heylin, Pauline Cunningham, Aine Lyng. Two other members of that team are included in the Kilkenny panel for the Senior final on Sunday - Mullinavat duo Clare and Elaine Aylward.
- Waterford manager, Andy Moloney, represented both Tipperary and Waterford in senior inter county hurling.

All-Ireland Junior Camogie Championship Final 2009 - Waterford v Offaly



Waterford in profile



1. Aisling O'Brien

Club: Lismore
Age: 21
Height: 5'9"
Position: Goalkeeper

2. Kate Marie Hearne

Club: Butlerstown
Age: 25
Height: 5'4"

3. Sally O'Grady

Club: Gaultier
Age: 25
Height: 5'7" Position: Full-back
Occupation: Physiotherapist

4. Vicky Gaffney

Club: Butlerstown
Age: 20
Height: 5'2"

5. Jennie Simpson

Club: St. Annes
Age: 22
Height: 5'6"

6. Mary O'Donnell

Club: An Rinn
Age: 27
Occupation: Accountant
Honours: 1 Junior/Intermediate Munster 2009,

7. Shauna Kiernan

Club: Ardmore.
Age: 17
Height: 5'10"
Occupation: Student.

8. Mairead Murphy

Club: St. Annes
Age: 25
Height: 5'7"
Position: Midfield

9. Charlotte Raher

Club: St. Annes
Age: 21
Height: 5'7"
Position: Midfield

10. Patricia Jackman

Club: Gail Tir
Age: 18
Height: 5'11"
Position: Forward

11. Aine Lyng

Club: Gail Tir
Age: 21
Height: 5'7"
Occupation: Student (Sports Science).

12. Shona Curran

Club: Lismore.
Age: 19
Height: 5'10."

13. Nicola Morrissey

Club: Lismore
Age: 22
Height: 5'7"
Position: Forward

14. Gráinne Kenneally

Club: Lismore.
Age: 22.
Height: 5'6."
Occupation: Student

15. Karen Kelly

Club: St. Annes
Age: 25
Height: 5'5."

Occupation: Student

Honours: County Medals in U12, U14, U16, U18 and senior, All Ireland runners-up medal Feile, Munster colleges Junior medal, Munster and All Ireland with Waterford Minors, Munster Int '09, Munster colls A and B '04 and '05, Represented Ireland in shinty.

Position: Corner-back

Occupation: Primary Teacher

Honours: 2 Junior County titles with Tramore, Munster Junior/Intermediate Championship, Interprovincial medals with Munster 2004/2008.

Honours: Gaultier Co. SCC 2008, 2006 (capt), Waterford Div 2 League Champions 2007 (capt) Munster IHC 2009 (capt), Munster Junior Champions '08 Munster: Played for Munster Junior team '08 and '07 All-star nomination 2007.

Position: Corner-back.

Occupation: Student

Honours: U16 All Ireland winners, National League winners '06 and '07, Munster Junior and Intermediate champions.

Position: Wing-back

Occupation: Student

Honours: Ashbourne Cup 2009, County Champions 2009, Munster Intermediate Champions 2009.

1 Junior Munster 2007; 1 Junior Club Championship, 2005 1 Junior Club League, 2005 1 Junior Mini 7's 2006, County Football 4 All - Stars; 5 Munster & 1 Senior All-Ireland, 2 Senior Nat Leagues, 3 Munster & 2 Minor All-Ireland 4 Munster & 4 U-16 All-Ireland 1 Munster U-14 Club Football; 2 All-Ireland Jun Mini 7's

Honours: Munster Intermediate Champions 2009, All Ireland colleges Champions 2008 and 2009, Munster Colleges Champions 2008 and 2009, All Ireland U16 finalists 2007 and U18 finalists 2008 and 2009, Feile All Ireland winners 2006, U12, U14, U16, U18 and Junior County titles.

Occupation: TR Researcher

Honours: All Ireland B Colleges 2002 with Mercy Convent, 6 Senior County Championships, Munster Junior Representative 2008, Div 3 and 4 National Leagues

Occupation: Student nurse.

Honours: Ashbourne Champions 2008, 6 Senior County Championships, NCAA Camogie scholarship 2008, Munster Junior rep, U16 All Ireland Camogie Medal 2003, Div 3 and 4 National League Medals.

Occupation: Student.

Honours: Nat League Div2, U16 All Ireland title, Munster Junior title, Munster Int Title, Munster Coll title, U12,U14,U16,U18 County titles, 2 senior county titles, 4 Wat/Munster & 1 All-Irl Poc Fada. Feile skills.

Honours: Munster Int Champs '09, Munster Junior champs '08, Nat League Champions, U16 all Ireland B County champions '06, '08, Kilmacud Crokes 7's All Ireland champions '07, County medals U14, U16, U18, 2 UL colleges All stars, All Ireland colleges champions (Mercy), 4 All star nominations, Munster sen and jun.

Position: Forward

Occupation: Student

Honours: Munster Intermediate final '09, under-age county titles U12, U14, U16, U18.

Occupation: Primary Teacher

Honours: Underage County Titles U12, U14, U16, U18, Senior County title, Munster Junior and Intermediate Championships, National League medals '06 and '07, Munster schools Int '04 and '05, Munster team.

Honours: U-18 County Senior League, Munster Coll Medal with Presentation, Lismore, Two Int Munster Colleges Medals with BCS, Colleges Interprovincial Munster Junior Championship, Munster Intermediate Championship, National League Division Two, Gael Uinn Interprovincial Team, College: Munster Bursary

Position: Forward.

Occupation: Teacher.

Honours: 2 x National League Medals, 2x Munster Medals, 6 x Senior County Championship titles.

16. Niamh Ryan

Club: Lismore
Age: 23
Height: 5'7"
Position: Defender

17. Deirdre Fahey

Club: An Rinn
Age: 18
Height: 5'3"
Occupation: Student nurse

18. Marie Russell

Club: Lismore
Age: 17
Height: 5'7"
Occupation: Student

19. Lisa Prendergast

Club: An Rinn
Age: 26
Height: 5'6."

20. Aileen Cummins

Club: Gail Tir
Age: 24
Height: 5'5."
Occupation: Primary School Teacher.

21. Roisín Heylin

Club: Butlerstown
Age: 21
Height: 5'4"
Position: Forward

22. Rachel Whelan

Club: Lismore
Age: 16
Height: 5'8."

23. Margo Heffernan

Club: Gail Tir
Age: 21
Height: 6'0."

24. Lorraine Whelan

Club: An Rinn
Age: 23
Height: 5'5.5."

25. Aine Breathnach

Club: Butlerstown
Age: 20
Position: Forward.

26. Aisling Kelly

Club: O'Loughlin Gaels.
Age: 26
Height: 5'7"

27. Pauline Cunningham

Club: St. Annes
Age: 22
Height: 6'0."

Occupation: Primary Teacher

Honours: County Titles U12, U15, U16, U18 and Senior County Title, Munster Junior and Intermediate Championship, National League medals '06 and '07, Munster schools Int title.

Honours: Camogie: U16B All Ireland Finalists '07, U18B All Ireland Finalists '08 and '09, U18 B County Champions '06, '07, '08, Interpro Post Primary Rep. Football: U18 B Shield All Ireland winners '09, Junior winners '07, Int winners '08, All Ireland Schools.

Honours: Munster Int Champions '09, All Ireland finalists U16 and U18, All Ireland finalists Feile 2005, 2x Munster & All-Irl Colleges titles, U12, U14, U16, U18 and Junior County titles. Represented Waterford in Croke Park on Camogie's centenary year in 2004.

Occupation: Garda.

Honours: Munster Jun/Int Championship, Ashbourne Shield '07, National Leagues Div 2 and 3, Junior Camogie County Champions 4 All-Irl ladies football

Position: Centre-back

Honours: U-12, U-14, U-16, U-18, Junior and two Senior County Championship Medals; Ashbourne Shield Winner with Mary I 2005, Kilmacud Crokes 7s Medal.

Occupation: Banking.

Honours: U-16 Munster and all Ireland winners, 2 national league, 2 schools Munster and 1 schools all Ireland, Junior Munster, Intermediate Munster.

Occupation: Student at BCS

Honours: Feile All-Ireland Winners and Runners Up, All-Ireland U16 and Minor Finalists All-Ireland Schools Winners. Club: U12,U14,U16, Minor & Senior honours.

Occupation: Physiotherapist Student

Honours: Senior Championship '06 '08, Senior League '06,Kilmacud Crokes Intermediate Title '06, Senior Finalists '07, U18, U16, U14, U12 Co Championships,U18, U16 League Titles.

Occupation: Army Officer.

Honours: Munster/Junior and Intermediate medals, Junior Camogie County Champions,U18 Ladies Football Munster and All Ireland, Various Co. Football titles

Occupation: Student.

Honours: U16 All Ireland, National league medals '06/'07, Munster Junior/Intermediate champions, Interprovincial winners '08.

Position: Corner back/wing back

Occupation: Pharmaceutical technician.
Honours: National League '06 and '07, Munster Junior and Intermediate Champions 2008 7 2009.

Occupation: Student.

Honours: Senior College League medal '09, 7 Senior Co Camogie medals, NCAA Camogie Scholarship '09, Div 3 and 4 Nat League medals, All Ireland B Colleges

Waterford's Path to the Final

Round 1: June 20th @ Kinnitty: Waterford 3-11 Offaly 0-7

Round 2: July 18th @ Ashbourne: Waterford 2-8 Down 0-11

Round 3: July 25th @ Dunhill: Waterford 5-11 Dublin 0-4

All-Ireland Semi-final @ Nowlan Park: Waterford 1-13 Laois 1-7



President of the camogie association Joan O'Flynn and Gary Desmond, CEO of Gala, with senior captains Ann Dalton, Kilkenny, right, and Cork captain Amanda O'Regan, left, and the O'Duffy cup at a photocall ahead of the Gala All-Ireland Camogie Championship in Croke Park

Cork seeking 24th camoige title

ALL IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL
CORK V KILKENNY
When: Sunday, September 13 **Time:** 2.45pm
Where: Croke Park, Dublin **Referee:** Una Keanney (Armagh)

CORK camogie captain Amanda O'Regan is in confident mood ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland All Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final in Croke Park, which sees the Rebel county seeking

back-to-back titles and their 24th senior title in all. The Rebels have won all three of their games in the round robin stage of the Championship this year Cork on their way to eighth successive final.

A win against Kilkenny would hand Cork their 24th All Ireland senior

title, bringing them to within two titles of Dublin who top the table with 26 All Ireland titles.

"Training has gone well and the competition for places is very strong," Cork captain O'Regan said this week. "But we know Kilkenny will be very hungry, they are a young team

coming through."

O'Regan was speaking in Croke Park this week at a special function with the captains and managers of the competing counties where they were joined by Joan O'Flynn, President of the Camogie Association, and Gary Desmond, CEO of sponsor Gala.

Kilkenny last contested the All-Ireland final in 2001 when they fell to Tipperary. Their most recent victory was in 1995 when today's manager Ann Downey came head to head with current Cork boss Denise Cronin.

Kilkenny captain Ann Dalton is excited to be

back in this year's final.

"It is the first All Ireland final for many of our players and we have worked hard. It was great to see the hurlers do the four-in-a-row on Sunday, it would be massive if we could bring another cup for the second week in succession."

Cork senior football captain Graham Canty with Cork senior camogie players Orla Cotter and Amanda O'Regan captain. Canty is backing Cork to win back-to-back All-Ireland titles on Sunday.
 Picture: Gerard McCarthy



Canty wants huge crowd to support the camogie stars

CORK football captain Graham Canty has backed the Cork camogie team to win back-to-back All-Ireland titles this weekend.

The girls take on Kilkenny on Sunday with Canty's men's side facing Kerry the following week and then the ladies footballers go for a five-in-a-row the week after when they face Dublin, which could see three of the four senior All-Ireland titles on offer back in Cork in three weeks' time.

"Back-to-back All-Ireland titles are the most treasured, yet difficult honours to achieve in GAA sporting terms," Graham Canty said.

"As a fellow Cork team player, I am proud to

support such a dedicated and talented team.

"We want to see a huge crowd from Cork cheering on the camogie team at Croke Park."

Cork camogie captain, Amanda O'Regan is looking forward to the final.

"Pride in the jersey is everything in Cork and we're determined to do it justice on Sunday," Amanda O'Regan said.

"The Bord Gáis Networks sponsorship makes a huge difference when you are aiming to maximise performance over a long, challenging season."

"Next Sunday is the culmination of all our hard work and we are ready to bring the title back home once more."

●More camogie on page 46.



Lisa Fallon

Families divided by fixtures clash

WHO was the genius that decided it would be a good idea to run the senior hurling semi-final between St Finbarr's and Newtownshandrum this Sunday and the other semi-final between Sarsfields and CIT on Sunday September 27?

Did nobody tell the Cork County Board that the Cork camogie girls are playing in their eighth consecutive senior All-Ireland final against Kilkenny this Sunday and that on Sunday, September 27, the Cork ladies footballers are contesting their own senior All-Ireland final against Dublin in Croke Park?

Is it just me or does the decision to fix these club championship games so that they clash with the girls' finals smack of a blatant disregard for their endeavours?

It's only a handful of days ago that Cork senior football captain Graham Canty was out encouraging people to get up off their backsides and make the trip to Dublin to support the girls and fair play to him.

It's about time these women got the support that their dedication and momentous achievements warrant.

I know for a fact that there will be regular male readers of this column that won't even have got this far through the text purely because they will have looked at the picture and seen that I am writing about women's sport and by now, they will have moved on to the Sudoku.

I know the girls get great support from their own friends, families and clubs but there should be a concerted effort to get more bodies up to support them rather than fixing a game of the magnitude of a senior county hurling semi-final so that it clashes with the girls' big game.

And not only does it distract a number of potential spectators but it fragments clubs.

Take St Finbarr's for example.

They have a number of girls in the camogie panel, Gemma O'Connor, Lynda O'Connell, Jenny Duffy and Orla O'Sullivan.

Let's take the O'Connor household for example. Gemma's brother Glen will be hurling for the Barrs on Sunday so how does that particular family decide on where they'll be Sunday afternoon?

Do they sit down on Saturday night and draw straws?

It's a similar situation for the Murray household as goalkeeper Aoife (who plays with Cloughduv) will be representing her county in Croke Park while her brother Kevin will be tagged out for the Barrs.

What a situation it puts parents in whereby they have to choose between siblings.

It's the same for chairperson of the camogie board Marian McCarthy, who is also a Barrs woman through and through.

No doubt she will be in Dublin but isn't it ridiculous that she has to choose?

Mary O'Connor, the wonderful dual star who is playing in her eighth final in a row and looking for her seventh medal, will have to do so without the support of her brothers Kevin and John, who will be playing



Mum, Mary O'Connor is facing a family dilemma on Sunday. Her sons, Kevin and John will be playing in the East Cork Junior Football final for Glenbrower Rovers while her daughter Mary, right, is on the Cork team which will face Kilkenny in the All-Ireland camogie final. There is not the only family that has been affected by local club games being fixed at the same time as Sunday's final.

Picture: Gerard Bonus

in the East Cork JAFB final for Glenbrower Rovers on Sunday.

But this isn't the first time it has happened nor will it be the last and that's the sad part about it.

No doubt if the girls were men, the toys would be well and truly out of the pram by now.

However, you won't hear a single one of them complain.

They will all hold their whist in dignified disappointment and will quietly go about their business of winning another senior All-Ireland title with or without the support of the Cork County Board.

And the Cork Camogie Board really should be commended for their trojan work.

I had the pleasure of visiting their new grounds on Castle Road in Douglas on Friday last and this is a fantastic facility.

This is the Cork Camogie Board's very own ground that is purely at the disposal of its girls.

There is no other county in the country that can boast to be in such a privileged position of having their own ground.

It's spacious with room for a stand of some description eventually and already has a lovely pitch with temporary dressing rooms.

This facility enables them to play their intercounty home games and camogie championship games when it suits, without the need to beg for use of pitches, which is usually the case for the females in the GAA.

In fact, I have heard of cases whereby schoolboys' matches have been given preference ahead of senior camogie/ladies football encounters all across the country.

It's a great credit to the camogie board particularly when you consider that this wasn't handed to them on any silver platter.

No - the women, girls and supporters of Cork camogie got up off their backsides and raised the money to

acquire their own grounds and are now embarking on phase three of their project which is to raise money for a pavilion and dressing-room facility to replace the Portakabins that they currently use.

They are self-sufficient, successful and professional in their work and are a great example to all sporting bodies and more importantly, they are indebted to nobody for this fantastic facility.

But here's a thought.

How difficult would it be for the cash-rich Cork County Board to lend them the money they need for their dressing rooms at a favourable rate and the camogie board then repay them from their fundraising efforts?

This would speed up the development at Castle Road and show the county board in a positive light.

Rather than moan about the support that they haven't got, the camogie board are quick to acknowledge the support that they have got and

PRO Mary Newman-McCarthy was anxious to thank their sponsor Bord Gáis for the tremendous commitment they give to the girls.

"They have been superb, the whole Bord Gáis team, especially John Mullins, John Barry, Ger Cunningham and Caroline O'Connor.

"There is no other county in Ireland that has as good a sponsor."

But then there is no other county as consistently brilliant as this particular bunch of camogie players.

To be appearing in their eighth consecutive All-Ireland final is one hell of an achievement and the gesture by the Cork County Board to fix the senior hurling semi-final for this Sunday should be frowned upon.

It's a great shame that they couldn't have found an alternative slot so that the girls could have had the limelight that they deserve for just one day.

But, then again, perhaps that's what they were afraid of.

Faithful boss Kelly hoping to finally lay ghosts of 2008 to rest

CAMOGIE

Cliona Foley

HE lost an All-Ireland hurling final at Semple Stadium playing for Offaly against Cork in 1984, but Joachim Kelly admits he suffered even greater heartbreak at Croke Park just a year ago.

He was managing the Offaly camogie team that saw an All-Ireland junior title cruelly whisked from their grasp at the last minute when Clare snatched a goal deep into injury-time.

"It was the hardest thing in my life. In all honesty, it was worse than losing the '84 final," Kelly said.

"It took a long-time to get over it but sure last-minute swings like that, isn't that what makes sport amazing. Look at Johnny Flaherty in '81," he chuckled.

Last year's heartache was probably deepened because Kelly made one particularly difficult call in the course of the game: taking off his own daughter Aoife.

"She wasn't going that badly actually but I had to respect the majority of selectors when we came in at half-time," he said.

MEMORIES

Dad and daughter are back again on Sunday hoping to leave with happier memories as the Faithful County contest the junior final again. This time it's against first-time finalists Waterford who are managed by former Kilkenny and Waterford hurler Andy Maloney.

They include dual stars Mary O'Donnell and Grainne Kenneally and also feature Aine Lyng, a first cousin of Wexford's inter-county stars Diarmuid and Ciaran Lyng.

Offaly, noticeably, now have former full-back Elaine Darmody at full-forward in a talented team. The Decies actually walloped Offaly (3-11 to 0-7) in Kinnitty, when the same sides met earlier this summer.

"We just didn't perform on the day," Kelly said. "We beat them last year in the All-Ireland semi-finals so they were out for revenge and they wanted it more but that was back in June."

Elsewhere, Gala senior finalists Cork and Kilkenny have named their sides and Cork make one change, with Eimear O'Sullivan in for Emer Dillon in the forwards.

But Cork have an unusual similarity with both of last weekend's senior hurling finalists as their captain, Amanda O'Regan, is also on the bench.

She has failed to wrestle back a starting place from Emer O'Farrell. But O'Regan, facing into her fifth final, said she still feels she has a key role to play.

"It's tough to take but there's competition for places which is a great sign," she said. "It's all about what's good for the team."

Beating Cats will

O'Farrell will lead from the front for Leesiders

By RORY NOONAN

All-Ireland camogie

WHY score points when you can score goals was a comment said in jest by Emer O'Farrell as she prepares for Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final against Kilkenny.

But the Cork full-forward has certainly been in goalscoring form this season and her two goals against Kilkenny in the round-robin series of the championship, when she came on as a sub, ensured they won that game by two points and it turned out to be a vital result as they aim to retain the O'Duffy Cup.

Overall Cork were not at their best in the round-robin stages, but still came through and they were given a major scare by Kilkenny in that game. Those goals have seen O'Farrell start every game since and she has now notched up five in the championship to date and no doubt will be looking for a few more in the final.

The full-forward position has been an area of concern to the Cork management team for a while as they have tried out a number of players there. But since she got her chance this year Emer has shown she can fill that role and should get the nod again on Sunday.

The Sarsfields player is no stranger to the full-forward slot having played there with Imokilly and is happy with how things have gone in the games so far.

"Last year I was used as a half-forward but full-forward is a position that I liked as a club and divisional player so it hasn't been a huge transformation, although you certainly have to be more patient."

"I suppose as a full-forward goals is something that others will look to me to score but it's those around me that create the chances and I have been lucky enough to score them."

"Some of the balls into me have been out of this world and with the quality of players around I generally end up with the simple task of slotting home after they have done the hard work."

Modest words from a player who, despite being on the squad for a number of years, has only in the last season or so cemented her place in the starting line-up. Like all in the squad Emer is fast to praise others and modest about her own scoring record, 5-2, so far in championship games this year.

"How could you not be inspired with players like Mary O'Connor, Brieghe Corkery, Gemma O'Connor and Orla Cotter, to name but a few, around you. They epitomise all that is good about this squad with a

Emer factfile

Club: Sarsfields

Occupation: Sales executive with Apple

Honours: A member of the CIT team that won the Purcell Cup in 2001. Holds Munster championship medals at various levels. Won an All-Ireland junior medal in 2004 and currently also has three senior All-Ireland medals.



be Emer's goal

Dalton is undaunted by Cork's challenge

By RORY NOONAN

All-Ireland camogie



fabulous feeling of togetherness amongst us all.

"Reputations count for nothing in this squad and both Denise Cronin and Frank Flannery, our trainer, along with the selectors have instilled this spirit among us. As far as they are concerned everybody in the squad is the same and they will pick the players who are on form.

"So we all know that you have to raise the bar every time, even in training sessions, and if you don't give it your all then you know there is someone to come in and take your place.

"I know this may sound like it should cause a divide among the players between those who start and those who don't but far from it.

"We as a squad have one single objective and that is to win the All-Ireland. Everybody works towards that goal and it is our soul focus once we go back inter-county training.

"Of course we take each game as it comes and we know they have to be won, because if we don't then our main objective is gone. We have had a couple of close games along the way this year and we know that Kilkeny will be far from a push-over.

"We were lucky to beat them in the round-robin stage and no doubt they will have improved even further since then.

"They are an extremely talented and young side and I have no doubt there will be a massive hunger in their side to win on Sunday. They will be up for this game and in coach Anne Downey have someone who knows what's all about.

"She will have them rearing to go and no doubt will be looking for a little bit of revenge on Denise, as the last time they met in the final was as players and Denise came out on top that day.

"They have some great players and won't be a bit afraid of playing us. Kilkeny have enjoyed great success at underage level in the last number of years and many of

those players are not filtering into the senior side.

"Both defensively and in attack we will have to put in a top performance or else we know the cup won't be coming back to Leaside with us. The fact we are in our eighth final in a row won't matter a damn if we lose on Sunday.

"I still think that there is still a bad taste after we lost in the final two years ago and I for one don't want to experience that feeling again. We played well that day but the hunger and desire that Wexford had was unbelievable.

"It will be the same on Sunday from Kilkeny and we will have to surpass that to win. The feeling we all had after losing two years ago still drives us on as we face into what will be another tough game for us.

"But we have the squad to deal with this and the experience we have gained over the eight years should stand to us. We know what we have to do and all will be geared up for the challenge ahead."

It is obvious from talking to Emer about her passion for the game and as well as Cork her club means a lot to her.

"My club is my world and without them I wouldn't have been lucky enough to get where I have without my club. I joined Sars when I was nine and haven't looked back since then. In my younger days at the club I was lucky enough to have the likes of Liz Dunphy and Breda Kenny training me.

"To have players like this training you can only inspire you and when they won the All-Ireland one year when I was nine or 10 I managed to get on the bus for the homecoming.

"I remember standing up at the front as they paraded through town and I thought to myself that one day I want to be back here as a player in the red of Cork and be coming home with the cup. I have managed to do that now on a number of occasions and I want to

keep living the dream for as long as I can.

"As well as Liz and Breda my brother, Barry, was a huge influence on me as a young player. He always jokes that without his influence I would have got no-where in the game. He was always out pucking around with me and we spent hours together practicing the skills of the game.

"In latter years people like Fionn O'Driscoll at CIT had a huge influence on me and obviously Cork mentors like Denise and Frank and those who went before them have all helped me.

"I am extremely nervous before games and Fionn helped me to conquer these."

Another who had an obvious effect on Emer was current Sars camogie coach, Emmet Fennell, so much so that she married him last year! "Emmet has been a constant source of encouragement and support to me for a number of years now. Because he is involved in the game he knows what it takes to be involved in Cork and the amount of time it takes up.

"When we got married last year in August I was actually supposed to miss the semi-final because of my honeymoon. But luckily for me the weather was bad here and the game was postponed and I was home by the time it went ahead. So it worked out that I missed nothing and got the opportunity to work my way back into the side.

"I had considered making last year my final one but coming on in the All-Ireland final changed all that. The adrenaline was pumping and it was just an incredible experience to play and contribute to the win.

"After that I knew I didn't want to quit and Emmet told me to go for it and thankfully we are back in the final this year."

And Cork can thank Emer as her goals have played a major part in reaching the final and hopefully she can add to that tally on Sunday to ensure the O'Duffy Cup makes it way back to Leaside again.

Emer O'Farrell looks relaxed at the Cork senior camogie press night in Mahon.

Picture: Diane Cusack

WHEN you look at Anne Dalton's medal tally it would be enough to make most people jealous.

The Kilkeny captain, who plays her club camogie with St Lachtain's, has three All-Ireland senior club championships, four Leinster senior club medals and six County senior club championships, an Ashbourne Cup medal, a minor All-Ireland with Kilkeny and a National League medal with the senior side.

But from her collection one medal is missing that she and her team-mates are desperate to get their hands on - a senior All-Ireland medal.

Anne will get that chance as she leads them out to play against Cork in the All-Ireland final and this mid-field dynamo won't be found wanting when it comes to skill and effort but she is acutely aware of the challenge that lies ahead.

"We know Cork are going to be tough opponents on Sunday, you don't get to eight All-Ireland finals in-a-row by being a bad side. They are the barometer by which all present sides must measure themselves."

The midfield battle is key she says.

"Briege and Orla are two great players and we are well aware of how difficult they are to play against. But all Collette and I can do is take care of our own game.

"Our forwards are capable of picking off scores from all angles and distances and they will need to if we are to have any chance of winning.

"We have enjoyed great success at underage level in recent years, including four All-Ireland minor titles in-a-row, and we are starting to see these players filter through to the senior side now. These girls have a winning mentality and are certainly won't be afraid of taking to the pitch for the final. When we played against Cork in the round-robin games we lost by four points and to hold the champions to that gave us a huge boost.

"We know we will be going in as underdogs but there is a massive hunger in this side to bring the cup back to Kilkeny."

The squad

AMANDA O'REGAN, DOUGLAS
(Teacher)

A SECONDARY school teacher in Kanturk, the former student of University of Limerick, with whom she won three Ashbourne Cup medals, she is the holder of All-Ireland minor, junior and senior medals.

Also has to her credit are provincial honours at junior and U18 level.

She is also an accomplished basketball player. Her father Michael won an All-Ireland minor football medal while mother Christine is the holder of Junior All-Ireland medals. Amanda captained her club Douglas to their first senior county championship title in 2008 she is also the holder senior champions and league with her club.

AOIFE MURRAY, CLOUGHDUV
(Quantity surveyor)

Aoife has junior, intermediate minor and senior medals as well as Munster championship honours, three Cork county senior championship medals with Cloughduv whom she captained in 2005 to their third county title.

She is sister of former Cork inter-county senior hurler Kevin who won an All-Ireland medal with Cork in 1999. Aoife won a camogie All-Star award.

GEMMA O'CONNOR, ST FINBARR'S
(Defence forces)

Gemma O'Connor captained the Cork senior team in 2007, was named on the All-Star camogie team in 2004/05/06/07/08. She represented Cork in Féile Na nGael Skills in 1998 and is also the holder of senior and junior national league medals as well as provincial honours. She has one senior county championship medal and was camogie player of the year in 2005.

Her brother Glen lined out at underage level with Cork while her uncle Bill Geaney captained Cork to All-Ireland U21 honours.

CATRIONA FOLEY, ROCKBÁN
(Student)

She captained Cork to an All-Ireland senior title in 2008. Catriona is the holder of All-Ireland senior and minor medals as well as provincial honours at minor, junior and intermediate. Holds senior B and junior county championships with her club and won a senior county championship medal with divisional side Muskerry. Her father Dan Joe won All-Ireland minor and U21 honours.

She is the holder of All-Star awards and has lined out with UCC in the Ashbourne Cup, sisters Mairead and Colleen wore the Cork colours at underage level. Won and Evening Echo ladies sports award last season.

JOANNE O'CALLAGHAN, CLOUGHDUV
(Business dev. rep. Lucozade Sport)

Captained Cork to an All-Ireland title in 2006. Joanne is in her eighth season on the senior team. She has minor, intermediate and senior All-Ireland Championship medals to her credit as well as Ashbourne Cup and Gael Linn honours. She holds three Cork senior county championship medals with her club Cloughduv.

MARY O'CONNOR, KILLEAGH
(National dev. off. Camogie Association)

Mary works with the camogie association as development organiser. She was previously a gaelic games underage coach with the East Cork GAA board. Also a well known footballer and played a big part in helping ladies win All-Ireland titles.

Holds senior All-Ireland medals and national league as well as county provincial and All-Ireland club medals with the Granagh/Ballingarry club where she played during her years working and studying in Limerick. Holds All-Star awards in camogie and football, captained Cork to National football league title recently.

BRIEGE CORKERY, CLOUGHDUV
(Stone mason)

Briega is the holder of three Cork county senior championship medals as well as minor, intermediate and senior All-Ireland and Munster honours.

She is also a prominent footballer and won an All-Ireland medal at senior football, was named as national female sports person of the year in 2005 following superb performances both in camogie and football. Briega is also a dual All-Star, she won a monthly sports award from 96/103fm and the Rochestown Park Hotel following splendid displays in 2008 also won an Evening Echo ladies sports award.

RACHEL MOLONEY COURCEY ROVERS
(Nutritionist)

Holds Ashbourne cup medals with UCC as well as minor and senior All-Ireland championship honours with Cork. She is the holder of All-Ireland honours at senior, intermediate junior and minor levels as well as provincial honours. Rachel was named on camogie All-Star team in 2005.

UNA O'DONOGHUE, CLOUGHDUV
(Food analysis)

Captained Cork to All-Ireland glory in 2002 having led her club to their first of three senior county championship titles in 2001 and is the holder of Ashbourne Cup and league honours with UCC as well as All-Ireland senior and national league medals with Cork.

Sideline battle



LINDA MELLERICK

THE battle on the sideline is almost as exciting as the battle on the field for Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final.

Denise Cronin and Ann Downey, so often on opposing teams for clubs and counties in the early 90s, face each other again — this time as managers of Cork and Kilkenny.

Ann, the holder of 12 All-Ireland senior titles and three All-Ireland club titles and Denise, holder of six senior medals and four All-Ireland club titles, could write a book on those glory years.

There'll be an incredible amount of medals on the sideline on Sunday afternoon.

Ironically, 1995 was the last time that Cork and Kilkenny met in the final and Denise was captain at the time.

In fact, it was a second-half goal by Denise which brought Cork back into the game after Kilkenny seemed to have a grip on it and Cork emerged victorious, 4-8 to 2-10.

Nineteen ninety-four was the last time Kilkenny won the All-Ireland and Ann was captain then.

Very few players played with the passion that Ann Downey did. She possibly lived in the shadow of Angela, still the greatest camogie player over the past 105 years, yet in a sense that was unjust, because in her own right Ann was a great player.

Opposing players found the Downey's to be unsociable with a touch of arrogance at the time. I don't believe they were. They were just so focused and so driven that it seemed that way and I can empathise with that.

There was much controversy when Ann wasn't selected on the 'Team of the Century' in 2004. Angela was so disappointed for her twin that she failed to turn up at the award winning ceremony.

Yet they put their own disappointment behind them and still presented myself and Sandie Fitzgibbon with cards congratulating us on our selection, something we were both thrilled with.

While I may be building Ann Downey up to be a great person, I can tell you that she was a tough



Kilkenny manager Anne Downey, right, celebrates with Colette Downey after their semi-final over Galway at Nowlan Park.
Picture: INPHO/Lorraine O'Sullivan

SILE BURNS, ROCKBÁN
(Physiotherapist)

Daughter of Denis Burns who won All-Ireland medals with Cork. Silé is the holder of All-Ireland minor and intermediate medals as well as Sciath Na Scol. She won a senior county championship medal with divisional side Muskerry last season.

ORLA COTTER, ST CATHERINE'S
(Student)

Captained the Cork minor team in 2006. Orla holds honours with her club from U14 to senior B championship, won an All-Ireland U16 medal in 2003 and holds two senior All-Ireland medals also holds provincial honours with Cork.

She became the only player to play in two senior All-Ireland finals in the same year (2006) winning Senior and senior B All-Ireland medals. Won All-star award in 2008. Sister

Finola was on the Cork U16 team last year.

LUCY HAWKES, VALLEY ROVERS
(Student)

Holds All-Ireland senior medals as well as Junior All-Ireland medal. Has won an Ashbourne shield medal with CIT as well as provincial honours at senior and junior. Was on the Carrigrohoun 2004 county winning team.

The current secretary of the Carrigrohoun division board, she also holds underage championship honours with her club as well as Sciath Na Scol honours.

ELAINE O'RIORDAN, MILFORD
(Student)

Elaine is the holder of All-Ireland junior minor and senior championship medals, she holds eight All-Ireland colleges with Charleville also holds Senior B championship with Milford.

Also a prominent footballer and has won

numerous honours amongst them All-Ireland under age and senior All-Ireland medals.

LYNDA O'CONNELL, ST FINBARR'S
(Chartered accountant)

Captained Cork to junior national league title in 2005 and is a holder of two Ashbourne Cup medals with UCC. Also holds Munster championship honours with Cork as well as senior and senior B county championship with her club.

SARA HAYES, COURCEY ROVERS
(Lab analyst)

Got married on August 28 to Michael Walsh and returned from honeymoon a week early to prepare for final. Sara holds All-Ireland senior and minor medals as well as Ashbourne Cup with UCC and senior B championship with her club. Played at underage level with Cork from U16 to minor, has won national league and inter provincial honours.

EIMEAR O'SULLIVAN, BALLINHASSIG
(Student CIT)

Holds All-Ireland senior and senior B honours as well as national league and provincial medals and holds Ashbourne shield with CIT. Won senior county championship medal with Carrigrohoun in 2004 and has won junior county championship with her club as well.

Sister Linda holds All-Ireland senior honours.

EMER O'FARRELL, SARRSFIELD'S
(Marketing)

She is the holder of All-Ireland junior and senior medals also holds national junior and senior league and provincial honours was a member of the Cork Institute of Technology team that won the Purcell Cup in 2001.

Holds Munster championship medals at senior junior and intermediate Emer is secretary of her club.

By RORY NOONAN

All-Ireland camogie

WHAT have former Cork hurler Joe Deane and current Cork camogie star Mary O'Connor have in common?

Both are stars for their home town of Killeagh, division Imokilly and of course Cork and in 1989 they won a county U12 hurling medal together.

Such was the high standard of hurling played by Mary, she was picked on the boys U12 team at midfield and played a starring role as they won the county title.

Not alone did she win a county medal with him that year but they also won an East-Cork football medal in the same year.

Even at that young age both were showing just how talented they were and have gone on to enjoy magnificent careers representing their club, division and county.

With 10 All-Ireland medals already in Mary's possession she will go in search of her 11th on Sunday in the All-Ireland senior camogie final and hopefully will she make it 12 two weeks later in the football final.

Mary, who is the director of development for the camogie association, currently has six camogie and four football senior medals and if it was just all about medals then she would now have 11 to her name.

After the All-Ireland camogie semi-final in 1995 Mary was asked to join the senior panel. She considered the matter seriously but decided not to as she felt if they went on to win the final, which Cork did, it would have been a medal she didn't earn and that's not Mary's way.

"I was delighted to be asked to join the panel, but at the time I was also on the Cork junior football panel and we were also in the All-Ireland final.

"To be honest I decided not to join the camogie panel as I felt if they won it would have been a medal I didn't earn. To me it would have been unfair on those who had played in earlier rounds to join at that stage," said Mary.

"So I decided to stick with the football and thankfully we went on to win and so my first All-Ireland win was in junior football. The following year luckily I was asked to join the camogie panel again and I have been ever present since."

Remarkably in that time Mary, who is the director of development for the Camogie Association, and her fellow camogie team-mates have qualified for the semi-final or

Mary O'Connor celebrates Cork's win over Galway in last year's final.



O'Connor mixing it with the best of 'em for years

better of the All-Ireland series since.

"I have been lucky to have played with some fabulous players and people like current coach Denis Cronin, Linda Mellerick and Sandie Fitzgibbon, to name a few, were a huge influence on me when I joined the panel.

"Like many others they were great players and they saw it as part of their job to pass on their wealth of experience to young players coming in. Now it is up to people like me to do the same and there are some magnificent young players after joining the squad in the last few years."

But it's this competition for places and the desire to challenge herself that keeps Mary going.

"Anyone with an All-Ireland medal treasures it and I have been lucky to have won 10 senior titles.

"But for me at the start of every season it is the challenge of getting there and the challenge of keeping your place that keeps me going.

"I love a challenge and I really enjoy the training and the friend-

ship amongst the squads, camogie and football. I love seeing if I still have the ability to keep my place as I look over my shoulder at all the great players chasing me.

"I love seeing if I can still get up to the high standards of fitness and skill levels required to play for Cork. I can honestly say I really enjoy the training and I know the minute I stop enjoying it I will give up.

"But for now that is far from my mind and I am really looking forward to the final on Sunday."

To get where she has today Mary has made many sacrifices in her personal life.

Coming from a large family at most of her brothers and sisters weddings she was unable to drink or at times stay late to enjoy the celebrations as she either had a match the following day or it was close to a championship game.

On other occasions she either missed or had to leave family events to play for her county, but she doesn't regret nor want anyone to feel sorry for her.

"This was my choice and it's one I have no regrets about. I consider it a privilege to wear the red jersey and it has brought me so much joy over the years I have nothing to complain about or regret.

"Naturally there have been highs and lows along the way and anytime you lose is always disappointing and nobody likes walking off the pitch after losing an All-Ireland final.

"It takes a long time to get over it, but once the new season comes around you re-focus and drive forward to try and make sure you experience the joy of winning that year."

Being a dual star makes it a busy week for Mary and in a typical week she will have football training on a Sunday, rest day on Monday, camogie on Tuesday, football on Wednesday, camogie on a Thursday, rest on Friday and camogie on a Saturday.

To ensure she is up to this, Mary makes sure she eats properly and gets plenty of rest.

"I try and take time out at some

point during the day to do a series of stretches which I find is a great help to me. I also have to ensure I get plenty of rest to ensure I am at my best for games, but that goes for all players not just me."

Looking ahead to Sunday's game Mary is well aware of the task ahead of Cork.

"Kilkenny are a young, hungry team and if we are not at our best then we will be in big trouble. Two years ago we experienced the feeling of losing a final and that memory is still with us all. It's not something we want to repeat on Sunday and the whole panel will have to be focused to avoid that.

"To win, our defence is going to have to play well as a unit and I think our forwards are going to have to be very patient. Kilkenny, if they stay true to form, play a certain type of game defensively that is tough to break down.

"But we have confidence in our own ability and hopefully we will be celebrating come Sunday evening and all the hard work will have paid off," concluded Mary.

It's no stretch for physio Rena to play in corner

THIS year threw up a new challenge for dual All-Ireland medal holder Rena Buckley when she took up the corner-back position on the Cork senior team having moved from her more familiar role in the half-back line.

In the early part of the season Rena had a few outings at full back but the move to the corner has her in the same position where she plays her football and she has slotted in well and is en-

By MARY NEWMAN

Camogie latest

joying her new role. She's just glad to be part of the starting 15.

"Competition for places is fierce and it is the most competitive it has been since I started on the senior team in 2004, everybody has to be at their best to make the starting 15 and it certainly keeps you on your toes."

Having qualified recently as a

physiotherapist, Rena is now based in a temporary capacity in Listowel and makes the journey to Cork for training and matches with Cork and Inniscarra something she is well used to doing.

"I was used to travelling home at weekends to train with Cork and Inniscarra when I was in college in Dublin, it would be nice to be closer to home but my employers in Listowel are very good

to me and I am really enjoying it there."

Last season Cork bounced back to regain the title they had lost in 2007 to Wexford but Rena is wary of the challenge Kilkenny will pose.

"It was tremendous to regain the title last year but now the pressure is on to retain it and we are going all out to defend our crown, we are determined to make a good start on Sunday.

That will be important. We already met in the earlier stages of the group series but that will count for little come the final.

"Kilkenny are a young side but they have won an awful lot at under age level they will be very strong opponents, we know what we must do to win and we will give it everything."

Losing out in 2007 still hurts and the Inniscarra defender is determined not to experience the

same feeling come Sunday evening: "Two years ago a young Wexford side defeated us in a game where we didn't do ourselves justice and to be honest it was awful to lose, we know we need a good performance to win this one."

With such a positive attitude from one of their most experienced defenders, the defence of the crown looks to be in very safe hands.



Catriona Foley, Eimear O'Sullivan, and Lucy Hawkes have a puck around during the Cork senior camogie team press night. Picture: Diane Dussack

Midfield battle to have big bearing

AS Cork prepare for next Sunday's All-Ireland final a number of key battles could have a big say in the final outcome, writes RORY NOONAN.

Experience is very much on Cork's side but unless they win in the key areas they could find themselves losing out to a Kilkenny team who will be full of hunger for success.

The midfield battle between Cork's Briege Corkery/Orla Cotter and Kilkenny's Anne Dalton and Collette Dalton will be vital.

Corkery is an inspirational figure and has amazing energy levels.

Strong on the ball, her forward running is something that Kilkenny will have to watch carefully. Her midfield partner, Orla Cotter, is equally strong on the ball and is capable of picking off long-range points.

These two have played a major part in Cork's success and will need to be at the top of their game on Sunday.

"We had a very close game against them in the round-robin series and I expect more of the same on Sunday," said Orla. "We know that they will be tough to break down and myself and Briege, if we are picked, will need to win the midfield battle."

"It's going to be tough as they are two good players and won't be found wanting when it comes to effort. We will have to match their intensity and hopefully be able to supply the right type of ball to our forwards."

"One thing for sure is that there is no complacency in the squad as we don't want to experience the feeling of losing like we did against Wexford two years ago. We know that overall we might be more experienced than Kilkenny but they have enjoyed massive underage success in recent years."

"We will have to up our game considerably to counteract their hunger and hopefully we can emerge as champions again," concluded Orla.

The clash of Cork's Catriona Foley and Kilkenny's Denise Gaule is another to keep a close eye on.

The young Kilkenny forward has been in brilliant form all year and Foley will have her hands full to keep her from scoring.

Kilkenny may move Gaule from the full-forward position to keep her away from Foley, but should they go head to head it promises to be a battle to the end.

At the other end of the pitch the clash of Cork centre-forward Gemma O'Connor and Kilkenny's Amy Butler is also worth keeping an eye on.

O'Connor has a major influence on this side and as well as attacking will have to keep an eye on Butler who likes to drive forward at every opportunity.

Though there is only two years between them, O'Connor being older at 24, there is a wealth of difference of big occasions.

Butler has a national league medal but has never won an All-Ireland and won't have experienced an All-Ireland atmosphere before.

O'Connor will be hoping to capitalise on this inexperience but Butler is a superb player and like the other two battles whoever comes out on top here will have a big say in the outcome of the game.

Cork's experience will be key factor

IT'S experience versus youth in this year's All-Ireland senior camogie final and that can be dangerous for only one team — Cork.

They are raging hot favourites and it's not a position any team likes to find themselves in.

How both managers prepare their teams mentality for this final will have a significant bearing on the outcome of it.

A player can believe they aren't complacent, that the hunger is still there, but it's only when push comes to shove that this is really tested.

There was a huge crowd at the semi-finals in Nowlan Park, in a tighter environment and it didn't seem to faze Kilkenny at all.

In fact the home crowd seemed to inspire the youngsters.

Thirty players will take to the field and it is only they who can decide what direction the O'Duffy Cup takes.

Five of Kilkenny's starting 15 in the semi-final are under the age of 20.

Kilkenny's tactics could have gone against them in the semi-final, playing too many players behind the ball and leaving Galway free around the middle of the field where they picked off points from 50 and 60 metres.

Were it not for some poor wides by Galway, Kilkenny might have found the gap too great to pull back.

Once the team returned to play for player marking the Cats dominated the game.

Galway scored just one point from



LINDA MELLERICK

play in 22 minutes in the second half as a Kilkenny defence, led by the excellent Elaine Alyward and Jacqui Frisby, tightened up considerably.

Cork's forward line didn't shine brightly in the semi-final with none of the six forwards scoring from play in the first half.

Wexford's defence are one of the toughest to break down but break them down is what Cork did in the second half.

The second half is always Cork's time. They may struggle against teams who put it up to them in the opening 30 minutes but Cork are patient. They don't panic. They hold their own without looking promising and then once the opposition's challenge begins to wane, they strike.

Should Gemma O'Connor hit form, Kilkenny will find her difficult

to hold. I always prefer to see Gemma out around the middle of the field but Cork needed strength up front and O'Connor is the one to provide it.

Her three points in the second half against Tipperary were sublime and exactly what is required on Sunday.

Cork don't seem intent on singling her out with their supply so she will need to roam in search of action if it is not coming her way.

Emer Dillon was another I felt who could punish Kilkenny with long distance scoring. However, Dillon was replaced in both the final group game against Tipperary and the semi-final and has failed to make the starting 15.

She wasn't playing to form but she wasn't alone and must be feeling disappointment.

One's disappointment is another's joy and Emer O'Sullivan, who has impressed in training gets her just reward at right half-forward.

Cork's midfield is their strongest line. Briege Corkery and Orla Cotter were instrumental in their semi-final victory.

Paths to the final

EIGHT counties set out in quest of a place in the gale All Ireland camogie final at the start of the competition, both finalist have emerged from the same group with Cork topping the group and Kilkenny coming in.

CORK

Cork 3-21, Dublin 1-7; Cork 2-5,

Kilkenny 0-7; Cork 1-13, Tipperary 0-14. Semi-final: Cork 2-13, Wexford 1-10

KILKENNY

Kilkenny 1-14, Tipperary 1-11; Kilkenny 0-7, Cork 2-5; Kilkenny 2-14 Dublin 0-4; Semi-final: Kilkenny 1-13, Galway 1-11

will be the key



Cork manager Denise Cronin runs on to the pitch after last year's All-Ireland final win over Galway.

competitor on the pitch and will be the same on the sideline next Sunday.

She wasn't slow to voice her opinion to referees. She is as shrewd as they come. Ann's directness and demands for perfection may have made it difficult for her to become a manager but she certainly has got the balance right now. That was evident in the last 20 minutes of the second half in Kilkenny's semi-final victory.

Trailing by five points, her side refused to give in and the Cats victory had all the hallmarks of the

Downeys. Ann is playing down her side's participation in the final. She loves the fact that Cork are hot favourites.

But anyone thinking that Kilkenny believe that getting to the final is progress and they are content with that would be wrong.

Kilkenny, under the guidance of Ann, will be out to win this. Nothing but a victory was ever acceptable to Ann Downey.

Denise was always the unsung hero in my view with both the Glen and Cork. She was always selected, always performed yet rarely

grabbed the headlines.

Denise was Miss Consistent, the type of player every team loves to have. She grabbed the headlines alright in 1995 when as captain she got that wonder goal and led us up the steps of the Hogan Stand.

When Cork were finding it difficult to secure a manager for their senior team in 2008, Denise answered the call. It can be pretty daunting taking over a senior inter-county team and regardless of the type of player you were it's a different ball game being manager.

But Denise has taken it in her

stride. Before Cork played Wexford in the semi-final Denise watched four DVD's of Wexford in action, on her own with no distractions, ensuring she was ready for everything Wexford might throw. Her attention to detail won't be found wanting against the Cats either.

Denise won't listen to those telling her that Cork have a soft All-Ireland. She herself knows that Cork will be up against a very fast, gritty team and the wits of Ann Downey.

Two great players, now two great managers! Let the battle begin.

host of honours with her club.

ANNA GEARY, MILFORD
(Student)

Is the holder of three All-Ireland minor medals in a row. Captained the side in 2003. Holds two All-Ireland senior medals won't available last year as she was studying abroad.

Has amongst her collection 10 All-Ireland colleges medals with St Marys Charleville. Was named on the Colleges All-Star team of 2004 and is also the holder of Camogie All-star awards.

EMER DILLON, BALLYGARVAN
(Pharmacist)

Was selected as Player of the match in the 2005 All-Ireland senior final. Eimear is also a prominent hockey player and has represented Munster and Ireland. Won a senior county with Carrighoun and

EIMEAR WHITE, BARRYROE
(Student)

Is the holder of All-Ireland senior, national league and provincial medals. This is her third year on the senior panel holds underage honours with her club Barryroe.

Has won Munster and Cork colleges medals with Sacred Heart Clonsilla as well as Munster Junior championship with Cork, won an U16 championship with her club and is also a prominent hockey player and has to her credit Munster schools and club honours

JULIA WHITE, DOUGLAS
(Student)

Second year on senior panel. Captain of the minor team this year. Holds Féile Na nGael All-Ireland honours as well as provincial underage medals won on All-Ireland senior B colleges' medal with Christ King, holds senior All-Ireland medal from last season, holds a

The squad

CHRISTINE O'NEILL, COURCEY ROVERS
(Student)

Played in Ashbourne Cup this year with UCC she has represented Cork Colleges at U14 level as well as lining out with the Cork U16 and minor sides with whom she won provincial honours. Has a U16B county league winners medal with Courcys won in 2005. She helped her school to win the Junior A Munster colleges championship in 2004. Is playing on the intermediate team that meet Galway in Intermediate All-Ireland final on September 19.



PAMELA MACKEY, DOUGLAS
(Student)

First season on senior panel. Pamela captained the Cork U16 team that lost out in All-Ireland final last season. Pamela is a member of the Cork minor squad this year. Holds Féile na nGael medals with her club Douglas as well as senior county championship honours and a host of underage honours.

KATRIONA MACKEY, DOUGLAS
(Student)

Is twin sister of Pamela also in her first season on senior panel, is a member of the Cork minor squad this year. Holds Féile na nGael medals with her club Douglas as well as senior county championship honours and a host of underage honours.

DENISE CRONIN, BALLINCOLLIG
(Student)

Sister of Cork hurler Pa Cronin second season on panel. Won a senior county championship with divisional side Muskerry as well as county junior championship and league with club.

MARION MURPHY, KILBRITTAIN
(Student)

Second year on panel represented Cork in the National Féile Na nGael skills competition in 2000, the holder of All-Ireland senior and U16 championships honours.

MICHELLE BROWNE, MALLOW
(Student)

Holder of All-Ireland senior and provincial honours as well as Gael Linn Inter provincial honours lined out with CIT in the Ashbourne Cup this year, is playing on the Intermediate team that meet Galway in the final.

ORLA O'SULLIVAN, ST FINBARR'S
(Accountant)

Holds All-Ireland junior medal from 1999 as well as provincial junior and senior honours. Won a senior county championship and senior B medals with her club.

MANAGER

DENISE CRONIN, GLEN ROVERS

Captained Cork to All-Ireland honours in 1995 and guided the fortunes of the Senior side in 2008 to the All-Ireland title. She is the holder of six All-Ireland senior medals as well as nine Cork senior County championships.

Without doubt she was one of the brightest underage players to emerge to successfully play at adult level with both club and county. She was a tough defender who stood up and was counted when the going got tough.

COACHES

LILLIAN ZINKANT, SANSFIELDS

The five-time All-Ireland medal winner (three at junior level and two minor) returns as a senior selector this year after a one year absence. It's her third time involved with the senior county senior side and she is no stranger to the pressures that come with the job.

Lillian has served Cork camogie at many levels, when she departed the inter county scene after winning her third Junior All-Ireland medal she quickly became involved as selector with junior or senior teams coaching the junior team of 2004 to All-Ireland success.

MICHAEL O'REGAN, DOUGLAS

Mick is the representative from County champions Douglas on the selection committee, he won an All-Ireland minor football medal in 1974 and Munster minor in '73 & '74, was on the Cork senior team in '75 and '76 but an injury cut short his career at inter-county level.

Mick has given 35 years service to camogie and has been involved with camogie in Douglas since 1974 when still playing minor.

Managed and coached Douglas to win junior senior B and senior county championship, in 1998. He was part of the Douglas football management team when we won the intermediate county championship.

COACH

FRANK FLANNERY, CARRIGTWOHILL

It's a first time involvement with camogie at inter-county level for Frank Flannery but he came to the job with a huge involvement in gaelic games both at club and colleges level.

Having guided the fortunes of the CIT hurlers to the Fitzgibbon Cup, he comes from a strong GAA background. Frank won an intermediate county championship medal with Carrigtwohill in 2007 to date his only involvement with camogie has been as coach to the Ballygarvan and CIT clubs.



Neary's Cats can't wait for Sunday

By MARY NEWMAN

Kilkenny view

"EVERYTHING is ready and we're raring to go."

The words of Kilkenny chairperson Catherine Neary as she returned from her county's last training session ahead of Sunday's Gala All-Ireland senior camogie final. It's been a hectic few weeks for Catherine, her first at the helm as county chairperson, with Kilkenny going in search of their first senior title since 1994 and while the four in-a-row was the big talking point all week attention is now turning to the ladies. "It been non-stop all week and as you can imagine all the hype has surrounded the hurlers and their marvellous achievement but we have remained focused on next Sunday and the job facing us, several people are talking about the double or even the treble but to be honest we haven't been thinking along those lines at all."

There had been a bit of speculation regarding the starting 15, but the selectors announced the same 15 as lined out against Galway, thus no place for Marie O'Connor whose goal deep into injury-time gave Kilkenny victory when all seemed lost in that semi-final clash. Marie O'Connor replaced Therese Muldowney with 18 minutes remaining but the St Brigid's forward retains her position.

The lineout is Catriona Ryan in goal, the full-back line has Catherine Doherty at full-back with Leann Fennelly and Jacqui Frisby in the corners, centre back is Amy Butler who is flanked by the experienced Lizzie Lyng and Elaine Alyward, at midfield. Colette Dormer is joined by captain Ann Dalton, Katie Power leads the attack at centre forward with Therese Muldowney and Edwina Keane, the inside line has Denise Gaule at full forward with Michelle Quilty and Aoife Neary in the corner forward positions.

"We know what is ahead of us and it won't be easy, we need to put in a huge performance. Cork are a great team any side who are contesting their eighth final in-a-row command huge respect but we are fit and well. Ann Downey and her fellow selectors are going all out to win it and know what is required and they will give it their all."

Kilkenny travel to Dublin on Sunday morning leaving around 10am they will stop at the Green Isle Hotel where they will be based until Monday and then it's on to Croke Park. Neary is nervously awaiting throw-in.

"I spoke to the Cork chairperson Marion McCarthy and she's been through all of the pressure so many times, to me it's all new I just wish Sunday was here."

A sentiment expressed by many in both camps this week.



LINDA MELLERICK

WHEN looking at teams for inspirational players many look to the commanding centre back, the tireless work of a midfielder or the dynamics of a lethal forward.

How many times does a goalkeeper spring to mind almost immediately? Rarely!

Yet in the modern game the goalkeeper's role is such a huge part of any team, more so than previously. No longer are they considered just the 'ball stopper'.

They now massively influence a game and their puck outs, their ability to read how a game is panning out and where to land those puck outs is crucial for success.

Aoife Murray is the best goalkeeper Cork has had in 25 years. She made her Cork debut in 2002 but it was 2004 before she became the regular number one choice.

After losing in 2003 and '04 Aoife recalls Cork's victory in 2005. "There is a greater fear of losing three in-a-row than winning three in-a-row. After losing two you almost have the feeling of what's it all for? But to beat Tipp in '05 and hold them to a point in the second half was great."

This is Aoife's first experience of Kilkenny in an All-Ireland final. There is no history or rivalry between this current crop of senior players on either side. How does Aoife feel about this? Is rivalry needed to motivate you?

"No I think it's better that there is no current rivalry there simply because all we're doing now is concentrating on the game, not thinking about who's won what or the last final so all we've been focusing on is how they play, how to counteract that and how we're going to play ourselves."

"So it's all about the game and not statistics. I'm sure it's the same for Kilkenny. I imagine that the Mackeys and Julia White share rivalry with Kilkenny from underage as they have dominated U16 and minor these past few years but that's all. It's actually that bit refreshing in a sense to go into a final with no baggage with the opposition."

Cork hasn't been playing well of late, particularly up front. What does Aoife feel is the reason for that and how will they counteract

Murray will treat final like it's her first



Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray on her knees making the penalty save against Galway during last year's All-Ireland senior camogie final. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

that on Sunday?

"I suppose we're our own greatest critics."

"The pressure is on to perform every time and sometimes that leads to, when you have the ball, taking the wrong option."

But we've been working on that and moving the ball around.

"We've worked a lot on our forwards being our best defenders. This year the subs that we can bring on have helped us up front. I suppose that can be hard to take as a forward too because I know forwards are big confidence players and they could be looking over their shoulder."

"But you have to learn to cope with that. But we've worked on our team game and it's working well."

Without doubt Aoife is a top class goalkeeper. She commands her square, keeps her full-back line in line and inspires from her position.

Does she consciously do that or does it come naturally as part of her make up?

"I always played in goal and I always remember Kevin (her brother) telling me what the Cork hurlers expected of their keeper."

"That was kind of drilled into me at a young age and then after a while you learn that if you don't

keep your full-back line tight you'll be the one picking the ball up out of the back of the net."

"We do a lot of each line pushing the other line on. I'm at the back and I've the best view so it's part of my job. It also helps me to hold my concentration and keep me on my toes. I might not see the ball for 10 minutes so that's very important."

This will be medal number five for Aoife but her approach and desire is the same as if it were her first.

"I'm sure in years to come I'll be very proud of those medals but all we care about now is 2009."

"It's like it's our first."

KILKENNY pose a new challenge this year, but Cork manager Denise Cronin has every faith in her charges' ability.

"Everything is going well," Denise said.

"Frank (Flannery, the coach) has done a tremendous job throughout the year and that has really shone through in the last few weeks."

"The girls are looking sharp and focused and from our previous game with Kilkenny, in July, we know and are prepared for the tough opposition we will be facing."

Denise was without doubt one of Cork's finest camogie players, the Glen Rovers star in her career won six All-Ireland senior medals, nine senior county, four All-Ireland club and nine Munster clubs medals.

Last year she was a novice at the management and selector job but this year, with that experience behind her, is better prepared.

"Looking back when I got involved last year I was a bit naive in that I didn't realise how much would be involved in managing the team."

"Pat Murray and Jim Mac had been involved with the senior team



Cork Camogie stars Cathriona Foley, Eimear O'Sullivan and Lucy Hawkes at open night in Ringmahon GAA pitch. Picture: Gerard McCarthy

By MARY NEWMAN

Camogie latest

in recent years and I found this a great help.

"Having now been through the process, I know what it takes to win and with Lillian, Mick and Frank we have brought it a step further from our preparations last year."

Denise, who was always a cool

player under pressure, is looking forward to Sunday.

"It is tremendous to be back in the final and we are looking forward to it, defence of any title is a huge task and we know on Sunday Kilkenny will come out all guns blazing."

She knows the pressure on players having been there herself and she understands how a player reacts on a day such as this.

"The anticipation that can get you, the week coming up to the match drags and a lot of the time you just can't wait to get out on to the field."

"There is nothing like the energy in a dressing room just before the team steps out on to the field, so many things run through your head everyone gets caught up in their own thoughts. It gives me shivers just thinking about it."

Denise will be, as always, just that little bit nervous herself on Sunday.

"When you prepare well you have to trust the team selected will do their job. I have tremendous respect and belief in the ability of all the players and that makes the difference."

A tremendous player in her day, Denise knows her former on the field opponent Ann Downey well and she has not doubt but that Downey's charges will be highly motivated.

When it comes to the crunch Denise Cronin will give it her all and no doubt her charges will rally to the cause just as she did in her own playing days, she is ready and willing and Cork can ask for no more.

● More camogie pages 2-8

Family support faces dilemma

Murrays and O'Connors are in a quandary

By RORY NOONAN
Camogie

DESPITE a plea by Cork football captain, Graham Canty, to support the camogie players on Sunday several of the Cork players families find themselves in a quandary.

Aoife Murray and Mary O'Connor will be lining out in Croke Park and some of their family members won't be able to attend as they are playing championship games in Cork.

Aoife's brother, Kevin, will be lining out for the Barrs as they take on Newtownshandrum in the semi-final of the *Evening Echo* SHC, while two of Mary's brothers are playing with Glenbowe Rovers in a East-Cork junior football final.

Gemma O'Connor is also in the same boat as her brother, Glen, will also be part of the Barrs team.

This now sees parents of these families, as well as other family members, having to make the decision to go to Dublin and support their daughter or stay and home and support their sons.

It also means that the siblings can't support each other on what are big occasions for all.



Joan and John, the parents of GAA players Kevin and Aoife Murray, are torn between two games. Kevin is playing in the SHC semi-final with the Barrs on Sunday, while Cork camogie keeper Aoife will be in action against Kilkenny in Croke Park in the All-Ireland final at the same time.

Picture: Diane Cusack

However, on the positive side, it's all systems go for Cork as they report no injury worries ahead of the big game as they aim to topple the Cats.

Cork are hoping to make it two in a row as they appear in their eighth final in a row against a Kilkenny side who are in their first final since 2001.

Coaches Denise Cronin, Cork, and Anne Downey, Kilkenny, are familiar faces to each other as Denise was captain in 2001 when Cork defeated them in the final.

Anne was on the Kilkenny side and Denise will be hoping to inflict another defeat on Anne.

● See Friday Sports Special inside for more on the big game.



Cronin up for Cats

Cork boss primed for Kilkenny challenge

Downey's faith in vibrant Cats

Kilkenny boss counting on exuberance of youth to end county's long wait for All-Ireland glory



CLIONA FOLEY

KILKENNY camogie manager Ann Downey can't help smiling when you ask her about her young charges and whether, maybe, they'll be less nervous than herself tomorrow.

With 12 All-Ireland senior titles under her belt she is no stranger to the pressures of Croke Park, while it is completely new to her players, whose youthful enthusiasm and confidence appears to know no bounds.

"Yes, sometimes you look around the dressing-room at some of them and you have to say, 'girls, would ye shut up and listen to what we're saying!'" she reveals with a grin.

Few of them were born when she was half of camogie's most lethal sister act, with twin Angela, who wrought havoc all around them when Kilkenny completely dominated the game in the 1970s and '80s, including winning seven senior All-Irelands in-a-row from 1985 to 1991.

COMPETITIVE

In her day Downey, usually operating at midfield, was one of the most focused and competitive camogie players to ever wield a hurl.

She hung up her inter-county boots in 1999 but still became something of a 'cause celebre' in 2004 when she was not selected on camogie's 'Team of the Century'.

Three Kilkenny women were included - her sister Angela, Liz Neary and Bridie McGarry - but Angela was so disgusted that Ann was not recognised that she boycotted the presentation ceremony.

Five years later, Ann is back in the limelight but this time on the sidelines, managing Kilkenny in their first senior camogie final since 2001.

They are actually chasing their first victory since Downey herself captained them to victory back in '94 and exactly why they veered so far off the senior radar for so long has always been something of a mystery.

"I think that happens in all sports; it can happen even in club camogie

TOMORROW

ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

Cork v Kilkenny, 2.45, Croke Park, U.Kearney (Armagh), Live RTE 2.

THIS time last year, a Cork team hit by retirements bounced back from their 2007 defeat to take their fourth title of the Noughties, and their eighth final in a row looks just an intriguing. They haven't hit top form yet, have had a tendency to start slowly and are meeting an 'emerging' team for the third year in a row.

This 'emerging' Kilkenny side are all first-time senior finalists, but they have lots of big-game experience and plenty of balance from Jacqui Frisby and Elaine Alyward in defence to lethal forwards such as Aoife Neary, Katie Power and Denise Gaule.

Given Cork's brilliant midfield of Brieghe Corkery and Orla Cotter, they look likely to drop back a forward again (probably Michelle Quilty) into defence and the tactical battle should be fascinating.

Cork won, by Emer O'Farrell's two goals off the bench, when the sides met earlier this summer, and while the Kittens are definitely the 'coming team' and will have the benefit of huge support, this legendary Cork side isn't finished yet.

Verdict: Cork

CORK - A Murray, J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley, J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes, B Corkery, O Cotter, E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue, S Burns, E O'Farrell, R Moloney.

KILKENNY - C Ryan, L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby, L Lyng, A Butler, E Alyward, C Doherty, A Dalton, T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane, M Quilty, D Gaule, A Neary.

ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CAMOGIE FINAL

Offaly v Waterford, 12.45, Croke Park, P Walsh (Armagh), Live RTE 2.

OFFALY are on a double-revenge mission. Clare's injury-time goal robbed them of a title in last year's final and they also suffered a 13-point trimming from Waterford in their earlier meeting this summer.

The Decies came chasing revenge themselves that day as Offaly had knocked them out in last year's semi-finals, so this is a huge grudge match.

Offaly, led by brilliant centre-back Michaela Morkan, have fast, nippy forwards, but Waterford also have serious scoring threats in Trish Jackman, Aine Lyng and Karen Kelly.

Heartache and hunger may be all that separates them, which tips things in Offaly's favour.

Verdict: Offaly

OFFALY - A Kennedy, K Brady, L Keane, F Stephens, L Sullivan, M Crean (capt), S Sullivan, K Nugent, M Morkan, A Kelly, T Hannon, M Davis, S Flannery, E Darnody, A Watkins.

WATERFORD - A O'Brien, V Gaffney, S O'Grady (capt), K M Hearn, O Kennedy, M O'Donnell, S Kiernan, M Murphy, C Maher, S Curran, A Lyng, N Morrissey, P Jackman, K Kelly, A Breathnach.



Brieghe Corkery (right) is a big player for Cork, but Kilkenny manager Ann Downey (above) will hope her young guns can cope with the threat

or hurling, it's hard to keep the momentum going," she says.

"The (Ballyhale) Shamrocks were on top (in Kilkenny) for ages in the '70s and then they were gone for years and now they're back again, and it was the same with ourselves.

"Also, with ourselves, when the game went 15-a-side (in 1999) it was hard to make the changeover and it has probably actually taken us this long to adapt," she observes.

"None of these girls have played 12-a-side, they've only ever played 15-a-side and that's a very different game."

The most repeated statistic about her young charges is that a third of the squad are teenagers.

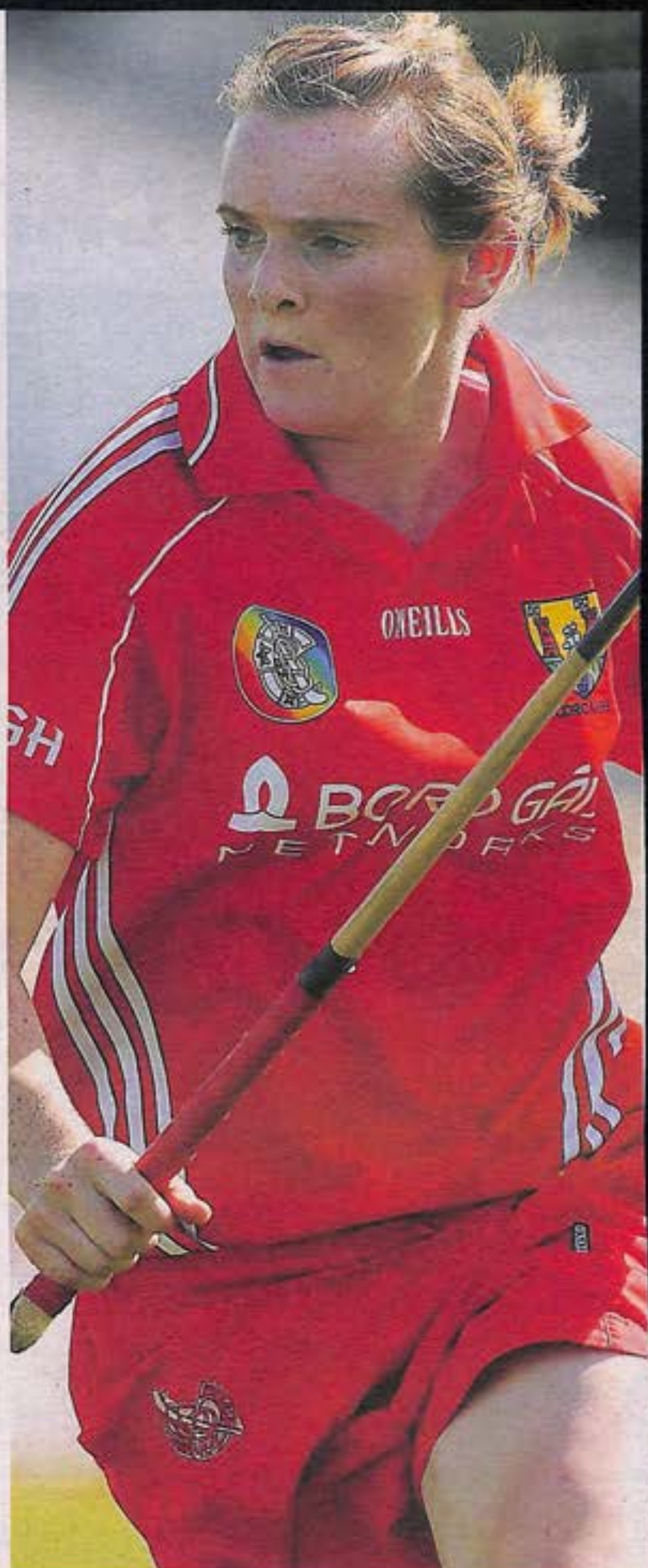
Yet their youthful legs and confidence may be just the thing to topple Cork's defending champions who are chasing a fifth title in their eighth final in a row.

Kilkenny, though, include plenty of experience. Five players survive from the 2001 senior final - Caitriona Ryan, Lizzie Lyng, Catherine Doherty, Edel Maher and Aoife Neary - while Jacqui Frisby was another involved when they won the All-Ireland junior title in 2002, when Downey was also on the management team.

But more of their starters have come off Kilkenny's phenomenal recent underage conveyor belt that has bagged All-Ireland four-in-a-rows at both U-16 and minor level.

And players like Leanne Fennelly and Denise Gaule have also won schools' All-Irelands with St Brigid's Callan, alma mater of the Downey and Millea sisters plus Olympic hammer thrower Eileen O'Keeffe.

Following in the steps of Neary and Katie Power, Gaule (18), from



Windgap, is Kilkenny's latest teen starlet. She scored 3-7 in this year's All-Ireland minor semi-final, 2-4 in the final and then a week later, lined out for the seniors in their late-goal semi-final victory over Galway.

Downey has been at pains to play down the expectation levels on her young side and admits they cannot let it affect them.

"While Croke Park is a big stadium, and it is frightening, when they're inside those four lines it's no different from any other pitch and they have to be totally focused on what they're about," she stresses.

But she cannot hide her delight in their skills and the way the game has moved on since it made the radical decision to move to a full-sized pitch 10 years ago.

"I look back at the videos and I think, 'bloody hell, that pitch was so

small, why wasn't I able to score more points!'" Downey quips.

"The modern game is brilliant; the speed of it, the levels of fitness and skill and the space they have.

"In 12-a-side on a small pitch you were nearly playing beside one another. There wasn't the room to express yourself, but look at what players like Brieghe Corkery are doing now."

It's 15 years since she became the last Kilkenny woman to lift the O'Duffy Cup and she's desperately hoping that statistic will change tomorrow.

"I'm sick of hearing that, I'm really hoping someone else will take over that mantle," she says.

"I was the last captain and I was a twin and Ann Dalton, our captain this year, is also a twin, so we're hoping that's a good omen."

Flannery so glad he was 'pressed' into action

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR C'SHIP FINAL



Cork v Kilkenny

Tomorrow: Croke Park, 2.45pm
Referee: U Kearney, Armagh
TV: RTE Two



Fintan O'Toole

WHEN he first received the call back in February about enlisting to the Cork camogie setup, Frank Flannery batted away the request. He was immersed in Cork IT's drive for Fitzgibbon Cup success at the time, had a hand in with Youghal's intermediate hurling outfit at the same time and felt his workload was heavy enough as it was.

But Denise Cronin was persistent. She came back in early March to Flannery and this time pressed him successfully.

"When Denise came back again, at the time I'd opted out of playing with Carrigtwohill for the year with injuries and stuff like that.

"So I took the chance on March 8th and started. Since then I've thoroughly enjoyed it and they're a very professional bunch. Denise is

excellent to work alongside.

"Her passion for the game is incredible and she'd be keeping an eye on you as well."

Taking the plunge into coaching waters was not a new experience for Flannery.

"I was involved with Ballygarvan camogie last year. We came from a poor Senior A team to get to the county league final and lost in the semi-final of the championship to St Finbarr's.

"So we made a lot of progress. I would have followed over the last few years. When it comes to oppositions, I wouldn't have a clue but I would have known three quarters of this Cork panel very well.

"Between all the teams, I'm out every night of the week but I love it. I'm going back with CIT Freshers next week and I'm looking forward to it.

"With a successful team I was on a hiding to nothing with this Cork side and I knew that. But I'm only 27 and from an experience point of view, it's great.

"I haven't played at intercounty level so I have to go a different route to get there. I would see this as a stepping stone maybe."

Flannery's first competitive stint at the helm of Cork was in this spring's National League, yet that competition never ranked high in his list of priorities.

He reasons that this Cork side had accumulated plenty miles on the clock and did not need to put them through a punishing pre-season slog.

"In any competition that I'm involved in coaching, I'm not too bothered about leagues. I feel you

peak too early, go too hard too early. Especially with a team like this, you can't go to the well too often. I remember we lost to Wexford in one game by three points, hurled absolutely terribly and should have been beaten by more.

"We did no pre-season. We just hurled at a fierce intensity all year. The way I work coaching, it's all match structure. I'm not into drills and running around fields."

When they fell into the high stakes in the summer, Cork had the happy knack of securing the right results without scaling great heights.

"We were haunted to beat Kilkenny in the group stages," concedes Flannery. "We took the eye off the ball then before Tipperary. They weren't going great and we were missing players. We hadn't played very

well as well in the first-half of the semi-final against Wexford but at half-time we'd a stern talk. I think the biggest thing was the fear of losing. We told them to go out and play with abandon.

"There's unbelievable rivalry between Cork and Wexford. We talked about the 2007 final beforehand but maybe we dwelled too much on it.

"The management were as guilty as anyone for that. But what I liked is that we dragged out the result, which was pleasing to see. I'm very lucky that they have character, you don't have to build it up."

Kilkenny enter this match without the levels of experience that Cork possess but Flannery does not subscribe to that theory that Cork are facing novices and insists he is anxious

about the proposition in store for his players.

"A lot of these Kilkenny players have been really successful. So I would find they don't know defeat. I felt in the championship earlier this year, they were happy to come within four points of us. They didn't believe then that they could beat us. But now they believe they can beat us.

"They've improved with every game since then. We're not playing great to be honest, we're hurling in fits and starts. They have never played there or lost there.

"It's a novelty for them. They'll be running on adrenalin. I'd fear them big time.

"We're not playing great to be honest, we're hurling in fits and starts. I know the bookies are making us 1/6 favourites but I would be worried."



Cork coach Frank Flannery: "we did no pre-season. We just hurled at a fierce intensity all year. The way I work coaching, it's all match structure. I'm not into drills and running around fields."

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR C'SHIP

CORK v KILKENNY

A Murray	1	C Ryan
J O'Callaghan	2	L Fennelly
C Foley	3	C Doherty
R Buckley	4	J Frisby
J Duffy	5	L Lyng
M O'Connor	6	A Butler
S Hayes	7	E Aylward
B Corkery	8	C Dormer
O Cotter	9	A Dalton
E O'Sullivan	10	T Muldowney
G O'Connor	11	K Power
U O'Donoghue	12	E Keane
S Burns	13	M Quilty
E O'Farrell	14	D Gaule
R Moloney	15	A Neary

Medals galore, but Ann now eyes big prize

by Fintan O'Toole

KILKENNY may have been starved of senior camogie success of late, but midfielder Ann Dalton has never found herself short of accumulating honours.

Dalton has featured during Kilkenny's all-conquering minor teams of recent years, has gained Ashbourne Cup honours with Waterford IT and helped to steer Kilkenny towards a National League title last season. But it is at club level where Dalton has really thrived, picking up six county club titles, four Leinster honours and three All-Ireland club medals as St Lachtain's of Freshford swept the boards. That slew of honours lead to Kilkenny boss Ann Downey opting to entrust Dalton with the mantle of captaincy.

"I'm happy enough with how the year has gone so far," remarks Dalton. "We beat Tipperary and then lost to Cork by just four points, which wasn't bad considering that they'd won the All Ireland title last year. After that we

knocked Dublin out, and then of course there was the win over Galway."

After a first half which Galway just about shaded, that semi-final tie looked to have slipped from Kilkenny's grasp as they approached the final whistle. But then Marie O'Connor popped up to strike a sensational last-minute goal to alter the course of the game.

"After the goal I thought to be myself that we needed to hold things," says Dalton. "And when Katie Power's last point went over that was it. I knew we had it then. It was a great victory for us."

At underage level Kilkenny have been rampant in recent seasons, but have hit a lull in the senior grade. It's fifteen years since Kilkenny won an All-Ireland, but the as far as Dalton is concerned the Galway win, and the manner of the fightback, was indicative of their belief.

"We've finally broken through that

barrier though, and we'll approach this in the same professional way as we would any championship match.

"It'll be the same thing as before, just rest, train and eat well. You need to see it and approach the match as you would for any other game.

"It's a championship match and to prepare any differently could take your eye off the goal.

"We've prepared properly all year

wrong, so we won't change things now. It should be a great final. Cork have won four All Irelands and so many of our players have been together for four years now, they are getting stronger every year.

"We are a close team, friends wise, and the minor and underage structure is a great help to the seniors", added a player who is relatively fresh out of the underage ranks."

Kilkenny captain Ann Dalton: the Galway win and the manner of the fightback was indicative of their belief.



Novel pairing seek maiden success

Junior preview

by Daragh Ó Conchúir

WHATEVER happens at Croke Park tomorrow, there will be a first-time winner of the Gala All-Ireland junior camogie championship.

Offaly and Waterford is a novel pairing to say the least, with the Suiriders appearing in their first decider, while their Faithful counterparts are back after suffering heartbreak in last year's final.

A controversial injury-time goal snatched victory for Clare, and the hangover from that defeat dragged on right into this season's round-robin opener, when Waterford trounced them by 3-11 to 0-7.

"We got back in January and we still hadn't got over the effects of it until Waterford beat us and then we knew we were back down to earth," says Offaly boss Joachim Kelly.

"We still fancied ourselves and thought we were a good team, but when Waterford beat us in the first round by 13 points, it was time to knuckle down then and the heads were right then after that. We got through against Down, Dublin and Meath and here we are in the final."

Waterford had been motivated by revenge, having been well beaten in

last year's semi-final. Kelly reckons it was the best thing that happened to his crew, particularly in light of how the season has panned out.

"If we beat Waterford by 14 or 15 points I would have a fierce job trying to get the girls' heads right for (tomorrow), but I can guarantee you that their heads are right because they're in no way cocky or favourites or anything like that. We're underdogs and we have a big job to do. It's all about work ethic next Sunday. Hard work."

Waterford are managed by former Déise and Tipperary hurler Andy Moloney. They have made significant strides in a short period of time.

Included in their ranks is one of the greats of ladies football, Mary O'Donnell. The An Rinn club woman holds four football All Stars, and Croke Park will hold no fears for her, having won an All-Ireland there as a 16-year-old in 1998.

Waterford had six points to spare over Laois in their semi-final and will travel with plenty of belief. So too will Offaly though, who had five points to spare over Meath.

OFFALY: A. Kennedy; K. Brady, L. Keena, F. Stephens; L. Sullivan, M. Crea (capt), S. Sullivan; K. Nugent, M. Morkan; A. Kelly, T. Hannon, M. Davis; S. Flannery, E. Darmody, A. Watkins.

WATERFORD: A. O'Brien; V. Gaffney, S. O'Grady (capt), K. M. Hearn; G. Kenneally, M. O'Donnell, S. Kiernan; M. Murphy, C. Maher; S. Curran, A. Lyng, N. Morrissey; P. Jackman, K. Kelly, A. Breathnach.

challenge

Lyng lauds young Cats'

winning mentality

by Fintan O'Toole

SUNDAY'S All-Ireland final joust with Cork may be unfamiliar territory for the modern Kilkenny camogie generation, but Lizzie Lyng proves an exception to that trend having strong acquaintances with the Cork set-up.

Lyng, who is joined on the Cats panel by her sister and Rower Instigoe clubmate Eimear, has plenty knowledge of Cork camogie circles from her time in UCC where she became an integral

members of the college's camogie outfit, picking up a few Ashbourne Cup medals en route.

Now she is starting to sample that successful feeling on the senior stage with Kilkenny,

whose set-up is benefiting from the arrival of an influx of All-Ireland minor winners.

"It's been four All-Ireland minors in-a-row for Kilkenny recently and those players have brought that winning feeling through with them, they really know what it's like to win."

"The winning feeling was lost in some of our senior players for a while

because we had a few hard years along the way. However, these young players coming through have boosted us all, and finally, we get to know what it's like to win again."

Lyng is greatly enthused by the progress that Kilkenny have made at underage level which was embellished by their National Senior Camogie League title last year. However in the championship the nine campaigns since the turn of the millennium have been bossed by Cork.

"This is their eighth consecutive final, so, yeah, we always expected them to be there or thereabouts again this year", says Lyng.

"Cork will take some stopping. In saying that, across the country it's actually very, very even now. Cork, Kilkenny, Wexford, Tipperary, Galway, we are actually quite close in terms of standard."

Meanwhile, Kilkenny trainer Paul Murphy has described it as 'an absolute privilege' to be working alongside Kilkenny boss Ann Downey. After a lengthy and celebrated playing career Downey has thrived since assuming the Kilkenny managerial reins, with Carrick-on-Suir school principal Murphy, praising her input.

"What can I say, it's an absolute privilege and honour to be working with a manager of Ann's calibre. She is a real



Lizzie Lyng: has plenty knowledge of Cork camogie. Picture: Dylan Vaughan

professional with heaps of managerial and playing experience.

"But the players themselves deserve enormous credit. I've been involved with Kilkenny now for five years and they're a great, versatile bunch."

The reality is you've basketball players, Gaelic footballers, volleyball players, soccer players and the lot. They could turn their hand to any sport and we are just happy that they have dedicated themselves to camogie.

"The mood is very positive in the camp right now, training is going well and our preparation has been very good to date", remarked Murphy, who had previous sporting success when he trained Carrick United to the FAI Junior Cup title in 2008.

Amanda set to walk the walk as captain

We speak to Cork coach Frank Flannery tomorrow



LINDA MELLERICK

FROM early in the season Tipperary captain Willie Ryan from Toomevara found himself unable to stake a claim on a starting position on the Tipperary senior hurling team.

Yet he continued throughout the season to fulfil his media and leadership duties.

The trend of selecting captains from County title winning clubs seems to be diminishing with Cork and Tipperary (from next season), ending the practice.

There is for and against the debate. Great players and leaders who are admired by his or her team mates may never get the chance to captain their county if from a weaker club.

The change in rules would offer them an opportunity. On the flip side of that would the strong personality always win out?

Would Amanda O'Regan's quiet and unassuming disposition ever afford her the chance to captain her county had Douglas not won the county?

Without doubt Amanda is a leader with her club Douglas. It is fair to say that they would not have won their county championship title without her.

Yet ironically, she finds herself in the same position as Willie Ryan and Kilkenny's Michael Fennelly in that, unable to secure a position on the starting 15, Amanda finds herself on the bench for Sunday's All Ireland final. It's difficult for the player, no denying that.

"Back in October when we won the county that was such a big thing for the club. It took a few weeks for that to sink in and then I felt like 'yeah I'm going to get my big dream, to captain Cork', said Amanda.

"Obviously I had to choose between basketball and camogie (Amanda played with Glanmire).



Captain Amanda O'Regan pictured at the Cork Senior Camogie team press night in Mahon.

Picture: Diane Cusack

give it 100% so I choose to sacrifice my basketball which ultimately meant giving up two All-Ireland titles.

"I used that time then to train myself and get myself fully fit. Going through the year it got very frustrating when I was being taken off in games, then I picked up an ankle injury which slowed me up a little bit and then not making the team.

"Frustration is the big thing for me. You train as hard as you can and you feel yourself getting nowhere which is obviously very tough."

Amanda plays at centre-back with Douglas. She got called up to the senior squad as a defender yet found herself switched into the forward line, which is not her ideal position.

Does she feel this is a factor and that was she left alone she would be on the team now?

"No I didn't mind it. Obviously the team comes first. They were looking for a full-forward and if I could fill that role I'll willingly do it for the team. It's out of my hands at present. All I can do is do my best. What the selectors pick is what they see best."

Obviously for Amanda being captain makes non selection that much harder but she continues to play a captain's role.

She continues to go in for the toss before games and will hopefully climb the steps of the Hogan stand on Sunday next. How does that make her feel and will she get as much out of that honour had she been playing?

"I don't think I will be honest. The reason I gave up basketball was because I didn't want there to be any doubts in anyone's mind that I de-

served to be there. Now I'm sitting on the bench. My leadership skills have always been through playing. I play and try to bring everyone along with me. That has been kind of taken away from me so I've had to go around that in different ways.

"It's been tough and I'm quite sure I'll be very emotional on Sunday. All I can do is hope and pray that I get on the pitch at some stage."

How does Amanda get around leading her team in different ways as she described?

"I think by just trying to be positive all the time, even when things are going badly, try to pick my team mates up at training encouraging them when they have an off night and try and push them on. Basically that's all I can do," claimed Amanda.

Referring to the final Amanda

says: "It's going to be a very tough game. I feel it's going to be very low scoring, just simply the way Kilkenny play it's going to be very defensive. We'll have to take every chance they give us."

It's been an emotional year for Amanda. The high of being named captain of her county coupled with the disappointment of not making the starting 15. She has dealt with both in a professional manner.

The team and victory on Sunday remains her focus. Should Cork win the All-Ireland title, Amanda will climb the steps of the Hogan Stand to collect the O'Duffy Cup and the homecoming Monday evening will be in Douglas GAA club.

Referring to the opening passage of this article, does Amanda deserve such an accolade? There is only one answer. Absolutely!

Experienced Zinkant is keen to bring the cup home

CORK selector Lillian Zinkant is focused and ready for the challenges that Kilkenny will pose on Sunday and the five-times All-Ireland medal winner, who has three at junior level and two minor at level to her credit knows it will be tough, writes MARY NEWMAN.

"There is only a puck of a ball between us, we know Kilkenny are no soft touch and we need a good start and a 60-minute performance we are ready and hopefully things will go our way on Sunday."

No stranger to the pressures that come with the role of selector to an

inter county team, Lillian has served Cork camogie at many levels, when she finally departed the inter county scene after winning her third Junior All-Ireland medal she quickly became immersed in the other side of the game.

Since 1999 she has been involved as selector to either the junior or senior team coaching the junior team of 2004 to All-Ireland success therefore progression to the senior backroom team came as no surprise. She dropped out last season but returned this year and is enjoying it.

"The players are great to work



Lillian Zinkant: "We need a good start and a 60 minute performance."

with and they really give it 100%. A lot of them make huge sacrifices to make training travelling long distances and hopefully we can help them achieve their aim of retaining the title."

Lillian acknowledges a lot of hard work has gone in by everybody in the quest to keep the O'Duffy Cup Leaside.

"The girls come to training and put in a huge effort but behinds the scenes we must be prepared as well we are always looking for that little bit extra that could just be the difference between winning and losing."

Retirements and emigration have seen a few changes to the panel over the years but this has not caused any disruption.

"Over the year a few faces have changed, younger players are step-

ping up to the mark and that has been good as it has kept everybody sharp and battling for a place on the starting 15 and this can only help keep things fresh."

On Sunday Lillian will be as nervous as the first time she stepped out in Croke Park as a player but she is ready and willing to give it her all.

"We in the backroom team are determined to come home as champions and we will be doing everything in our power to ensure that happens the hunger is as great as every and we are full focused on winning."

Camogie

Monday, September 7, 2009

All-Ireland nostalgia



Mary O'Connor

Eight in a row means so much to Mary

Pages 20-21



The Cork All-Ireland camogie team that were defeated by Kilkenny after a replay in 1981. Back: Val Fitzpatrick, Joan O'Sullivan, Mary Geaney, Mary O'Leary, Patricia O'Riordan, Eileen Dineen, Claire Kelleher, Ger McCarthy, Claire McCarthy, Nancy O'Driscoll. Front: Marion McCarthy, Miriam Higgins, Martha Kearney, Clare Cronin, Liz Lynch, Anne Delaney, Angela Higgins.

Picture: Echo photo



Jenny Duffy

Jenny's used to being behind enemy lines

Pages 22-23

Cork can close gap on roll of honour to two

WHEN Dublin won their 25th All-Ireland senior Camogie title in 1966, Cork's total stood at a mere six.

The gap was considerable, yet Cork filled second place on the roll of honour.

Eighteen titles in a period of 19 years put them in what looked like an unassailable position.

Slowly but surely, Cork have been eating away at Dublin's lead while the poll-toppers have only claimed a single championship in the last 43 years.

Next Sunday, Cork can close the once intimidating divide to two.

Cork burst on the scene in 1934 for their first taste of championship action.

Used to watching their hurlers and footballers in action, the Cork sporting public viewed the arrival of girls in red and white with an air of expectancy. They were not disappointed.

A team built around Lil

MARY MORAN,
former president of the camogie association looks at the shift in power over recent years



Kirby, Josie McGrath, Kitty Cotter and Lena Delaney set the ball rolling with a three-in-a-row.

The formation of Old Aloysians club in 1937 brought many talented players to the Cork panel.

A second hat-trick was won in 1939-1941 with Kitty Buckley, Peggy Hogg, Kathleen Coughlan, Mary Fitzgerald and Eileen Casey the standouts.

Dark and barren days were to follow. A dispute over the involvement of male officials led to Cork's absence until 1952. By then, the great players had left.

The new Cork team found Dublin at the height of their powers and were unable to dethrone them.

The clouds lifted in 1970 when Marie Costine, Pat Moloney, Liz Garvan, Mel Cummins, Betty Sugrue and Rosie Hennessy made history and stretched their run to a four-in-a-row.

Kilkenny and Wexford provided new opposition. Cork picked off four titles from 1978-83 through Mary O'Leary, Marion McCarthy, Cathy Landers, Clare Cronin and Mary Geaney.

A great Kilkenny side, powered by the Downey twins, thwarted Cork for the rest of the decade.

The Rebels bounced back in the 1990s and added five titles to their score. The exciting talent of Sandie Fitzgibbon, Linda Mellerick,



Cork forward Mary O'Leary (centre) beats Dublin's Sheila Wallace and Catherine Doherty during the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park in 1978.

Fiona O'Driscoll, Lynn Dunlea, Colette O'Mahony, Denise Cronin and Eithne Duggan made Cork the team of the decade.

Tipperary emerged as a new and daunting force and kept Cork's progress on hold for a few seasons.

The O'Duffy Cup has come to Cork four times since the turn of the cen-

tury. Mary O'Connor, Jenny O'Leary, Briege Corkery, Gemma O'Connor, Aoife Murray, Rena Buckley and Joanne O'Callaghan will always be associated with these victories.

Cork can climb another rung up the ladder with a win over Kilkenny on Sunday but it will not be easy.

Picture special

Nostalgic look back of some Cork teams

Pages 18, 19, 24





The Cork captains are welcomed back to the Victoria Hotel after winning the junior and senior All-Ireland camogie titles in 1973.



Marie Costine clears the ball under pressure from an Antrim defender during the 1973 All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park.
Picture: Echo Photo



The Cork camogie team on the way to Belfast for the All-Ireland semi-final against Antrim in the early 50s.



Cork forward Mary O'Leary shoots for goal during the All-Ireland senior camogie final against Dublin at Croke Park in 1978.



The Cork team who beat Dublin in the 1978 All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park, Dublin.
Picture: Echo photo



Lizzie Lyng: Looking forward to renewing old acquaintances.

Lizzie puts forward a case for opposition's defence

By RORY NOONAN

All-Ireland camogie

FEW, if any, of the Kilkenny team will know more about Cork camogie than Lizzie Lyng. She has won two Ashbourne Cup medals with UCC as she spent several years studying there before returning home to work as a social worker.

"I enjoyed my time in Cork with UCC and was lucky enough to win two medals with them and am looking forward to renewing acquaintances with some of the players," said Lizzie.

But she knows that as a member of their defence they will have to be at the top of their game to hold Cork's forwards.

"Cork's forwards are very formidable, very strong and we are really going to have to be on top of our game to keep their scores down. We have been working really hard on our defensive play and that's as much as we can do on the day."

"But I suppose when you get to an All-Ireland final you have to have a certain amount of confidence in your own ability. We are excited to be in the final as it's so long since Kilkenny have been there."

"It's going to be a great experience for us, we are a young side and only two of the squad were there when we were in our last final in 2001, so it's a whole new experience for everyone."

"It's a big day for everybody but everyone's going to be nervous whether it's your first or eight time being there, it's the same for both teams. It's just a matter of going out there and giving it your best."

"We played Cork in Nowlan Park in the round-robin series of the championship and only lost by four points in that game. It was a very bad day weather wise making it difficult for both teams to play decent camogie. They got a couple of goals to win in the end and we have looked at our defensive play to see what happened there."

"But we were happy with our performance on the day and to get that close was a boost to us, as they had beaten us by far bigger margins in previous years."

"Of course we would love to win an All-Ireland but we are well aware that it's going to take an awful lot of hard-work on the day to beat that Cork team. I think there will be a large crowd travel up for the final and in fairness to them the support of our fans got us through the semi-final game against Galway."

"When we looked out of it late on they kept cheering us on and thankfully we got that late goal which put us through to the final. Hopefully we will give them plenty to cheer about again on Sunday."

Jenny's job has her

By RORY NOONAN

Camogie All-Ireland

NEXT Sunday's senior All-Ireland camogie final sees Cork and St Finbarr's star Jenny Duffy in a bit of a quandary.

Jenny, like her team-mates, will be doing all she can to try and add to Cork's considerable roll of honour of senior titles and this defender is one of the reasons why they are back in their eighth consecutive final.

However, as she plots, plans and trains with the Cork squad to defeat Kilkenny on Sunday, she also finds herself helping her opponents prepare for the big game.

Jenny is a full-time camogie development officer for South Leinster and Kilkenny is one of the many areas she covers in this role.

When Jenny finished studying at CIT she continued afterwards to work in the college as a chaplaincy officer, i.e. someone who works closely with students in helping them settle into college life.

"I was just finishing up in this role in June 2007 when I saw the advert for the development officer and I decided to apply," said Jenny.

"I was lucky enough to get the job and I started in July of that year."

"I am based in Portlaoise and the area I cover is Kilkenny, Wexford, Laois, Offaly, Carlow and Wicklow."

Jenny's job sees her working closely with the county boards in all these areas, as well as clubs and schools. There are many facets to the job and they include helping and advising to set up new clubs, sending in coaches to help develop players and also giving coaching workshops to coaches and occasionally to players.

In this role she has coached some of the players that will line out against her on Sunday and no doubt many of them have looked up to her as a role model.

As both counties prepare for the biggest day in the camogie calendar, Jenny has been helping the Kilkenny County Camogie Board with the some of the background preparations, although she was quick to point out she has nothing to do with the team.

"Part of my job sees me advising the board on things like press nights, organising transport for fans to and from the game, among other things. But I have nothing to do with the team and I am sure they wouldn't want me involved."

"Naturally this has led to a lot of banter in the office and also with the officers of the Kilkenny board as they wind me up about the game."

"Hopefully, I will have the last laugh on the day, but no matter what I will be back at work a couple of days later."

"My aim is simple in that I want to get a hurley into as many small girls' hands as possible."

"The game is growing and we have to capitalise on this and hopefully more clubs will start springing up over the country. It's a great game for young and not so young to play and there are teams at all sorts of skill levels people can play for. The younger we can get girls playing the better for the game and hopefully some of the counties where the game



Don't miss our
build-up every
day this week
and our
eight-page
All-Ireland
preview in next
Friday's
Evening Echo

Jenny Duffy factfile

Club: St Finbarr's

Position: half-back

Occupation: Camogie development officer for the south Leinster area.

Honours: Captained CIT to the Ashbourne Shield title in 2004, also winning an All-Ireland league with them.

Has won numerous underage as well as Senior A and B county titles with her club. Has two senior All-Irelands.

behind enemy lines

Aylward is under no illusions of task ahead

By RORY NOONAN

All-Ireland camogie



I'M STILL JENNY FROM THE LOUGH: Jenny Duffy may be working in South Leinster but her heart is definitely on Leaside.

is not strong at the moment will start coming to the fore."

Looking at the Kilkenny team, Jenny knows that this game is far from a foregone conclusion and in some ways compared their progress to Douglas in Cork.

"Douglas as a club side have to be admired and they have built on incredible success at underage level. They have come up through the ranks in the last number of years, building on many Féile successes and now are a top class senior side.

"These Douglas players have a winning mentality. Even if you think you have them beaten they come back at you.

"Kilkenny are like this. I am not for one second saying they are only like a club side, but this squad has emerged from incredible success at underage and minor intercounty level in the last number of years.

"They have won four minor titles in a row and a lot of these players are not part of the senior set-up. When I say they are like Douglas, I mean these players also have this massive winning mentality and

won't be a bit afraid of taking us on in the final.

"They won't worry about the fact we are in our eighth final in a row and the fact we are the reigning champions. Of course they will respect us, as we will them, but they won't fear us and these young players will take that attitude into the game.

"We are well aware of this and also of how close they ran us in the round-robin series of the championship. They are a quality side, who have a great running game, and we know we will have to be at our best to retain the title."

But Cork are the standard bearers that all others look up to and have quality players — not alone in the starting line-up but also in the squad.

"We have a strong squad and even in training, you have to give 100% or else you know someone can come in and take your place. This has helped us as a squad get stronger and stronger as everyone is both pushing, as well as encouraging, you to improve all the time.

"Far from tearing the squad apart it has brought us closer together and we are great friends as well as team-mates. Even when you are having a bad game, or even not going well in training, they will encourage you and lift you.

"How could you not be inspired when you see someone like Briege Corkery winning the ball and driving forward to either score or set one up for someone else. Players like her are an inspiration to all of us and she will always have a good word for you if things are not going your way.

"There is a huge trust element among the players and we all know what each other is going to do during a game. There are no big-heads or cliques in the squad.

"Our coaching and management team have also kept us going and you couldn't ask for better people than the likes of Denise Cronin and Frank Flannery. As far as they are concerned we are all part of a squad and those who are on form will play.

"They have no favourites and you

know that if you don't put in the effort in training and in games there is someone to take your place and they won't hesitate to do so.

"Because of this everybody is so well grounded and I think this plays a huge part in driving us forward as we try and keep on winning. We know what it's like to use and the memory of losing to Wexford is still fresh in our minds.

"I know we won last year but we haven't forgotten what it felt like to lose and we will be doing all we can to ensure we don't experience that feeling on Sunday.

"When the final whistle goes and you have won the All-Ireland it's almost impossible to describe the feeling. It's one of the proudest moments of your life, to be surrounded by people whom you have slogged your guts out with in training and in games and to have family and friends at Croke Park, it's just beyond words to describe it.

"Many people looking on might say we are mad to do this year after year but we just want to be the best and your time at the top doesn't last long and I want to savour every moment. This desire, topped with young, fresh and ambitious players being added to the squad every season, is probably a major reason why we are lucky enough to face into our eighth straight final."

Before Sunday's big game there will be one ritual that Jenny always follows before any big game.

"Oh God my mum (Irene) will kill me for telling you this," said a smiling Jenny, "but before I leave home ahead of any championship game my mum will catch me unaware as some point and pretend to spit on me. She never does but it has become a ritual and I won't be breaking it this weekend.

"I don't know how, when or why it started but my mum is originally from Derry and I think it must be some sort of a tradition where she is from. I know it's unusual but it has just become something she does before games."

But whether it's spitting rain or glorious sunshine on Sunday you can be guaranteed that Jenny will be a ray of sunshine in the Cork team and hopefully there will be a warm glow over Cork at the final whistle with the cup on its way back to Leaside again.

IF Kilkenny go on to win the senior All-Ireland camogie final next Sunday they will owe a huge debt of gratitude to defender Elaine Aylward.

Trailing by two points to Galway in the semi-final and in the fourth minute of injury-time their campaign looked over, but not as far as Elaine was concerned.

The teak-tough defender, who has been an inspiration to all around her this season, picked up the ball and her pin-point pass to Marie O'Connor played her in on goal. O'Connor made no mistake as she blasted to the back of the net and a place in the final.

After the game O'Connor couldn't speak highly enough of Elaine and called her "the driving force in the back-line" that now sees them in the final.

Elaine, like all this squad, is modest about her achievements with an All-Ireland junior medal, a senior national league medal and countless Leinster medals to her name.

Speaking about the defining moment in their season Elaine said: "The ball broke to me and I saw Marie free inside. Thankfully the pass found her and no better girl to find the back of the net to put us through to the final.

"From a Kilkenny point of view it's great to be back in the final and it's long overdue. The last time we were there was 2001 so it's going to be a totally new experience for this squad.

"We are delighted to be here and at the start of the year we felt we had the squad to ensure we did, but until you get there you don't really believe it. It's a great feeling and we are really looking forward to the big occasion.

"On the other hand we are under no illusions of the task ahead of us. We are facing a Cork team who are in their eighth final in a row and are full of players who know what how to win this title.

"Overall we are a young side but a lot of the squad have won All-Ireland medals at minor and U16 level as well as Ashbourne Cup medals, so despite the young years there is a fair amount of experience of finals. There is a great buzz around with so many teams involved in All-Ireland finals and we are feeding off that."

If they do manage to get the better of Cork then many will turn to Elaine and say a big thank you for that pass to Marie.

Wishing Cork the best of luck in the All-Ireland Senior Championship Camogie Final

Fuelling Cork's passion for Camogie

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BORD GÁIS
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Another title would b

By RORY NOONAN

Camogie All-Ireland build-up

NEXT Sunday will be another milestone in the camogie career of Cork centre-back Mary O'Connor.

Mary will be appearing in her eight straight senior camogie final and has been an inspirational player to all around her over the last number of years.

Mary, who has six senior All-Ireland camogie medals to her name, said that like all finals some have good and others have bad memories.

"Naturally the ones you win will always be days you treasure for the rest of your life, but there is no worse feeling than coming off the pitch after losing an All-Ireland final," said Mary.

Two finals in particular in this magnificent run stand out for Mary.

"From a personal point of view last year was a big game for me. I hurt my leg the previous year after the final and missed the All-Ireland football final.

"I was told that my leg would probably never heal to the level where I could play at inter-county again.

"Thankfully I was lucky enough it did and to take to the pitch last year was as much a relief as anything else to me and then to go on and win the game was brilliant.

"From a county point of view the 2005 final was a huge game as far as I'm concerned.

"We have lost the two previous finals to Tipperary and we were determined to stop them making it three-in-a-row and luckily it worked out for us on the day.

"At that time, and even now, I felt we needed to win that game or it could have set up back a long way.

"It's a privilege to play for Cork and I am honoured every time I do so and I can't wait for Sunday's game."



2002: Mary, centre of three players lying on the ground, celebrates a famous win.



2003: Mary, third from left in front row, ready for action in the 2003 final against Tipperary.



2004: Mary, front row second from left, ahead of final against Tipperary.



2005: Mary, third from left in front row, ready for action against Tipperary again in the final.



e greight for Mary



2006: Mary, holding the cup, after they beat Tipp in the All-Ireland final.



2007: Mary, seventh from left in red helmet, ahead of Cork's final with Wexford.



2008: The Cork team with Mary, fourth from left in front row ahead of last year's All-Ireland against Galway.



The Cork camogie team which won the Cronin Cup when defeating the Combined Universities on St Patrick's Day 1961. Back: Kathleen O'Mahony (Canovee), Betty Walsh (Old Als), Maura Browne (Glen), Gerry Vaughan (Old Als), Deirdre Young (Old Als), Mary Lehane (Carrignavar), Deirdre Sutton (Glen). Front: Kitty Barry Murphy (South Pres), Ann Honohan (Donoughmore), Joan Clancy (Old Als), Theresa Murphy (Glen), Rose Manley (Old Als).

Picture: Exam photo



The Lord Mayor of Cork, Richard Anthony, throws in the ball at the start of the Cork v Dublin All-Ireland camogie final at UCC Grounds, Mardyke in 1942.

Picture: Exam photo



The Cork camogie team that played Tipperary in the Munster final at Cork Athletic Grounds in 1960.

Picture: Echo photo



The Cork team who played Antrim in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final at Croke Park in 1973.



The Cork senior side of 1934 who won the All-Ireland Camogie Championship.



Cork's Linda Mellerick gets the sliotar away under pressure from Galway's Olivia Broderick during the 1998 final. Picture: Inpho



The Cork senior team who took part in the 1942 All-Ireland championship.

Experience and scoring potential should swing it for Cork

Final preview

by Jim O'Sullivan

BOTH the Cork senior camogie team and the Clare U-21 hurlers will presumably have to contend with a strong Kilkenny support in Croke Park tomorrow. But, whatever about the Banner boys, the Cork girls should not be unduly perturbed if their own fans are in the minority.

The fact the Rebels are contesting the Gala All-Ireland final for the eighth year in a row means that they will focus on the challenge provided by Kilkenny rather than the occasion.

For Cork boss Denise Cronin and Cats boss Ann Downey the game will revive memories of the last meeting of the counties in a final, back in 1995 – when Cork were victorious and Cronin lifted the cup. Kilkenny are appearing in their first final since 2001, but while Cork and Tipperary were

the main contenders for most of this decade, their progress this year is not unexpected after the winning of the last four All-Ireland minor titles.

Nevertheless, their win over Galway in the semi-final in Nowlan Park – on the same day that Cork overcame Wexford – was a little unexpected.

The Westerners had come close enough to beating Cork in the final last year and were better placed to win, except that they missed chances at a crucial stage and were caught by a goal

from substitute Marie O'Connor in the fourth of six minutes added time.

What's interesting about the Kilkenny line-up – unchanged from the semi-final – is that there is a lot of experience in the backline, whereas four of the forwards (including minor star Denise Gaule) are under the age of 20. The last day, goalkeeper Catriona Ryan, wing-back Elaine Aylward midfielder Ann Dalton played key roles, while last year's captain Marie O'Connor made a big impact after being in-

troduced around the three-quarters stage.

Cork were not over-impressive in beating Wexford. Largely, it was a problem of under-performing in the first half, but a significant improvement after half-time showed what the team is capable of. Dynamic Brieghe Corkery went through for a vital goal in the 40th minute and it marked the turning point in the game.

While team captain Amanda O'Regan again has to content with a place

on the bench, Cork have an assortment of natural leaders in key positions, not least goalkeeper Aoife Murray, Corkery, fellow dual star Mary O'Connor and former captain Gemma O'Connor.

In form, they have more to offer in terms of their experience and greater scoring potential. However, it all depends on them playing more consistently this time. Manage that and they will hold on to their title.

Verdict: Cork

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Kilkenny girls face holders Cork

KILKENNY are bidding for four-in-a-row All Ireland hurling titles today in Croke Park, and it will be some achievement if they succeed. The Kilkenny camogie team has been in triumphant mood too and while some might say the hurlers have yet to hit top gear, the girls are a force to be reckoned with.

Next Sunday they face their biggest test here in headquarters. All Ireland finals don't come much tougher than meeting the holders Cork who are appearing for the eighth year on the trot. The Leesiders are seeking back-to-back titles and based on their second half performance against Wexford in the Gala All Ireland semi-final they have the look of champions again.

This will be music to Ann Downey's ears. The Black and Amber won their fourth successive All Ireland minor final in Semple Stadium last month – Con Hogan and Co. always ensuring a great day. And now, like Tipperary today, they reap the rewards with their seniors back in the final for the first time since 2001.

Nowlan Park was looking splendid last month – thanks to Ned Quinn and his staff – and those present would have to be impressed with the fare on offer. The Cats showed no respect to hot favourites Galway, and when sub Marie O'Connor leashed an unstoppable shot past Susan Earner deep in stoppage time, we knew this team had arrived.

Ballyhale Shamrocks have King Henry – but they also have Jacqui Frisby whose efficient play at corner back reminds us of the great Bridie McGarry. What about the Fennellys? Leann Fennelly in the other corner is a first cousin to today's captain Michael Fennelly. U21 hurler Colin Fennelly and camogie panelist Kevea Fennelly.

Her team mates from Mullinavat, Lizzie Lyng and Amy Butler, play with great pride. Skipper Ann Dalton

and Collette Dormer might be one of the youngest midfielders around, but they will not be overawed by Cork's engine of Brieghe Corkery and Orla Cotter.

What about young Denise Gaule, Katie Power and Edwina Keane? Their ability to take on their markers will give them huge confidence. Further up, Aoife Neary from the James Stephen's club has plenty of experience under her belt.

Of course, they have another trump card with the Kilkenny U21 hurling team lining out immediately after the camogie final. Double the support. So, be assured Ann Downey's charges will not be swept away by the occasion and will be here to win.

Meanwhile, Joachim Kelly's Offaly meet Waterford who are appearing in the All Ireland junior final for the first time. Patricia Jackman is already an All Ireland winner claiming the Poc Fada a couple of weeks ago in the Cooley Mountains. Andy Moloney, a Tipperary man from New Inn who hurls with Ballygunner, is the Waterford manager.

Kelly's side is back after being dramatically denied by Clare in the 2008 final. Watch today when the Offaly Centenary hurling team is being honoured – five of the girls on the Offaly panel have dads in the parade – Aoife Kelly (Joachim), Aoife Corrigan (Mark), Claire Birmingham (Brendan), Katie Bergin (Noel) and Orlagh Kirwan (Paddy).



Kilkenny Under-21 Captain, Shane Maher and Kilkenny Senior Camogie Captain, Ann Dalton, together before both All-Ireland Finals in Croke Park.



Focal ón Uachtarán



BA MHAITH LIOM fáilte ó chroí a chur roimh gach duine i láthair inniu le haghaidh Cluichi Cheannais Chamógaíochta na hÉireann. Fáilte go leith roimh na h-imreoirí, na roghnóirí, na reiteoirí agus na h-oifigi.

Táimid ag suil le cluiche spórtúil agus tá suil agam go mbeidh sibh tairneamh as. Táim cinnte go mbeidh sábháilteas idir na foirne agus go dtabharfaidh sibhse, an lucht féachana, aitheantas cuí don foirne agus iad ag léiriú scileanna ár gcluiche ar an bpáirc imeartha inniu.

Every camogie player's dream is to win an All-Ireland in Croke Park. Today, dreams will come true in the biggest day in the sporting lives of the Cork, Kilkenny, Waterford and Offaly players.

The All-Ireland finals are the showcase of camogie. The skill, speed, athleticism and artistry of the game's finest players will be on display. The club and family base of camogie, as part of the Gaelic Games community, will be much in evidence.

Cork's red and Kilkenny's black and amber are no strangers to Croke Park. Kilkenny Minors achieved a remarkable four-in-a-row of All-Ireland titles this summer. Last year, they secured a four-in-a-row of Under-16 titles. No doubt then that they are well decorated with under-age honours and worthy contenders for the Senior title.

Seventy-five years ago Cork featured in the first camogie All-Ireland in Croke Park in 1934. Pitted against Louth, the Rebels came away with the title. In more recent times, Cork have appeared in every All-Ireland Senior final since 2002. They won on four of those seven visits, most recently last year against Galway. They will not give up easily on their status as champions.

For Waterford it will be a special occasion. The Deise's young camogie stars make their first appearance in this iconic stadium. I extend a special welcome to them on their Croke Park debut. Offaly's tenacity and excellent ability

ensure they make a return visit seeking to reverse last year's Junior final defeat. Two great games are in prospect.

JUBILEE TEAM 1984

All-Ireland finals day now pays the customary tribute to the champions of 25 years ago. Today, that accolade goes to the Dublin players who, on their third successive visit to Croke Park, overcame Tipperary to take the title. Dublin lost the previous two finals to Cork and, ironically, in the year they won it they were captained by a Cork woman domiciled in the capital - Ann Colgan from Lisacarrill.

RECOGNISING PLAYER EXCELLENCE

The Gala All-Ireland championship series has been outstanding this season. Competitive action, high playing standards, a couple of close finishes, all Senior championship games in excellent facilities at county G.A.A. grounds, increased media coverage and increased public following for the game have been its hallmarks.

I am delighted that we will introduce two new Player Recognition Awards this year. The first of these is the Gala Performance Award for the most outstanding individual performance throughout the season during the Senior championship. Uniquely within women's sport, this award will be voted on by the public from a shortlist of ten players. The winner will be announced today.

The second award scheme is the selection of fifteen awards for players competing in the three Gala Junior All-Ireland championships - the New Ireland Cup (today's Junior final); the Nancy Murray Cup (won by Roscommon), and the Máire Ní Chinnéide Cup (won by Cavan).

The new scheme ensures that county players are selected for an award based on their performances against players of a similar standard. The new scheme is in addition to the All Stars which will now be selected from the Gala Senior and

Intermediate championships. Make sure to put November 7th in your diary for the annual All Stars presentation dinner.

FROM THE GRASSROOTS

There is no doubt that the achievement of counties reaching All-Ireland finals is built on work at the grassroots. The work done at local level is vital in so many ways. It contributes to creating active young people while also connecting people and communities.

I know that all around the country, on any given summer's evening, there are thousands of people giving freely of their time to others, coaching and mentoring players in the skills of camogie. They work towards creating environments that are about fun, enjoyment, participation and sporting competitiveness.

There are many more volunteers who work on fixtures administration and the promotion and development of camogie. Then there are referees who do a job that is integral to the game but often may be the least recognised. And, of course there are many others.

Your individual and combined efforts make the Camogie Association. Many of you are here today. Week in week out, in your work with children and young people especially, you create mini All-Ireland in clubs at home and abroad. To all of you, I offer sincere thanks.

SHAPING THE FUTURE

I would love to see females all over Ireland having the opportunity to enjoy camogie, regardless of their backgrounds or where they live. I would like us to reach out to people who have not had the experience of playing camogie before and through this expand even further our thriving club scene.

This year is the tenth anniversary of our game changing to 15-a-side. In the last decade, the playing standard of the game continues to improve and intensify. We now have more camogie competitions, clubs and players than ever before. Media coverage is also improving though we can aim to do better.

I strongly believe that our female athletes should get their recognition as sporting equals. These and other issues are under discussion at the moment as we work to develop a new vision for camogie. We want to put in place a plan that will see camogie get stronger and stronger.

I have undertaken visits to 20 counties over the past six months. I also had the opportunity to support camogie development in London and in the U.S. I can honestly say that the interest, enthusiasm, energy, ideas and commitment to camogie is outstanding. Over the next few months we aim to have a new Development Plan in place.

I look forward to working with you so that together we can grow camogie even further.

APPRECIATIONS

On behalf of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, I am delighted to congratulate the G.A.A. on its 125th birthday. This is a momentous year for a momentous organisation. The affinity between camogie and the G.A.A. is strong and the excellent relationship between our Associations is highly-valued.

A roll call of some of the family links in evidence today highlights the bond between camogie and hurling, e.g. the Fennellys from Kilkenny (Leann, Keeva and cousin Michael), the Kellys from Offaly (Aoife and Joachim), the Burns from Cork (Sile and Denis), and the Heffernans from Kilkenny and Waterford (Margo and Christy).

It is fitting that this year's All-Ireland programme continues to unite the camogie and hurling families when the All-Ireland Under-21 hurling title will also be decided. I wish both Clare and Kilkenny a great final.

A very special word of thanks to Gala, sponsors of the All-Ireland championship series. Now in its fourth year, this sponsorship has been extremely important and beneficial. It has strengthened the profile of camogie as an indigenous sport for women and promoted Gala as an indigenous Irish brand. In these times, I am pleased that Gala's support continues and I look forward to our ongoing partnership.

Sport has several important roles including social, recreational, health promotional, educational and cultural. It is important that sport is open to everyone and particularly women who are under-represented. The significant support of the Irish Sports Council and the support of Sports NI (Northern Ireland) is extremely important to us and much appreciated.

Lastly to the many of you involved in making an All-Ireland special - supporters; referees and match officials; team mentors; participants in the mini-games; the media; Croke Park stewards and all of those involved in the unseen work that makes today possible, including Croke Park Stadium, the GAA and the outstanding staff team of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael - míle buíochas as ucht an oibre.

Enjoy the games and good luck to all today.

Siobhán Ní Fhlóinn

SIOBHÁN NÍ FHLÓINN
Uachtarán Chumann Camógaíochta na nGael

CLÁR AN LAE

Páirc an Chrócaigh, 13ú Meán Fomhair 2009

12.45 p.m. CLUICHE CEANNAIS NA SÓISEAR
Port Láirge v Uíbh Fáilí
(Live on RTE)

1.20 p.m. Camogie mini-games
PORT LÁIRGE v UÍBH FHÁILÍ
CILL CHAINNIGH v CORCAIGH

Camóg-aerobics demonstration

2.15 p.m. Jubilee team presentation - DUBLIN 1984
Entertainment by the Artane Band

2.38 p.m. Paráid na bhFoireann

2.43 p.m. Amhrán na bhFiann

2.45 p.m. CLUICHE CEANNAIS NA SINSEAR
Cill Chainnigh v Corcaigh
(Live on RTE)

Half-time entertainment by the Artane Band

4.15 p.m. CLUICHE CEANNAIS IOMÁNA
NA hÉIREANN FAOI 21
Cill Chainnigh v An Clár
(Live on TG4)

The O'Duffy Cup will be brought on to the pitch by Caoimhe O'Callaghan from Piltown in Co. Kilkenny and Rebecca O'Brien of Ladyshbridge in Co. Cork.



Meet the Match Officials

THE Senior decider between Cork (holders) and Kilkenny will be under the control of ÚNA KEARNEY who is a member of the St. Brenda's (Ballymacnab) club.

Úna, a teacher by profession, took charge of her first All-Ireland Senior final in 2004, and she also handled the Junior finals of 2002, 2005 (draw and replay) and 2008.

Úna is Chairperson of the National Referees' Committee and has been officiating since 1999. She has won



O'Brien (Dublin) and Eadhonn Mac Suibhne (Dublin) are the fourth and fifth officials.

PAT WALSH is the man in the middle for the Junior final between Offaly (last season's beaten finalists) and Waterford who are appearing in their first decider.

Pat, who is a supervisor with Quinn Brothers Construction Company, is a native of Cappawhite in Co. Tipperary but now lives in Portadown.

He played Senior hurling with Keady in Armagh. He also spent some time in London where he lined out with Glen Rovers.



Pat refereed the 2008 Nancy Murray Cup final and numerous county championship deciders, as well as the recent Junior semi-final in Nowlan Park when Waterford beat Laois.

Pat's umpires are Michael McNabb, Vincie McErean, Malachy McToal and Derek McNabb. The line umpires are Alan Lagrue (Kildare, stand-by referee) and John O'Leary (Cork), while Julie O'Neill (Armagh) and Owen Elliott (Antrim) are the fourth and fifth officials.

UNDER-21 HURLING

CATHAL McALLISTER takes charge today of his third game in this season's Under-21 championships. He was the man-in-the-middle at the Munster semi-final between Clare and Limerick at Ennis and the Clare-Galway All-Ireland semi-final at Semple Stadium last month.

The Cork man is no stranger to All-Ireland finals. Early last year he was on duty in the All-Ireland Intermediate club final between Clonkill, Westmeath, and Tommy Larkins, Galway, and last September joined the ranks of All-Ireland



Minor referees at the Kilkenny-Galway decider.

McAllister has been on the inter-county panel since 2004 and has controlled games in the Allianz National League and at provincial championship level. His Senior inter-county programme this year included the Leinster semi-final between Dublin and Wexford at Nowlan Park in June.

Cathal won juvenile championships medals with Middleton, but is now a member of the Aghada club.

Gala All-Ireland Junior Camogie Championship TOP SCORERS

LEADING CHAMPIONSHIP SCORERS 2009

NAME	COUNTY	GOALS	POINTS	OVERALL TOTAL	FROM PLAY
KAREN KELLY	WATERFORD	4	12	24	4-7 (19)
AINE LYNG	WATERFORD	2	17	23	2-9 (15)
ELAINE DARMODY	OFFALY	1	15	18	0-8 (8)
SIOBHÁN FLANNERY	OFFALY	3	8	17	3-6 (15)
LOUISE MAHONY	LAOIS	0	14	14	0-5 (5)
ELIZABETH LYNCH	MEATH	2	7	13	2-6 (12)
AINE MAHONY	LAOIS	1	8	11	1-4 (7)
CATHERINE MCGOURTY	DOWN	0	10	10	0-2 (2)
KAREN NUGENT	OFFALY	1	7	10	1-7 (10)

OFFALY SCORERS

	1	2	3	4	TOTALS
ELAINE DARMODY	0-4	1-4	0-6	0-1	1-15
SIOBHÁN FLANNERY	0-1	1-2	2-1	0-4	3-8
KAREN NUGENT	—	0-1	1-4	0-2	1-7
MICHELLE DAVIS	—	—	1-5	0-1	1-6
MICHAELA MORKAN	0-2	0-1	—	0-6	0-9
AOIFE KELLY	—	0-1	0-2	0-1	0-4
AOIFE CORRIGAN	—	—	1-0	—	1-0
SHAUNA FLYNN	—	1-0	—	—	1-0
TINA HANNON	—	0-2	—	0-1	0-3
ARLENE WATKINS	—	0-1	0-2	—	0-3

WATERFORD SCORERS

	1	2	3	4	TOTALS
KAREN KELLY	1-3	1-4	2-3	0-2	4-12
AINE LYNG	1-3	0-4	1-5	0-5	2-17
PATRICIA JACKMAN	1-1	—	—	0-4	1-5
AINE BREATHNACH	—	—	2-1	—	2-1
NICOLA MORRISSEY	0-1	1-0	0-1	0-1	1-3
GRAINNE KENNEALLY	—	—	0-1	1-0	1-1
MAIREAD MURPHY	0-2	—	—	0-1	0-3
JENNY SIMPSON	0-1	—	—	—	0-1

Top Left: SIOBHÁN FLANNERY (Offaly)
Middle Left: KAREN KELLY (Waterford)
Bottom Left: AINE LYNG (Waterford)
Right: ELAINE DARMODY (Offaly).

(Waterford photo: Veronica Lyng)

IRELAND
JUNIOR
CHAMPIONSHIP

Gala All-Ireland Junior Championship - New Ireland Cup PATHS TO THE FINAL

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP 1 DETAILS

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP				
DATE	VENUE	RESULT		REFEREE
June 20	Kinnitty	Waterford.....	3-11 Offaly.....	0-07 Dermot Connolly
June 20	Clonduff	Down.....	4-16 Dublin.....	0-00 Julie O'Neill
July 11	Portmarnock	Offaly.....	3-12 Dublin.....	1-08 Alan Lagrue
July 18	Ashbourne	Waterford.....	2-08 Down.....	0-11 Donal Ryan
July 25	Newry	Offaly.....	5-20 Down.....	0-06 Una Kearney
July 25	Dunhill	Waterford.....	5-11 Dublin.....	0-04 Killian Looney

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP 2 DETAILS

DATE	VENUE	RESULT		REFEREE
June 20	Kiltale	Meath..... 2-11	Antrim..... 3-06	Alan Lagrue
July 4	Portlaoise	Laos..... 1-07	Meath..... 1-07	Morgan Conroy
July 25	Loughgiel	Antrim..... 2-09	Laos..... 2-09	Pat Walsh

GALA ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL DETAILS

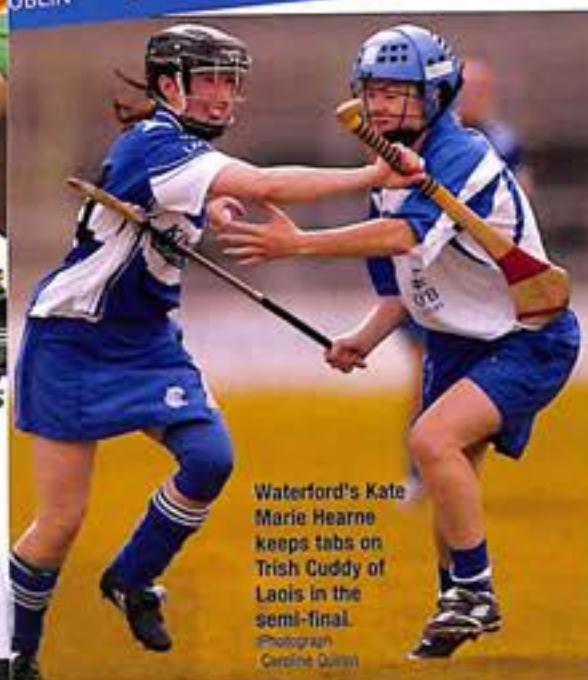
DATE	VENUE	RESULT		REFEREE	
Aug. 8	Nowlan Park	Waterford.....	1-13	Laos..... 1-07	Pat Walsh
Aug. 8	Nowlan Park	Offaly.....	0-16	Meath..... 1-08	Dermot Connolly

GROUP 1 TABLE

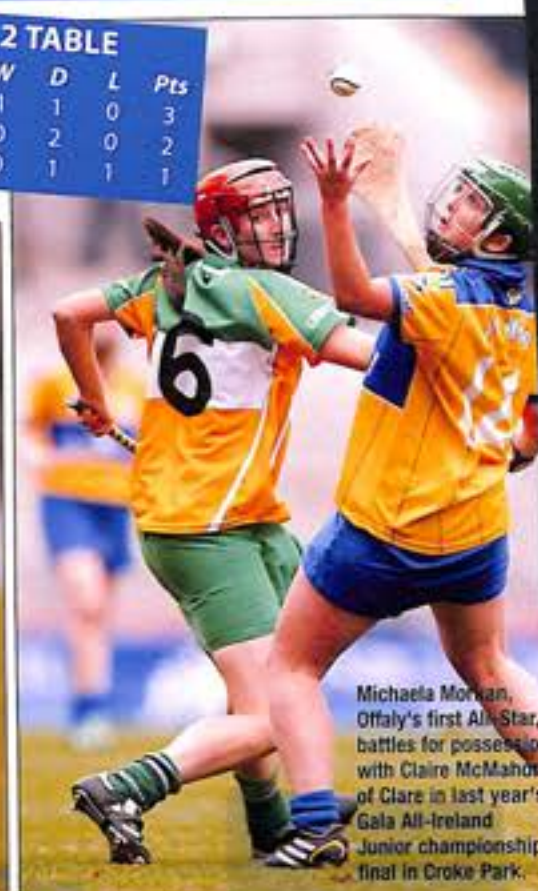
	P	W	D	L	Pts
WATERFORD	3	3	0	0	6
OFFALY	3	2	0	1	4
DOWN	3	1	0	2	2
DUBLIN	3	0	0	3	0

GROUP 2 TABLE

	P	W	D	L	Pts
MEATH	2	1	1	0	3
LAOIS	2	0	2	0	2
ANTRIM	2	0	1	1	1



Waterford's Kate Marie Hearn keeps tabs on Trish Cuddy of Laois in the semi-final.
Photograph: Caroline Quinn



Michaela Morkan, Offaly's first All-Star, battles for possession with Claire McMahon of Clare in last year's final in Croke Park.
Photograph: Caroline Quinn

IRELAND
JUNIOR
CHAMPIONSHIP

NICOLA MORRISSEY

Lismore
Age: 22.
Occupation: Primary School Teacher. A member of the Munster inter-provincial team, Nicola won two Munster Schools Intermediate medals in 2004 and 2005. On the county scene she collected National League honours in 2006 and '07 as well as provincial Junior and Intermediate titles. Holds county championships in Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior.



PATRICIA JACKMAN

Gaultier
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. A Poc Fada specialist, Patricia is the current All-Ireland holder in this discipline and also has four Waterford and Munster titles to her name. A former All-Ireland Féile skills champion, she has won All-Ireland Under-16, National League Division 2, Munster Junior and Intermediate medals with the county. A Munster Colleges winner, her club honours include All-Ireland sevens and county medals in Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and two Senior.



KAREN KELLY

St. Anne's
Age: 25.
Occupation: Teacher. The leading scorer in her side's impressive march to the final, Karen has won two National League medals, Munster titles in the Junior and Intermediate grades, as well as six Senior county championships with her club.



GRAINNE KENNEALLY

Lismore
Age: 22.
Occupation: Student. Grainne has represented her province in the Gael Linn and was awarded a Munster Third Level Bursary. Won National League Division 2 plus Munster Junior and Intermediate medals with Waterford, along with Under-18 championship and Senior League titles at club level. Played on the second level colleges inter-provincial team and won a Junior Munster medal with Presentation (Lismore) and two Intermediate titles with Blackwater Community School.



Technician. Aiding plays most of her camogie at corner-back or half-back and has won National League medals in 2006 and 2007. She also captured Munster Junior and Intermediate championship medals with the county.



AINE BREATHNACH

Butlerstown
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. Aine won an inter-provincial medal in 2008 and has also captured two National League medals with Waterford in 2006 and 2007. An All-Ireland Under-16 medal-winner, she is the proud holder of Munster Junior and Intermediate honours as well.



MARIE RUSSELL

Lismore
Age: 17.
Occupation: Student. Marie had the distinction of representing Waterford in Croke Park in camogie's Centenary Year of 2004. She has won Munster and All-Ireland Colleges medals in 2008 and 2009, and was an All-Ireland Féile finalist four years ago. Won a Munster Intermediate medal in 2009 and has played in All-Irelands in the Under-16 and Under-18 grades. Holds county medals in all grades from Under-12 to Junior.



AINE LYNG

Gaultier
Age: 21.
Occupation: Sport Science student. An honours-laden attacker, Aine has been nominated for an All-Star four times and has won Gael Linn medals with Munster in both Junior (as captain) and Senior. Won an All-Ireland medal with Mercy College and two Colleges All-Stars while playing for U.I. Holds National League, Under-16 All-Ireland, Munster Junior and Intermediate medals with Waterford. At club level she captured county medals in Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior (two), as well as an All-Ireland sevens title from 2007.



AISLING KELLY

Butlerstown
Age: 26. Occupation: Pharmaceutical

SHONA CURRAN

Lismore
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. Shona collected her first piece of silverware with Waterford earlier this year when they won the Munster Intermediate title. At club level she holds county medals in the Under-12, Under-14, Under-16 and Under-18 grades.



DEIRDRE FAHEY

An Rinn
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student Nurse. Deirdre featured on Waterford's All-Ireland final teams in Under-16 (2007) and Under-18 (2008 and '09). Represented Munster in the post primary inter-provincial series and has won three county Under-18 medals with



CAPTAINS' COMMENTS

SALLY O'GRADY (Waterford)

'We have prepared well and every player has given of her best all through the championship. We have an excellent team management and look forward to playing in Croke Park today. It is wonderful to be playing in an All-Ireland final and we want to bring glory to Waterford. Offaly were pipped at the post last year and we expect a very competitive game. Every team needs a little luck and I hope we get it today.'

MARION CREAN (Offaly)

'We were shattered last year when Clare beat us in the last minutes of the All-Ireland final. Since then all we wanted was to get the opportunity to get back into the final and win. Our team management led by Joachim Kelly are also very focused on success. Having played in Croke Park gives confidence and every player knows what she has to do to bring the cup back to the Faithful county.'

Team	Year	League	Points
1	2007	2008	2009
2	2008	2009	2010
3	2009	2010	2011
4	2010	2011	2012
5	2011	2012	2013
6	2012	2013	2014
7	2013	2014	2015
8	2014	2015	2016
9	2015	2016	2017
10	2016	2017	2018
11	2017	2018	2019
12	2018	2019	2020
13	2019	2020	2021
14	2020	2021	2022
15	2021	2022	2023
16	2022	2023	2024
17	2023	2024	2025
18	2024	2025	2026
19	2025	2026	2027
20	2026	2027	2028
21	2027	2028	2029
22	2028	2029	2030
23	2029	2030	2031
24	2030	2031	2032
25	2031	2032	2033
26	2032	2033	2034
27	2033	2034	2035
28	2034	2035	2036
29	2035	2036	2037
30	2036	2037	2038
31	2037	2038	2039
32	2038	2039	2040
33	2039	2040	2041
34	2040	2041	2042
35	2041	2042	2043
36	2042	2043	2044
37	2043	2044	2045
38	2044	2045	2046
39	2045	2046	2047
40	2046	2047	2048
41	2047	2048	2049
42	2048	2049	2050
43	2049	2050	2051
44	2050	2051	2052
45	2051	2052	2053
46	2052	2053	2054
47	2053	2054	2055
48	2054	2055	2056
49	2055	2056	2057
50	2056	2057	2058
51	2057	2058	2059
52	2058	2059	2060
53	2059	2060	2061
54	2060	2061	2062
55	2061	2062	2063
56	2062	2063	2064
57	2063	2064	2065
58	2064	2065	2066
59	2065	2066	2067
60	2066	2067	2068
61	2067	2068	2069
62	2068	2069	2070
63	2069	2070	2071
64	2070	2071	2072
65	2071	2072	2073
66	2072	2073	2074
67	2073	2074	2075
68	2074	2075	2076
69	2075	2076	2077
70	2076	2077	2078
71	2077	2078	2079
72	2078	2079	2080
73	2079	2080	2081
74	2080	2081	2082
75	2081	2082	2083
76	2082	2083	2084
77	2083	2084	2085
78	2084	2085	2086
79	2085	2086	2087
80	2086	2087	2088
81	2087	2088	2089
82	2088	2089	2090
83	2089	2090	2091
84	2090	2091	2092
85	2091	2092	2093
86	2092	2093	2094
87	2093	2094	2095
88	2094	2095	2096
89	2095	2096	2097
90	2096	2097	2098
91	2097	2098	2099
92	2098	2099	2100
93	2099	2100	2101
94	2100	2101	2102
95	2101	2102	2103
96	2102	2103	2104
97	2103	2104	2105
98	2104	2105	2106
99	2105	2106	2107
100	2106	2107	2108

PORT LAIRGE

Dathanna: BÀN agus GORM



Ashling O'Brien
A. Ní Bhriain
Lismore

Vicky Gaffney
V. Ní Ghamhna
Butlerstown

Sally O'Grady
S. Ní Ghráda (Capt.)
Gaultier

Kate Marie Hearne
C. M. Ní hEathirín
Butlerstown

Gráinne Kenneally
G. Ní Chinnolaigh
Lismore

Mary O'Donnell
M. Ní Dhónaill
An Rinn

Shauna Kiernan
S. Ní Thiarán
Lismore

Mairéad Murphy
M. Ní Mhurchú
St. Anne's

Charlotte Raher
C. Ní Reachair
St. Anne's

Shona Curran
S. Ní Chorráin
Lismore

Áine Lyng
Á. Ní Loinn
Gaultier

Nicola Morrissey
N. Ní Mhuileasa
Lismore

Patricia Jackman
P. Seac
Gaultier

Karen Kelly
C. Ní Cheallaigh
St. Anne's

Áine Breathnach
Á. Breathnach
Butlerstown

17 **JENNY SIMPSON**
S. Ní Shim
St. Anne's

20 **NIAMH RYAN**
N. Ní Riain
Lismore

23 **RACHEL WHELAN**
R. Ní Fhaoilín
Lismore

26 **LORRAINE WHELAN**
L. Ní Fhaoilín
An Rinn

18 **ASLING KELLY**
A. Ní Cheallaigh
Butlerstown

21 **LISA PRENDERGAST**
L. de Priondragas
An Rinn

24 **ROISIN HEYLIN**
R. Heylin
Butlerstown

27 **PAULINE CUNNINGHAM**
P. Ní Cuinneagáin
St. Anne's

19 **MARIE RUSSELL**
M. Ruiseil
Lismore

22 **AILEEN CUMMINS**
A. Ní Chomáin
Gaultier

25 **MARGO HEFFERNAN**
M. Ní hEathirín
Gaultier

28 **DEIRDRE FAHEY**
D. Ní Fhaoilín
An Rinn

IRELAND
LEAGUE
CHAMPIONSHIP
S

Port Láirge

PORT LAIRGE



Gala

Back (from left): Áine Lyng, Áine Breathnach, Shona Curran, Deirdre Fahey, Rachel Whelan, Niamh Ryan, Margo Heffernan, Charlotte Raher, Aisling O'Brien, Nicola Morrissey, Mairéad Murphy, Sally O'Grady (capt.), Shauna Kiernan, Pauline Cunningham, Karen Kelly, Lisa Prendergast, Lorraine Whelan. Front (from left): Roisín Heylin, Marie Russell, Jenny Simpson, Aileen Cummins, Kate Marie Hearne, Vicky Gaffney, Gráinne Kenneally, Patricia Jackman, Mary O'Donnell, Aisling Kelly.



ANDY MOLONEY
(Manager)

"It has been very easy to motivate this group of players, they are focused on improving and winning every game. We took over from Paul Lyng and his selectors who had laid a solid foundation. In any All-Ireland final, players have to deal with the occasion and treat it like any other game. They have given 100% and I hope that they do themselves justice today. Every player who has the privilege of playing in an All-Ireland final wants desperately to be successful."

- ANDY MOLONEY



NIALL DUNPHY - Selector



CAROLYN AHEARN - Selector



SHAY FITZPATRICK - Trainer

PORT LAIRGE



ASHLING O'BRIEN
Lismore

Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. Ashling represented Ireland in camogie/shinty in 2005 and has played with Munster in the Gael Linn and at colleges level. An All-Ireland runner-up in Féile na nGeal, she holds county medals in Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior as well as a Waterford Poc Fada title. Won a Munster Colleges Junior and two Senior titles as well as All-Ireland Under-16 and National League honours with Waterford.



VICKY GAFFNEY
Butlerstown

Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. A National League winner with Waterford in 2006 and 2007. Vicky has also won provincial medals in the Junior and Intermediate grades as well as an All-Ireland Under-16 title.



SALLY O'GRADY
Gaultier

Age: 25.
Occupation: Physiotherapist. Team captain Sally played for the Munster Junior team in 2007 and '08 and was nominated for an All Star two years ago. Captained the Waterford teams which won Division 2 of the National League in 2007 and this year's Munster Intermediate title. Has won county medals with Gaultier in 2006 (captain) and 2008.



KATE MARIE HEARNE
Butlerstown

Age: 25.
Occupation: Primary School Teacher. An inter-provincial medal-winner with Munster in 2004 and 2008, Kate Marie captured two Junior county titles with Tramore and has helped Waterford to Munster Junior and Intermediate honours.



JENNY SIMPSON
St. Anne's

Age: 22.
Occupation: Student. Jenny has had three good reasons to celebrate already this year as she won an Ashbourne Cup medal with W.L.T., helped her club to a county title, and was a member of the Munster-winning Waterford Intermediate team.



MARY O'DONNELL
An Rinn

Age: 27.
Occupation: Accountant. Mary is one of the best dual players ever to emerge in Waterford, winning Munster Junior and Intermediate camogie titles as well as club Junior championship and league honours. A Junior sevens victor in 2006 when she also earned the player of the tournament award. In football, she won four All Stars in 2000, 2002, 2003 and 2006, five Munster and one Senior All-Ireland, two Senior National Leagues, two Minor All-Irelands and four Under-16 All-Irelands.



SHAUNA KIERNAN
Lismore

Age: 17.
Occupation: Student. Shauna has featured in numerous finals in recent years, winning Munster and All-Ireland Colleges honours in 2008 and 2009. Played with Waterford in the All-Ireland finals at Under-16 (2007) and Under-18 (2008 and 2009), and won a Munster Intermediate title earlier this year. An All-Ireland Féile winner in 2006, she also holds county medals for Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Junior.



MAIRÉAD MURPHY
St. Anne's

Age: 25.
Occupation: TR Researcher. Mairéad represented Munster in 2008 and won an All-Ireland Colleges medal with Mercy Convent (Waterford) seven years ago. She has six Senior county titles to her name and has won two National League medals with the county.



CHARLOTTE RAHER
St. Anne's

Age: 21.
Occupation: Student Nurse. Charlotte won an Ashbourne medal with U.C.D. in 2008 and also received an N.C.A.A. camogie scholarship that year. Has represented Munster at Junior level and holds six Senior county medals with her club as well as All-Ireland Under-16 (2003) and two National League titles with her county.



her club. In football she won an Under-18 All-Ireland Shield title earlier this year and has a Munster post primary schools medal to her name as well as county honours.

AILEEN CUMMINS
Gaultier

Age: 24.
Occupation: Primary School Teacher. Aileen won an Ashbourne Shield with Mary Immaculate (Limerick) in 2005. Captured a Kilmacud Crokes sevens medal with her club as well as county titles in Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18, Junior and two Senior.



NIAMH RYAN
Lismore

Age: 23.
Occupation: Primary School Teacher. Niamh has won county titles in the Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior grades as well as a Munster Schools Intermediate medal. Her county honours include provincial Junior and Intermediate plus two National Leagues in 2006 and '07.



ROISIN HEYLIN
Butlerstown

Age: 21.
Occupation: Banking Official. Roisín won Munster and All-Ireland Under-16 medals with Waterford and went on to add two National League plus Munster Junior



Intermediate titles to her collection. At schools level she captured an All-Ireland plus two Munster medals.

RACHEL WHELAN
Lismore

Age: 16.
Occupation: Student. An All-Ireland winner with Blackwater Community School, Rachel has played with Waterford in All-Ireland Under-16 and Minor finals. Claimed Féile winners and runners-up medals as well as county Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Minor and Senior honours with her club.



MARGO HEFFERNAN
Gaultier

Age: 21.
Occupation: Physiotherapy Student. Margo won an All-Ireland sevens medal with her club as well as Senior championships in 2006 and 2008. Also claimed county honours in the Under-12, Under-14, Under-16 and Under-18 grades. Her father, Christy, will have a keen interest in all three of today's games as he gave sterling service to his native Kilkenny in the full-forward position.



LORRAINE WHELAN
An Rinn

Age: 23.
Occupation: Army Officer. A talented dual player, Lorraine has won Munster Junior



and Intermediate camogie honours with Waterford as well as a Junior county title with her club. She holds Munster and All-Ireland Under-18 ladies' football medals along with various county titles.

LISA PRENDERGAST
An Rinn

Age: 26.
Occupation: Garda. A sister of Waterford hurlers Seamus and Declan, Lisa won an Ashbourne Shield in 2007 and has Munster Junior and Intermediate medals plus two National Leagues in her collection. A county Junior camogie medal-winner, she is a capable dual player and has won ladies' football All-Irelands at Under-16 (two) and Under-18 (two) as well as numerous county medals.



PAULINE CUNNINGHAM
St. Anne's

Age: 22.
Occupation: Student. An Ashbourne Cup winner with W.L.T. earlier this year, Pauline was also awarded an N.C.A.A. camogie scholarship and added a Division 1 colleges league title for good measure. Played on the Ireland camogie/shinty team and won an All-Ireland Colleges 'B' medal in 2002 as well as two National Leagues with Waterford and seven county Senior medals with her club.

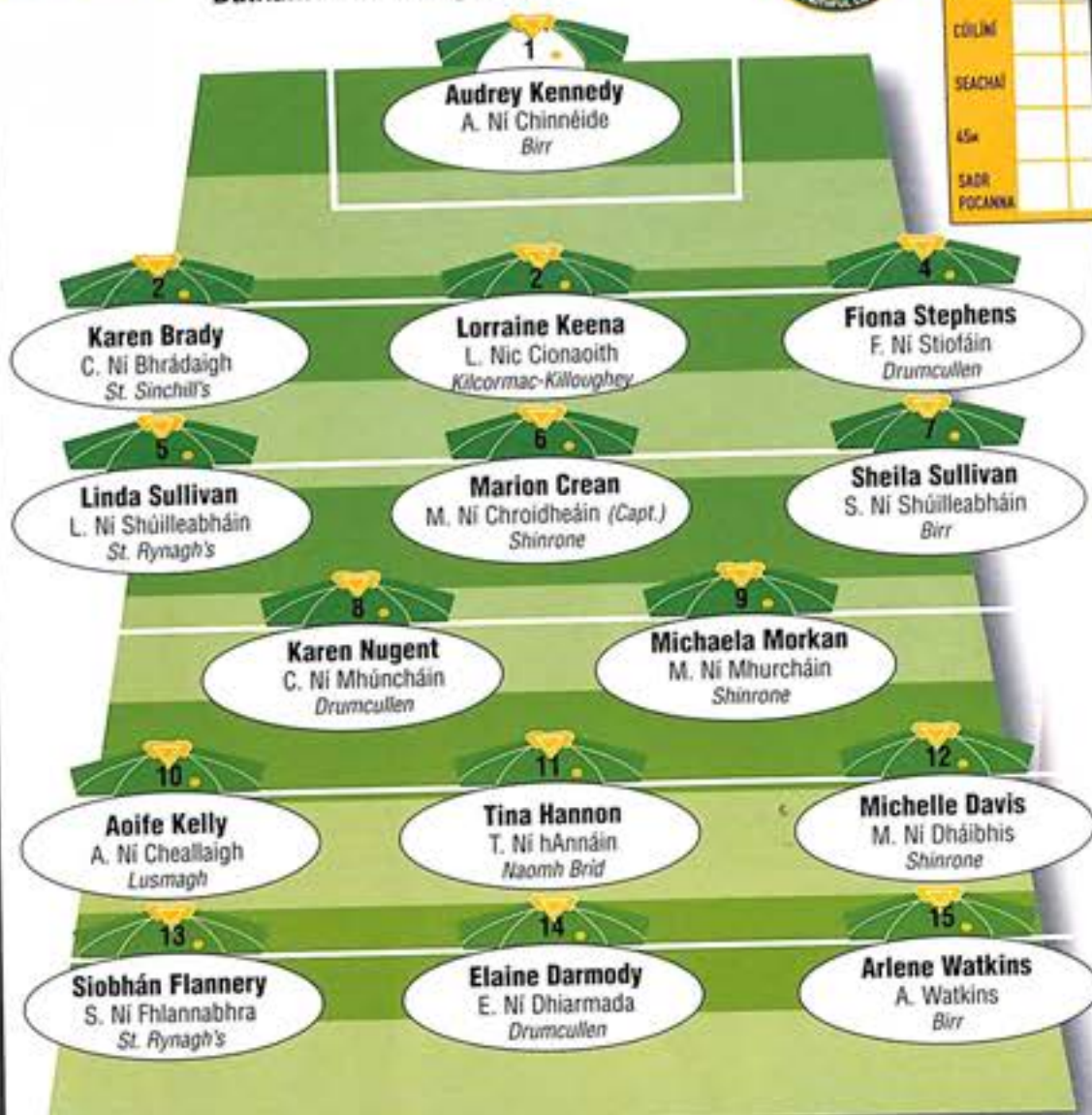


UÍBH FHÁILÍ

Dathanna: GLAS agus ÓR



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16 CLARE BIRMINGHAM C. Birmingham Lusmagh	19 EMMA FOGARTY E. Ní Fhógartaigh Kilcormac-Killoughy	22 LEANNE SCULLY L. Ní Scolai Kinnitty	25 AMIE DOOLEY A. Ní Dhálaigh Naomh Buid	28 ORLAGH KIRWAN O. Ní Chiarubháin Birr
17 JEAN BRADY S. Ní Bhrádaigh St. Sinchill's	20 ELAINE SULLIVAN E. Ní Shúilleabháin St. Rynagh's	23 KATIE BERGIN C. Ní Bheirgin Birr	26 DEBBIE FLYNN D. Ní Fálainn Kilcormac-Killoughy	29 ELEANOR CLENDENNEN E. Clendennen Kinnitty
18 AOIFE CORRIGAN A. Ní Chorráin Kinnitty	21 EMMA DUNNE E. Ní Dhoine Kilcormac-Killoughy	24 SHAUNA FLYNN S. Ní Fhlóinn Kilcormac-Killoughy	27 GRACE CLENDENNEN G. Clendennen Kinnitty	30 CLAIRE NEVIN C. Ní Cnáimhín Drumcullen

ROGHNOIRI: Joachim Kelly (Bainisteoir), Ger Fogarty, Catherine Byrne, Mark Corrigan.

UÍBH FHÁILÍ



AUDREY KENNEDY
Birr
Age: 31.
Occupation: Sports Therapist. Audrey has a total of seven Leinster medals in her collection - two with the county Junior team, one schools and four Junior club. Her brother, Brian Hennessy, won All-Ireland Minor and Senior hurling titles with Offaly. Favourite sportsperson: Roy Keane.



FIONA STEPHENS
Drumcullen
Age: 23.
Occupation: Student. A two-time Purcell Cup medal-winner with Athlone I.T., Fiona received sports scholarships for the 2006-'07 and 2007-'08 academic years. Freshers player of the year in 2006-'07, she holds six county and three Leinster championships with her club. Has made the transition from corner-forward, where she played in last year's All-Ireland final, to corner-back. Favourite sportsperson: Ken McGrath.



LORRAINE KEENA
Kilcormac-Killoughy
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. A Leinster and All-Ireland medal-winner in the Under-16 'B' grade with Offaly, Lorraine came off the bench in the 2008 Junior final. At club level she has won county titles in Under-16 (two), Under-18 (three) and Senior 'B'. Favourite sportsperson: Ken McGrath.



KAREN BRADY
St. Sinchill's
Age: 23. Occupation: Student. Karen also

donned the number four jersey in last year's narrow final defeat and was an Ashbourne Shield winner with U.I. in 2008. She won a Leinster Under-16 'B' championship with Offaly along with Under-12, Under-16 and Junior medals with her club. Favourite sportsperson: Brian Whelan.



SHEILA SULLIVAN
Birr
Age: 23.
Occupation: PE Teacher. A dependable defender who also played at right half-back last year against Clare. Won three Ashbourne Cups and one Ashbourne Shield with U.I., and has Leinster medals in Under-16 'B' and Junior as well as a National League title. Helped her club to three county Junior championships. Favourite sportsperson: J.J. Delaney.



MICHAELA MORKAN
Shinrone
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. Michaela became the county's first-ever All Star last year, having received a nomination in 2006. Won All-Ireland 'B' titles with Offaly in Under-16 (2005) and Under-18 (2008), as well as three Senior championships with her club. Attended Berrisokane Community College where she was female sportsperson of the year in 2008. Also Tipperary V.E.C. sportsperson of the year in 2007 and winner of Munster schools titles in the Junior, Intermediate and Senior grades. Favourite sportsperson: Ben O'Connor.



LINDA SULLIVAN
St. Rynagh's
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. A Leinster Under-16 championship medal-winner with Offaly, Linda played at left half-back in last year's Junior final. Won provincial Junior and Senior schools titles, adding All-Ireland honours in the latter grade. Favourite sportsperson: Brian Whelan.



KAREN NUGENT
Drumcullen
Age: 26.
Occupation: Clerical Officer H.S.E. A Féile na nGael winner in 1996, five years later Karen won an Ashbourne Cup title with U.I. Has won Leinster Under-14 and Under-18 championships with Offaly and on the club scene she has captured eight county and four Leinster titles plus an All-Ireland sevens medal. Favourite sportsperson: Henry Shefflin.



MARION CREAN
Shinrone
Age: 27.
Occupation: Primary School Teacher. An all-action midfielder, Marion leads her team into battle on All-Ireland final day for the second year running, having also played in the 2001 decider. Has won two Leinster championships as well as county titles in the Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior grades. Favourite sportsperson: Henry Shefflin.



MICHELLE DAVIS
Shinrone
Age: 37. Occupation: Sales Representative.



Uíbh Fháilí



Back (from left): Elaine Darmody, Tina Hannon, Grace Clendennen, Orlagh Kirwan, Claire Bermingham, Michaela Morkan, Audrey Kennedy, Aoife Kelly, Sheila Sullivan, Marion Crean (capt.), Katie Bergin, Eleanor Clendennen, Karen Brady, Emma Fogarty, Amie Dooley, Emma Dunne, Leanne Scully, Shauna Flynn. Front (from left): Aoife Corrigan, Claire Nevin, Debbie Flynn, Fiona Stephens, Arlene Watkins, Karen Nugent, Jean Brady, Michelle Davis, Siobhán Flannery, Linda Sullivan, Lorraine Keena, Elaine Sullivan.



JOACHIM KELLY
(Manager)

"It's an All-Ireland final and they are hard won; whoever wants it most will win. The experience of playing in Croke Park last year and learning from defeat in the dying seconds is vitally important today. Waterford are a good team but we are only worried about our own game and if we get it right on the day we will win. Winning an All-Ireland is not everything, it's the only thing!"

- JOACHIM KELLY



GER FOGARTY - Selector



CATHERINE BYRNE - Selector



MARK CORRIGAN - Selector

CHAMPIONSHIP

A tremendous servant of camogie in Offaly, Michelle is playing in her third All-Ireland Junior

final today. A Gael Linn medal-winner with Leinster, she holds three Offaly camogie sportstar awards and one Roscrea sportstar award. Helped her club to Junior, two Senior and Leinster titles, and was the millennium player of the year in Roscrea Vocational School. Has won All-Ireland Vocational Schools medals as well as two Leinster championships with Offaly. Favourite sportsperson: Tony Browne.



ELAINE DARMODY
Drumcullen
Age: 27.
Occupation: FBD Insurance employee. The versatile Elaine has made the switch from full-back last year to attack this season, and captained the county on their first All-Ireland final appearance in 2001. Has won Under-18 and two Leinster Junior championships, along with eight county and four provincial medals with her club. Favourite sportsperson: Joe Deane.



AOIFE KELLY
Lusmagh
Age: 23.
Occupation: PE Teacher. The U.I. captain in the All-Ireland sevens finals of 2004-'05, Aoife played at right corner-back last year and is now posted in the half-forward line. An All-Ireland Senior 'B' schools titleholder, she has won Under-18 and Junior county titles with her club. Her father, Joachim, is team manager and a former star midfielder with Offaly. Favourite sportsperson: Eddie Brennan.



TINA HANNON
Naomh Buid
Age: 22. Occupation: Student Nurse. An Ashbourne Shield medal-winner with U.I. in 2008, Tina scored four points from play in last year's All-Ireland Junior final when she

lined out at centre-forward. Has won Junior and Senior 'B' medals with her club. Favourite sportsperson: Tommy Walsh.



SIOBHÁN FLANNERY
St. Rynagh's
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. The Offaly Senior camogie sportstar of 2009, Siobhán was a young player of the year nominee in 2005. Player of the match in the All-Ireland Under-18 'B' final success last year, she also won an Under-16 'B' title in 2005. Won a Leinster Under-14 medal with Offaly and two Under-16 championships with her club. Favourite sportsperson: David Kenny.



ARLENE WATKINS
Birr
Age: 20.
Occupation: Dental Nurse. Arlene fulfilled a lifelong ambition by getting to play in Croke Park in last year's final. Has played with the county since 2005 and won two Purcell Cup medals with Athlone I.T. in 2007 and 2009. Was also honoured as Senior camogie player of the year in 2009. Favourite sportsperson: Henry Shefflin.



CLAIRE BIRMINGHAM
Lusmagh
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. Claire's father, Brendan, was centre-forward on the All-Ireland winning Offaly Senior hurling teams of 1981 and 1985. A Leinster and All-Ireland Under-16 'B' medal-winner with Offaly, she captured a provincial Under-14 title at schools level and has won Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Junior championships with her club. Favourite sportsperson: Henry Shefflin.



AOIFE CORRIGAN
Kinnitty
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. Aoife's first visit to Croke Park as a player came in the mini-sevens, and she has won two Leinster championships with St. Brendan's C.C. Captured a provincial Under-14 title with Offaly and went all the way to All-Ireland glory at Under-16 level. Has helped her club to five under-age county championships. Her father, Mark, is a selector today and an All-Ireland hurling medal-winner with Offaly. Favourite sportsperson: Jeanette Feighery.



ELAINE SULLIVAN
St. Rynagh's
Age: 21.
Occupation: Veterinary Nurse. An All-Ireland Senior 'B' schools medal-winner with St. Rynagh's C.C., Elaine also won Leinster titles in the Senior and Junior grades. Her club honours include Under-16, Under-18 and Junior county championships. Favourite sportsperson: Eoin Kelly (Tipperary).



SHAUNA FLYNN
Kilcormac-Killoughy
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. An All-Ireland Féile runner-up, Shauna won a Leinster Under-14 medal with Offaly and added provincial and All-Ireland Under-18 'B' honours last year. At club level she holds county titles in Under-14 (two), Under-16 (three), Under-18 (two) and one Senior 'B'. Favourite sportsperson: Brian Whelan.



AMIE DOOLEY
Naomh Buid
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. A Leinster and All-Ireland



winner with Offaly in 2005. She won a Roscrea and District Sports Star award for camogie later that year. Senior player of the year in Coláiste Phobal (Roscrea) in 2006, she has won championship medals down through the years with her school, her club Naomh Bríd, and the Coolderry boys' team. Favourite sportsperson: Brian Whelan, Tommy Walsh and Cristiano Ronaldo.

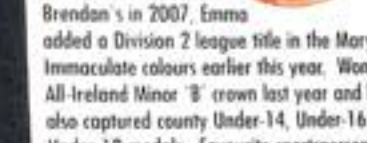
DEBBIE FLYNN
Kilcormac-Killoughby
Age: 14
Occupation: Student. An All-Ireland Community Games gold and bronze medal-winner. Debbie is the youngest panel member from the four finalists today. Has won three Leinster Under-14 championships as well as Under-10, Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior 'B' medals with her club. Favourite sportsperson: Shane McGrath.



EMMA DUNNE
Kilcormac-Killoughby
Age: 19
Occupation: Student. A Leinster Schools medal-winner with St. Brendan's in 2007. Emma added a Division 2 league title in the Mary Immaculate colours earlier this year. Won an All-Ireland Minor 'B' crown last year and has also captured county Under-14, Under-16 and Under-18 medals. Favourite sportsperson: Derval O'Rourke.



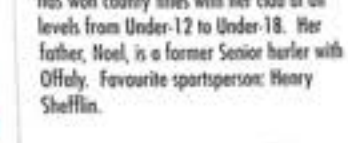
GRACE CLENDENNEN
Kinnitty
Age: 22
Occupation: Student. Grace has Munster and All-Ireland Colleges runners-up medals in her collection along with three Féile na nGael titles and county Under-12, Under-14, Under-16, Under-18 and Senior 'B' honours. Favourite sportsperson: Gilvan Dempsey and Patricia Barry.



LEANNE SCULLY
Kinnitty
Age: 19
Occupation: Student. Leanne appeared in four Féile na nGael finals and has a Leinster schools medal to her name. Won provincial medals with Offaly in Under-14 and Under-16 (two), adding an All-Ireland title in the latter grade. Helped her club to county Under-12, Under-14 and Under-16 titles. Favourite sportsperson: Ken McGrath.



KATIE BERGIN
Birr
Age: 20
Occupation: Student. An All-Ireland Féile runner-up and Leinster championship winner from 2007, Katie has won county titles with her club at all levels from Under-12 to Under-18. Her father, Noel, is a former Senior hurler with Offaly. Favourite sportsperson: Henry Shefflin.



JEAN BRADY
St. Sincill's
Age: 18
Occupation: Student. An All-Ireland Under-18 'B' medal-winner last year, Jean came off the bench in the Junior final loss to Clare. Won a Leinster Under-14 medal with Offaly, county titles with her club in all grades from Under-10 to Under-16, as well as Cumann na mBunscoil and mini-sevens honours. She was an All-Ireland finalist with Sacred Heart School and captured three county championships and two Leisters. Favourite sportsperson: Johnny Dooley.



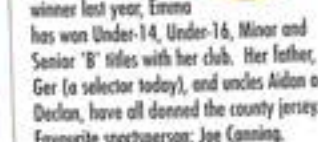
ORLAGH KIRWAN
Birr
Age: 16
Occupation: Student. The Offaly Under-16 camogie sportsperson of 2009, Orlagh holds



an All-Ireland bronze medal from Community Games. Won two Leinster Under-14 championships, three provincial schools titles and club honours in the Under-14, Under-16 and Under-18 grades. Her father, Paddy, gave distinguished service to Offaly and was a key forward in their breakthrough All-Ireland year of 1981. Favourite sportsperson: Elaine Dermody.



EMMA FOGARTY
Kilcormac-Killoughby
Age: 18
Occupation: Student. An Under-18 All-Ireland 'B' medal-winner last year, Emma has won Under-14, Under-16, Minor and Senior 'B' titles with her club. Her father, Ger (a selector today), and uncles Aidan and Declan, have all donned the county jersey. Favourite sportsperson: Joe Canning.



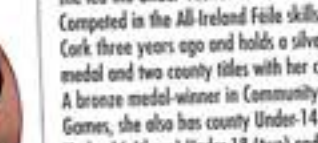
ELEANOR CLENDENNEN
Kinnitty
Age: 17
Occupation: Student. A Munster Colleges medal-winner, Eleanor has won four Féile na nGael titles as well as Under-14, Under-16, Under-18, Junior and Senior 'B' honours with her club.



CLAIRE NEVIN
Drumcullen
Age: 16
Occupation: Student. Claire captained the Offaly Under-14 team to Leinster success in 2006 and went one better last year when she led the Under-16s to the All-Ireland title. Competed in the All-Ireland Féile skills in Cork three years ago and holds a silver Féile medal and two county titles with her club. A bronze medal-winner in Community Games, she also has county Under-14 (three), Under-16 (three) Under-18 (two) and Senior 'B' county titles. Favourite sportsperson: Angela Downey.



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JOACHIM HOPES FRESH HISTORY WILL BE WRITTEN

By: JACKIE CAHILL

JOACHIM KELLY stares out across the lush Croke Park turf and ponders on past glories.

This afternoon, Kelly's beloved Offaly can write some fresh history by annexing the Gala All-Ireland Junior camogie title.

Victory would make up for last year's heartbreaking final reverse against Clare and allow Kelly to step aside, satisfied.

The two-time All-Ireland Senior hurling medallist and double All Star has hinted that his tenure will end after today's game, and he wants the New Ireland Cup as a lasting souvenir.

Offaly were within touching distance twelve months ago before Shonagh Enright struck a winning goal in stoppage time to clinch a dramatic win for the Banner county.

'It took us a long time to get that out of our systems and Waterford hammered us in June. It's great to get back here and we'll leave no stone unturned,' Kelly vowed.

It's Kelly's second year at the helm and he insisted: 'That's enough for any manager. There's only so much you can do with a team but we won't be making any decisions until Sunday'.

Few would begrudge Kelly the success he and the team craves. They left Croke Park last year devastated, but Clare had felt that way too, having lost three finals in the previous five seasons.

So, if the old adage that you have to lose one to win one holds true, the Faithful county will be celebrating tonight.

Kelly reflected: 'We'll have the experience of last year. Nerves never got to them. Twelve of them hurled well and



didn't let the occasion affect them.

'I'm looking across the pitch here and it's absolutely beautiful. If you can't hurl on it, you can forget about it, but Waterford won't mind either coming out here and getting a chance of winning an All-Ireland.'

Slowly, the wounds of last September healed, but Kelly is anxious to see the team progress quickly.

'Winning would mean everything and it's such a hard group to get out of, this Junior championship. Offaly would be well able to compete at Intermediate level and they'll get out of Junior eventually, whether it's this year, next year or the year after.'

On June 20th last, Offaly's 2009 Junior championship campaign started with a 3-11 to 0-7 defeat against today's final opponents.

Kelly's charges bounced back with comfortable victories over Dublin and Down to set up a semi-final meeting with Meath.

'That was a dour, dogged game,' Kelly recalled. 'Meath were tough and physical, like their footballers, and we didn't perform that well compared to the Down game.'

Offaly produced their best performance of the season against the Ulster outfit in

Newry, racking up 5-20. 'The pitch (Páirc Esler) was beautiful, it was a lovely day and we got off to a great start,' Kelly explained.

'The girls expressed themselves and the game was all over at half-time. I was expecting a fierce hard game and the margin of victory surprised me.'

Today, Offaly have the chance to exact revenge for that 13-point defeat against Waterford 12 weeks ago.

Kelly remarked: 'We have just one or two positional switches since that game. They wanted revenge for Cashel.'

'I remember hearing them (Waterford) in the warm-up - "remember Cashel" - that's where we beat them last year. They were well motivated in the first round but we weren't well prepared in the warm-up or anything and they beat us well.'

'We were at Kinnitty, a home venue for us, and we had no excuses on a warm day. We should have performed better and had a good few below par.'

Kelly, now retired from the Garda training college in Templemore, was first persuaded to get involved with the Offaly team by daughter Aoife in November, 2007.

He recalled: 'I knew from going to matches that there was the nucleus of a good team there, and I brought in Mark Corrigan, Ger Fogarty and Catherine Byrne.'

'We worked an awful lot on hurling skills, attitude and work-rate. I felt confident going into last year's final, especially after losing to Clare by just a goal in Ennis.'

'I felt we could take them the next day and again next Sunday, we'll be underdogs. I'm not as confident this Sunday as I was last year; I'm anticipating a very close game.'

CAMOGIE CHAMPIONSHIP FINALS

MANAGER ANDY ADOPTS ATTACKING MINDSET

By: JACKIE CAHILL

WATERFORD manager Andy Moloney has insisted that opponents Offaly are favourites for this afternoon's Gala All-Ireland Junior camogie championship final.

Waterford defeated Offaly by 13 points on June 20th, but Moloney still believes that Joachim Kelly's team hold the aces ahead of an eagerly-awaited Croke Park decider.

Former Tipperary and Waterford Senior hurler Moloney said: 'Offaly are going to be favourites going into this game.'

'They'll want to prove that our win in Kinnitty was a freak result and they lost the All-Ireland final last year. They say that you have to lose one to win one, but our motivation is that we're unbeaten all year and there's no point in standing back and admiring them. We hope to match them stride by stride.'

Waterford's experience of Croke Park is limited compared to opponents Offaly, although Mary O'Donnell has graced the hallowed sod in the past with the county's ladies' footballers.

But Cahir native Moloney is confident that his players can adapt quickly to All-Ireland final day and all that it entails.

He said: 'We did have a walk through the ground a couple of weeks ago. The girls walked on the field, into the dressing-rooms and got a feel for the place.'

'We had a chat with them about the "wow" factor and how players can be distracted from the real job. The key is to strip away the strands and just look on it as an ordinary playing field.'

Moloney decided to take the Waterford job on a full-time basis this season, having helped out with clubmate and former boss Paul Lyng in recent years.

The 32-year-old brought in a fitness coach, Shay Fitzpatrick, and Ballygunner's Gordon Ryan as sports psychologist this year to beef up the backroom team.

Niall Dunphy came in as selector and Carolyn Abearn was the final piece of the jigsaw, an important female influence on the other side of the whitewash.

Having lost in four previous semi-finals, Waterford finally

got over the line this year to reach the showpiece decider and in some style too, with a 1-13 to 1-7 victory over Laois.

Moloney reflected: 'We won by six points but we were hanging on at the finish. It was a psychological barrier and Gordon would be involved in one-to-one and group sessions with the girls.'

'He's very pro-active and won an All-Ireland Junior medal with Kilkenny during his playing days.'

'I felt we were in with a shot the minute we took over. We played a good few challenge games and in the league, we beat Cork by nine points in Cork.'

'We won the Munster Intermediate championship and were beaten by a just a point against Cork's Seniors. That said, Cork weren't playing their full team but our girls were unbelievable.'

'We knew we weren't far away and played Offaly in the first round. They beat Waterford by 13 points last year and we beat them by 13 this time.'

'I'd put that result down to the fact that the girls wanted to prove a point, but whatever has happened in the past counts for nothing in the final,' Moloney stressed.

Moloney admitted that his mindset was defensive in the Laois semi-final, explaining: 'The girls were nervous and we were a little negative on the line.'

'We played a defensive game and let Laois attack in the second-half instead of sticking 15 v. 15. The win was the most important thing after the crushing defeats in the last couple of years.'

'Our mindset now is to go and attack the final. We have one chance and that's it; all bets are off.'

'There's no point in just turning up, the girls played Offaly before and know a good bit about them but Offaly will have a bee in their bonnet after that game in Kinnitty.'

Moloney is certainly glad now that he took the plunge, and victory today would represent sweet reward for the huge amount of work put in since last November.

He reflected: 'I was involved with Paul Lyng with the under-age in Ballygunner. His daughter, Aine, was playing with the Ballygunner boys' team and she grew up to become a camogie player.'

'Paul asked me would I give a hand with some of the sessions. I could see the potential but because I was still playing at a high level, I felt that I didn't have the time to give, even though I'm still hurling Senior with Ballygunner now!'

Aoife KELLY (Offaly)

- Q Biggest influence on your career
A My Dad! We both share a passion for sport, and camogie was always encouraged in our house. We do have the odd dispute over sport every now and again though!
- Q Achievement you treasure most
A I climbed a glacier in New Zealand this year which I'm proud of. However, I would have to say that winning the All-Ireland Senior camogie final in my final year in St. Rynagh's Community College, Banagher, is the achievement I treasure most.
- Q Funniest player on panel and why?
A Tina Hannon, our speedy forward - she is always game for a laugh and is no stranger to the dance floor!
- Q If a transfer market was in place what player would you buy?
A Jane Adams from Antrim.
- Q Book you enjoyed most
A Any book by Irish author Marian Keyes.
- Q Film you enjoyed most
A Walk The Line - I am No. 1 Johnny Cash fan!
- Q Fantasy date
A Hmm, Gerard Butler, funny and so hot!!!
- Q If you were marooned on a desert island, what three things would you take with you?
A 1) A big food hamper (I wouldn't be the best hunter or scavenger); 2) Sun cream; 3) A box of flares.
- Q Guest at All Stars 2009
A Any one of the following would do, I am not that fussy!! - Josh Hartnett, Ashton Kutcher or Matthew McConaughey.
- Q Three sports people you admire most
A 1) Henry Shefflin; 2) Joe Canning; 3) Roger Federer.
- Q A talent you have that people are not aware of
A I can play a tune on the recorder
- Q Three words to describe yourself
A 1) Friendly; 2) Sociable; 3) Outgoing.



Aine LYNG (Waterford)

- Q Biggest influence on your career
A My Da and Ma, and family.....they put a hurl in my hand to begin with; have played my toughest matches in the back garden in New Ross against them and they are my biggest support!
- Q Achievement you treasure most
A Hard to choose one; county champions in 2006 with Gaultier was special as it was my first Senior county medal. Winning All-Ireland titles with Our Lady of Mercy Secondary School and the Under-16 'B' county All-Ireland stand out too, as well as winning the National League title with Waterford in 2007. I could go on, have been lucky to play with many successful teams.
- Q Funniest player on panel and why?
A Hard one to call! There's been a few classic comments from Róisín Heylin and Aine Breathnach, as well as Shona Curran's stories, Vicky Gaffney's questions, Gráinne Kenneally's random facts and Shay Fitzpatrick's time-keeping in training: 'Double speed', '20 seconds recovery girls...1, 2, 10, 20, go!'
- Q If a transfer market was in place what player would you buy?
A Does Henry Shefflin count?
- Q Book you enjoyed most
A Recently read Malcolm Gladwell's 'Outliers' which was good.
- Q Film you enjoyed most
A Madagascar 2, Airplane.
- Q Fantasy date
A September 13th!!
- Q If you were marooned on a desert island, what three things would you take with you?
A 1) Hurl; 2) Surf board; 3) A supply of Mammy Lyng's dinners.
- Q Guest at All Stars 2009
A Eddie O'Sullivan.
- Q Three sports people you admire most
A 1) Stephen Frampton; 2) Pádraic Bonner; 3) Paula Radcliffe.
- Q A talent you have that people are not aware of
A I can change an ambulance's gear box!
- Q Three words to describe yourself
A 1) Energetic; 2) Happy; 3) Determined



CORCAIGH

Dathanna: DEARG agus BÁN



LEAGUE
CORK
CORK
SEACH
AS
SAR
POCANN

1
Aoife Murray
A. Ni Mhuiri
Cloughduv

2
Joanne O'Callaghan
S. Ni Cheallacháin
Cloughduv

3
Cathriona Foley
C. Ni Fhoghlú
Rockbáin

4
Rena Buckley
R. Ni Bhuachalla
Inniscarra

5
Jenny Duffy
S. Ni Dhufáigh
St. Finbarr's

6
Mary O'Connor
M. Ni Chonchúir
Killeagh

7
Sara Hayes
S. Ni Aodha
Courcy Rovers

8
Briege Corkery
B. Ni Chorcra
Cloughduv

9
Orla Cotter
O. Nic Coltúir
St. Catherine's

10
Eimear O'Sullivan
E. Ni Shuilleabháin
Ballinhassig

11
Gemma O'Connor
G. Ni Chonchúir
St. Finbarr's

12
Una O'Donoghue
Ú. Ni Dhoonchú
Cloughduv

13
Sile Burns
S. Ni Bhroin
Rockbáin

14
Emer O'Farrell
E. Ni Fhearrail
Sarsfields

15
Rachel Moloney
R. Ni Mhaolomhnaigh
Courcy Rovers

16 EIMEAR WHITE E. de Faite Barryroe	19 PAMELA MACKAY P. Ni Mhaca Douglas	22 ELAINE O'RIORDAN E. Ni Riordáin Milford	25 JULIA WHITE S. de Faite Douglas	28 CHRISTINE O'NEILL C. Ni Neill Courcy Rovers
17 LYNDA O'CONNELL L. Ni Chonacháin St. Finbarr's	20 ANNA GEARY A. Ni Ghadhra Milford	23 DENISE CRONIN D. Ni Chroinin Ballincellig	26 KATRIONA MACKAY K. Ni Mhaca Douglas	29 MICHELLE BROWNE M. de Brún Mallow
18 AMANDA O'REGAN A. Ni Riagáin (Capt.) Douglas	21 LUCY HAWKES L. Hawkes Valley Rovers	24 EMER DILLON E. Ni Dhioláin Ballygarvan	27 MARIAN MURPHY M. Ni Mhurchú Kilbrittain	30 JENNIFER LYNCH J. Ni Loingsigh Tracton

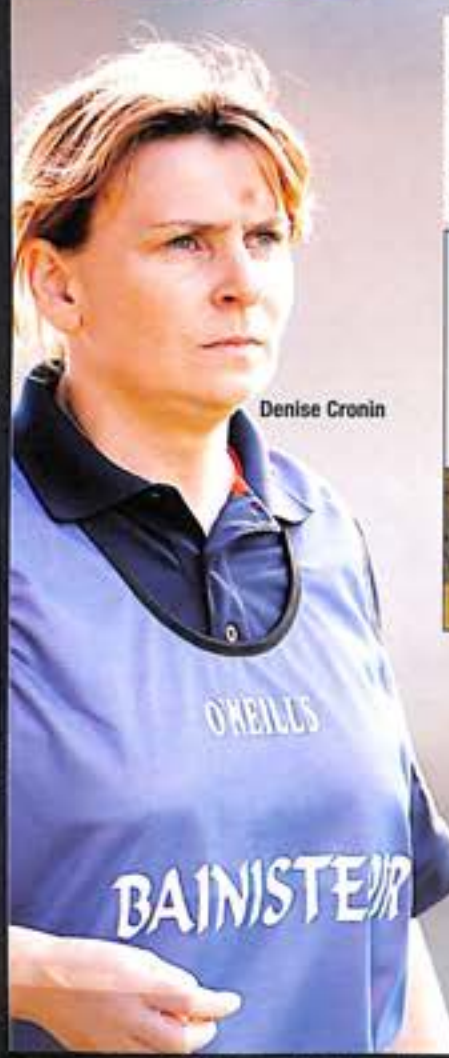
ROGHNOIRI: Denise Cronin, Glen Rovers (Bainisteoir), Lillian Zinkant, Sarsfields, Michael O'Regan, Douglas, Traenitail, Frank Flannery, Carrigrohilly

Corcaigh



Gala

Back (from left): Elaine O'Riordan, Marian Murphy, Jennifer Lynch, Christine O'Neill, Julia White, Denise Cronin, Anna Geary, Katrina Mackey, Michelle Browne, Eimear White, Pamela Mackey. Middle (from left): Emer O'Farrell, Lucy Hawkes, Cathriona Foley, Rena Buckley, Eimear O'Sullivan, Lynda O'Connell, Sile Burns, Orla Cotter, Gemma O'Connor, Jenny Duffy, Aoife Murray. Front (from left): Mary O'Connor, Briege Corkery, Rachel Moloney, Una O'Donoghue, Amanda O'Regan (capt.), Sara Hayes, Emer Dillon, Joanne O'Callaghan, Orla O'Sullivan.



CORK MANAGEMENT TEAM:
DENISE CRONIN
(Manager)
Selectors:
LILLIAN ZINKANT
MICHAEL O'REGAN
Trainer:
FRANK FLANNERY



CORCAIGH



AOIFE MURRAY
Cloughduv
Age: 25.
Occupation: Quantity Surveyor. Aoife has Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior All-Ireland medals as well as Munster championship honours in all grades. Won three county Senior championship medals with Cloughduv and was captain in 2005 for their third county title. Sister of former Cork Senior hurler, Kevin Murray, who won an All-Ireland medal in 1999. Aoife won an All Star award in 2004.



RENA BUCKLEY
Inniscarra
Age: 22.
Occupation: Physiotherapist. The holder of All-Ireland Senior, National League and provincial medals in camogie and ladies' football, Rena has also won All-Ireland Minor honours as well as Intermediate and Junior Munster championships. She is in her fifth year on the Senior team, was selected on the Colleges centenary All Star team and is also a dual All Star. She was The Corkman/Springfort Hall sports person of the year in 2006.



JOANNE O'CALLAGHAN
Cloughduv
Age: 26. Occupation: Business Development Representative. Captained Cork to the All-Ireland title in 2006 and is in her eighth season on the Senior team. She also has Minor and Intermediate All-Ireland championship medals to her credit as well as Ashbourne Cup and Gael Linn honours. Holds three county Senior championship medals with her club, Cloughduv.



JENNY DUFFY
St. Finbarr's
Age: 26.
Occupation: Camogie Development Officer. A former student at C.I.T., Jenny is the Camogie Regional Development officer in South Leinster. She is the holder of All-Ireland championship and league medals with C.I.T. as well as Senior and Junior All-Ireland championship medals and National League. Won a Senior county championship with her club and captained C.I.T. to the Ashbourne Shield title in 2006.



CATHRIONA FOLEY
Rockbáin
Age: 22.
Occupation: Student. Cathriona captained Cork to the All-Ireland Senior title last year and is also the holder of an All-Ireland Minor medal as well as provincial honours at Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior. Holds a Junior 'B' county championship medal with her club and won a Senior championship title with divisional side Muskerry. Her father, Dan Joe, won All-Ireland Minor and Under-21 honours. Is the holder of All Star awards and has lined out with U.C.C. in the Ashbourne Cup. Sisters Mairead and Colleen were the Cork colours at under-age level.



MARY O'CONNOR
Killeagh
Age: 32.
Occupation: Director of Camogie Development. Mary is also a well-known footballer and has played a big part in helping the ladies to win the last four All-Ireland titles. Holds six Senior All-Ireland and National League camogie medals as well as county, provincial and All-Ireland club medals with Granagh-Ballingarry whom she played with while studying and working in Limerick. Was the overall winner of the 96/103fm Rochestown Park Hotel award following her performances in the All-Ireland



and National League finals in 2006. Holds All Star awards in camogie and football, captained Cork to the National Football League title this year, and is hoping to lead them to a fifth successive All-Ireland crown in a fortnight.

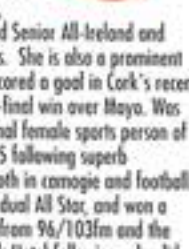
SARA HAYES
Courcy Rovers
Age: 27.
Occupation: Laboratory Analyst. It has been a very busy few weeks for Sara as she got married since the semi-final. She is the holder of All-Ireland Minor and Senior medals as well as Ashbourne Cup with U.C.C. and Senior 'B' championship with her club. Has also won National League and inter-provincial honours.



BRIEGE CORKERY
Cloughduv
Age: 22.
Occupation: Stone Mason. Briege is the holder of three county Senior championship medals as well as Minor, Intermediate and Senior All-Ireland and Munster honours. She is also a prominent footballer and scored a goal in Cork's recent All-Ireland semi-final win over Mayo. Was named as national female sports person of the year in 2005 following superb performances both in camogie and football. Briege is also a dual All Star, and won a monthly award from 96/103fm and the Rochestown Park Hotel following splendid displays in 2008.



ORLA COTTER
St. Catherine's
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. Captained the Cork Minor team in 2006, having won an All-Ireland Under-16 medal three years earlier. Has won two Senior All-Ireland medals and made history in 2006



when she became the first player to collect Senior and Senior 'B' honours in the same year. Orla holds titles with her club from Under-14 to Junior as well as All-Ireland Junior Colleges honours and Senior and Junior National League medals. Orla won an All Star award in 2008, and her sister, Finola, was on the Cork Under-16 team last year.

EMER DILLON
Ballygarvan
Age: 25.
Occupation: Pharmacist. Emer was selected as player of the match in the 2005 All-Ireland Senior final. She is also a prominent hockey player and has represented both Munster and Ireland. Holds a Senior county championship medal with Carrigrohilly and also Junior and under-age championship honours with Ballygarvan. Won All-Ireland Senior, Intermediate and Minor medals as well as inter-provincial honours and All Star awards. Didn't participate in last season's championship due to study.



GEMMA O'CONNOR
St. Finbarr's
Age: 24.
Occupation: Member of Defence Forces. Gemma captained the Cork Seniors in 2007, and has the distinction of being chosen on every All Star team since the inaugural year in 2004. She is the holder of All-Ireland Minor and Senior championship honours along with National League Senior and Junior medals. Represented Cork in the Féile na nGael skills in 1998 and was camogie player of the year in 2005, as well as winning one Senior county title. Her brother, Glen, lined out with Cork in this year's National League while her uncle, Bill Goanney, captained the Rebels to All-Ireland Under-21 honours.



UNA O'DONOGHUE
Cloughduv
Age: 27. Occupation: Food Analyst. Una captained Cork to All-Ireland glory in 2002 and also led her club to their first county Senior championship title in 2001. She is the holder of Ashbourne Cup and league honours with



U.C.C. as well as National League medals with Cork. Has won three county Senior medals in total with her club.

SILE BURNS
Rockbáin
Age: 23.
Occupation: Physiotherapist. Daughter of former Cork Senior hurler, Denis Burns, who won All-Ireland medals. Sile is the holder of All-Ireland Minor, Intermediate and Senior medals as well as Sciath na Scoil honours. She won a Senior county championship medal with divisional side Muskerry in 2007 and captured a Junior championship title with her club.



EMER O'FARRELL
Sarsfields
Age: 27.
Occupation: Marketing Executive. The team's leading goalscorer is the holder of All-Ireland Junior and Senior medals and also won National Junior and Senior League and provincial honours. Was a member of the C.I.T. team that won the Parrell Cup in 2001. Holds Munster championship medals at Senior, Intermediate and Junior. Emer is Secretary of her club and very involved with their under-age section.



RACHEL MOLONEY
Courcy Rovers
Age: 27.
Occupation: Nutritionist. Holds Ashbourne Cup medals with U.C.C. as well as Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior All-Ireland championship honours with Cork. Has won inter-provincial honours with Munster and is the side's free-taker and top scorer. Rachel was named on the All Star team in 2005 and is coach to her club's Under-14 team.



EIMEAR WHITE
Barryroe
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. Eimear is the holder of All-Ireland Senior, National League and provincial medals.



and this is her third year on the Senior panel. Holds under-age honours with her club, Barryroe, as well as Munster and Cork colleges medals with Sacred Heart (Clonakilty). Won an Under-16 championship with her club and is also a prominent hockey player with Munster schools and club honours to her credit.

LYNDA O'CONNELL
St. Finbarr's
Age: 28.
Occupation: Accountant. Captained Cork to the National League Junior title in 2005 and is a holder of two Ashbourne Cup medals with U.C.C. as well as Senior, Intermediate and Junior All-Ireland medals. Also holds Munster championship titles with Cork as well as a Senior county championship with her club and inter-provincial honours with Munster.



ANNA GEARY
Milford
Age: 22.
Occupation: Student. Is the holder of three All-Ireland Minor championship medals in a row, captaining the side in 2003. Won two All-Ireland Senior medals and wasn't available last year as she was studying abroad. Anna has ten All-Ireland Colleges medals with St. Mary's (Charleville) and has won under-age and Senior 'B' championships with Milford. She was the Centenary Camogie Ambassador for Cork Secondary Schools and was named on the Colleges All Star team of 2004. Is also the holder of All Star awards.



PAMELA MACKAY
Douglas
Age: 17.
Occupation: Student. In her first season on the Senior panel, Pamela captained the Cork Under-16 team which lost the All-Ireland final last season. She was a member of the Cork Minor squad this year. Holds Féile na nGael All-Ireland medals with her club, Douglas, as well as Senior county championship honours and a host of under-age titles including All-Ireland Colleges with Christ The King, Turner's Cross. Won a Munster Senior championship medal this



HAWKES Valley Rovers
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. Lucy holds All-Ireland Senior and Junior medals along with an Ashbourne Shield with C.I.T. Won provincial honours at Senior and Junior with Munster and was on the Carrigrohoun team that took the county Senior title in 2004. The current Secretary of the Carrigrohoun divisional board, she also holds under-age championship medals with her club as well as Scioth na Scoil and Munster Colleges honours.

ELAINE O'RRIORDAN
Age: 26.
Occupation: Student. Elaine is the holder of All-Ireland Minor Junior and Senior championship medals. Won eight All-Ireland Colleges medals with Charleville, along with Senior 'B' and under-age championship honours with Milford. Also a prominent footballer, she has won All-Ireland Senior and under-age titles.

AMANDA O'REGAN
Age: 27.
Occupation: Secondary School Teacher in Kanturk. Amanda won three Ashbourne Cup medals with U.L. She is the holder of All-Ireland Minor, Junior and Senior honours and is also an accomplished basketball player. Her father, Michael, won an All-Ireland Minor football medal and is a selector today, while mother, Christine, captured a Junior All-Ireland medal in 1980. Amanda captained her club, Douglas, to their first Senior county championship title in 2008.

EIMEAR O'SULLIVAN
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. A sister of former All-Ireland medal winner Linda O'Sullivan, she holds All-Ireland Senior and Senior 'B' honours as

well as National League and provincial medals. Holds an Ashbourne Shield with C.I.T. and won a county Senior championship medal with Carrigrohoun in 2004. Has also won the Junior county championship with her club as well as colleges and schools medals. Her father, John, is Ballinacorney club Chairman while her brothers, John, Paul, Brian, Declan and Kevin, all play with the club.

KATRIONA MACKEY
Age: 17.
Occupation: Student. Twin sister of Pamela, she is also in her first season on the Senior panel and won a Munster championship. Was also a member of the Cork Minor squad this year. Holds Féile na nGael All-Ireland medals with her club, Douglas, as well as Senior county championship honours and a host of under-age titles, including All-Ireland Colleges with Christ The King, Turner's Cross.

DENISE CRONIN
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. Sister of Cork hurler Patrick Cronin, she is in her second season on the panel and won an All-Ireland Senior title in 2008. Denise won a Senior county championship with divisional side Muskerry as well as county Junior championship and league titles with her club.

JULIA WHITE
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. In her second year on the Senior panel, Julia was captain of the Cork Minor team this season. Holds Féile na nGael All-Ireland honours as well as provincial under-age medals. Won an All-Ireland Senior 'B' Colleges medal with Christ The King, and holds a Senior All-Ireland medal from last season. Won a host of honours with her club including a Senior county championship last season.

MARIAN MURPHY
Age: 22. Occupation: Student. In her second

year on the panel, Marian represented Cork in the national Féile na nGael skills competition in 2009. The holder of All-Ireland Senior and Under-16 championship honours, she also won Munster under-age and Senior championship medals.

CHRISTINE O'NEILL
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. Played in the Ashbourne Cup this year with U.C.C. and has represented Cork Colleges at Under-14 level as well as lining out with the county Under-16 and Minor sides with whom she won provincial honours. Has an Under-16 county league medal with Courcy Rovers, won in 2005. Christine helped her school to win the Junior 'A' Munster Colleges championship in 2004.

MICHELLE BROWNE
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. In her second year on the Senior panel, Michelle is the holder of All-Ireland Senior and Munster honours as well as testing Gael Linn inter-provincial success. Lined out with C.I.T. in the Ashbourne Cup this year.

JENNIFER LYNCH
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. Jennifer is a member of the Cork Minor and Intermediate panels this season. Played in Scioth na Scoil with Scioth Naoimh Fionain, Rennie's, and lined out with the Primary Game Cork team. Jennifer is the holder of Junior 'B' county championship and league medals as well as South East under-age honours with her club. Her brothers, Frank and Billy, also lined out at under-age level with Cork teams.

RENA READY FOR ANOTHER BIG TEST

By: JACKIE CAHILL

WE CATCH UP with Rena Buckley on a Saturday morning, eight days before this afternoon's Gala All-Ireland Senior camogie championship final.

It's a busy time for the Inniscarra player, who is also a member of the Cork ladies' football panel. Buckley is an adaptable and selfless player, uninterested in personal gain as she aims to add even more medals to an already bulging cabinet.

Along with fellow dual stars like Mary O'Connor and Brieghe Corkery, Buckley has been leading a relentless charge for top honours in recent years and shows no signs of slowing down just yet.

She's at corner-back this afternoon, having forged her reputation in the half-back line with the Cork camogie team.

'We have an awful lot of class players,' Buckley said. 'Aoife Murray in goals is solid and, being a back, I'd pick out Joanne O'Callaghan for her consistency. I was trying to watch her a little bit this year, to convert myself into a corner-back.'

'It's been a transition but I've been playing there for the footballers so I have that bit of experience. You have to sacrifice your own game completely,' Buckley explained.

'Playing at corner-back, you never get the limelight but you stick it out and realise that it's just a pure team effort. You have to do your best and close down whoever you're marking.'

'I'm probably more comfortable out the field but I'm delighted to be on the team because it's one of the

toughest years ever in terms of competition for places. Buckley will line out in her sixth successive Gala All-Ireland camogie final today, having first sampled the big day against Tipperary in 2004.

She's chasing a fourth medal too, to go alongside two coveted All Star awards.

Buckley (22) reflected: 'When we beat Tipperary in 2006, I thought that was just brilliant. It proved that the year before wasn't a fluke and we won that

match well. '2005 was my first-ever All-Ireland football title for Cork, and that was a special one as well. At the start of the year it can be hard trying to juggle the two because you're out most nights of the week training and playing.'

'There's college activity as well but when it comes to the business end of the year, it's brilliant. You're going match to match and not training as much because it's all about matches then.'

Buckley, now a qualified physio, won two Ashbourne Cups and an O'Connor Cup football title during her time with U.C.D.

There, the former under-age star got to know Kilkenny players Leann Fennelly and Julianne Woodcock, but friendship will be put to one side for 60 minutes this afternoon.

Buckley believes that Cork's experience will stand to the team but she is wary of a Kilkenny team who can approach the game with a 'carefree attitude'.

'We played Kilkenny at Nowlan Park earlier in the season and got two goals that sealed the win for us,' Buckley recalled. 'It was definitely a very tough match and they'll probably enter the final with a carefree attitude.'

'Their hurlers went so well at Croke Park and they've had under-age success. That carefree attitude I'd see as their biggest asset but every one of them is able to hurt too.'

'Under-age success is really important but it only comes through if you have a few experienced heads around the place, players that can rally a team and show leadership.'

'Kilkenny have those players in Elaine Aylward, Aoife Neary and Marie O'Connor. Experience is vital but at the same time, when you're young you have no fear so it's a double-edged coin.'

'2004, my first year, was brilliant. I really enjoyed it but we were well beaten in the final by Tipp and my dreams were shattered.'

'We didn't realise how good a team they were but you learn a lot from those games and we learned a lot from that Tipp team.'

'I realise now how blessed I am to play on such brilliant teams and I'd regret it if I didn't give 100 per cent.'

'I'm grateful for the chance because you go to college and see other great players from other counties, like Susie O'Carroll from Kildare, who's never had a chance to play at Croke Park.'



MEMORIES OF 1995 - Last Final Clash

Cork and Kilkenny are meeting in an All-Ireland Senior final for the first time since 1995. On that occasion, Denise Cronin (captain) and Ann Downey both wore number seven and were locked in a midfield battle - today they will pit their wits against each other on the sideline. That final of 14 years ago is recalled by two of the stars from that day.

FIONA O'DRISCOLL (Cork)

AS THE 2009 All-Ireland Senior camogie final between Cork and Kilkenny approaches, it brings to my mind the 1995 final, which was the only time during my playing career that we played Kilkenny in the final. As a young camogie player I grew up going to Croke Park to watch Cork playing Kilkenny in All-Ireland finals and unfortunately Cork losing them. Many of my sports heroes came from those two teams and I spent countless hours against the wall at home and on the pitch trying to emulate some of their skills and tricks.

Having witnessed the devastation the Cork players of that era experienced losing to that great Kilkenny team which won seven titles in a row, it was always

in my head that it would be the ultimate challenge to beat Kilkenny in the final. Our chance came in 1995.

From a personal perspective the build-up to the 1995 final was different. I had just started work as a P.E. teacher in Ballyfin College outside Portlaoise and, not having a car yet, did not make the midweek sessions with the panel during September (the camogie finals were towards the end of September then).

The ball alleys in the school were well utilised those first few weeks. On the day before the final I met the train from Cork in Portlaoise. It was reassuring to see the usual banter and craic. The card group of Kathleen Costine, Mags Finn, Sandie Fitzgibbon, Irene O'Keeffe and Rose

CORCAIGH

Thirlanora, Eboragh, na Rios

1. CAITLÍN NÍ O'STÍN

Kathleen Costine, Eboragh

2. EITHNE NÍ DHUGAÍN

Eithne O'Connell, Eboragh

3. PÓLA NÍ GHOGÁIN

Paula Goggin, Eboragh

4. SANDIE NÍ GHOGÁIN

Sandie Fitzgibbon, Eboragh

5. DENISE NÍ CHROÍN

Denise Cronin, Eboragh

6. THÉRESA NÍ CHALLACHÁIN

Theresa O'Callaghan, Eboragh

7. LYNN NÍ DHUGAÍN

Lynn O'Connell, Eboragh

8. FIONA NÍ DHÉIS

Fiona O'Driscoll, Eboragh

9. ROIS NÍ DHÉIS

Rois O'Driscoll, Eboragh

10. YVONNE NÍ DHÉIS

Yvonne O'Driscoll, Eboragh

11. COLETTE NÍ DHÉIS

Colette O'Driscoll, Eboragh

12. MARIAN NÍ DHÉIS

Marian Murphy, Eboragh

13. ROIS NÍ DHÉIS

Rois O'Driscoll, Eboragh

14. YVONNE NÍ DHÉIS

Yvonne O'Driscoll, Eboragh

15. COLETTE NÍ DHÉIS

Colette O'Driscoll, Eboragh

16. MARIAN NÍ DHÉIS

Marian Murphy, Eboragh

Desmond

were in full flow and of course the selectors were stuck in the middle of them trying to win some money off them!

I think of the 1995 Cork team that day as a 50-50 group; six of the 12 players starting had suffered All-Ireland defeats at the hands of Kilkenny, while the other six of us who had joined the squad since 1992 had not.

Not alone that, for the six of us we had not lost a Senior final yet and, having been beaten by Kilkenny in the 1994 semi-final

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

JOHNNY AND DOLLY QUIRKE

Johnny was a member of Cork's hurling four-in-a-row team (1941-1944), while Dolly helped Cork to win the 1935 All-Ireland Senior crown. They were originally from Milltown, Co. Kerry.

DAVE AND MARY GEANEY

Mary captained Cork to success in 1980 and holds three All-Ireland medals in total. Dave won an All-Ireland football medal with Kerry in 1959, and their father, Con, had captained the Kingdom to glory in 1932.

MARION AND SEÁN MCCARTHY

Marion won eight All-Ireland Senior medals with Cork. Seán played with the winning Cork Senior hurling team in 1990.

SEÁNIE AND MARY O'LEARY

Both have four All-Ireland Senior medals with Cork. Seánie was here last Sunday as a member of the 1984 silver jubilee team.

BEN, JERRY AND PAULA O'CONNOR

Twins Ben and Jerry hold All-Ireland Senior and club championship titles. Paula has helped Cork to win Senior camogie honours.

MICK AND MAUREEN CASHMAN

Mick won six Railway Cup hurling medals. Maureen collected All-Ireland



Senior camogie titles with Cork in 1940 and 1941.

FATHERS AND DAUGHTERS

ANDY AND MARY FITZGERALD

Andy played in goal for Cork in the 1912 All-Ireland Senior hurling final. Mary holds three All-Ireland Senior medals (1939-1941).

PHIL AND EITHNE DUGGAN

Eithne captained Cork to win the 1998 All-Ireland Senior title and holds four medals in all. Phil won a Railway Cup hurling medal with Munster.

Her Cork colleagues made sure that Sara Hayes kept her eye on the ball after she married Michael Walsh in Ballinspittle recently.

Photographs: Pictured: Mick of the Evening Echo

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

JOHNNY CLIFFORD AND LOUISE MCGOWAN

Johnny scored the winning goal for Cork in the 1954 All-Ireland Senior hurling final. Louise was not so lucky when playing against Antrim in the camogie decider two years later.

DONIE O'DONOVAN AND SHEILA CAHILL

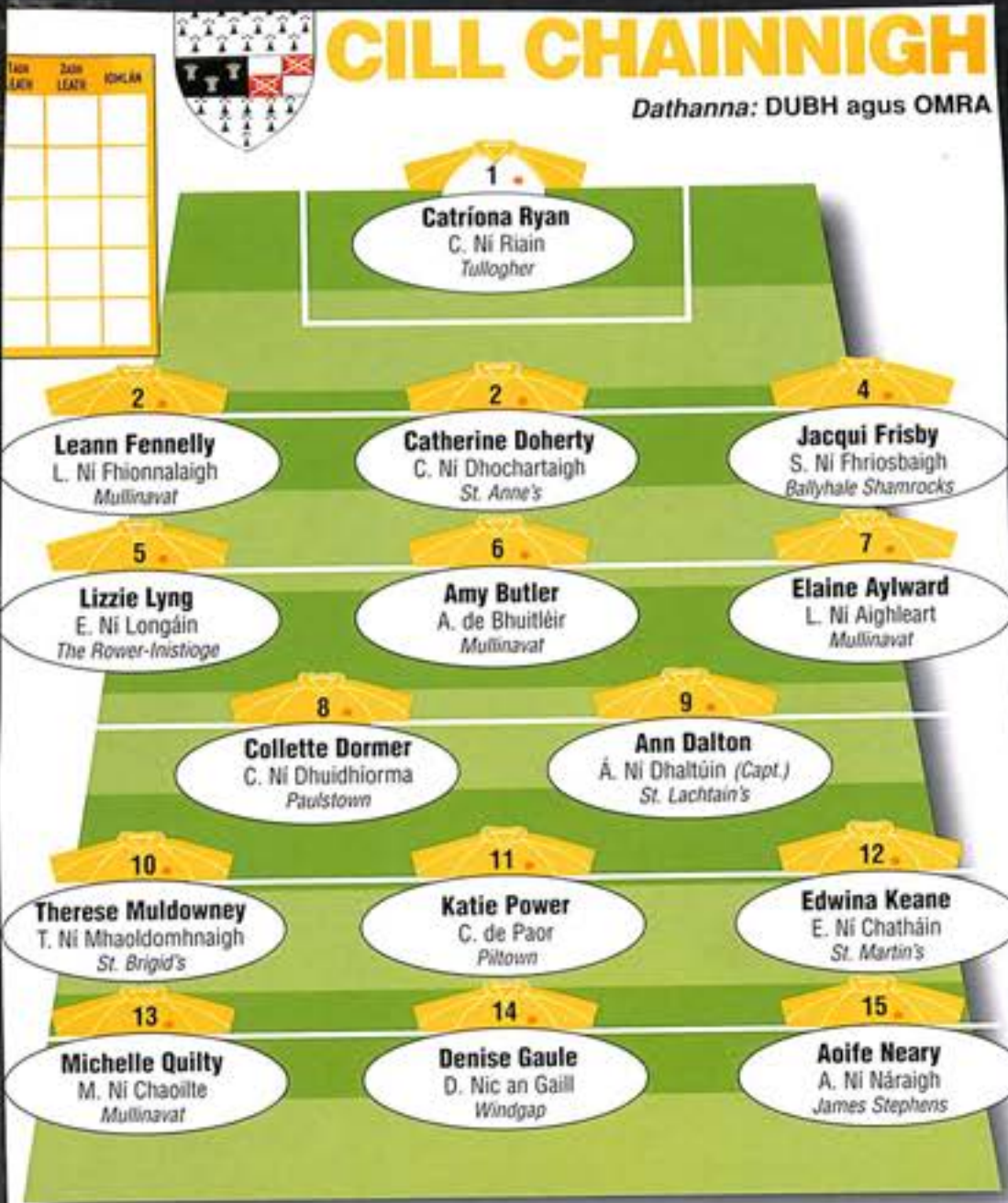
Donie won a Railway Cup football medal with Munster in 1949 and coached Cork to win the 1973 All-Ireland football title. Sheila played in goal for Cork in the 1955 and 1956 All-Ireland finals.

TOMÁS RYAN AND ANNE McAULIFFE

Tomás and Anne created history by winning All-Ireland Senior hurling and camogie medals in 1970. Anne won four All-Ireland titles in total.

CILL CHAINNIGH

Dathanna: DUBH agus OMRA



16 MARIE O'CONNOR M. Ni Chonchúir St. Lachtain's	19 DEIRDRE DELANEY D. Ni Dhuthláine St. Lachtain's	22 EDEL MAHER E. Ni Mheachair St. Anne's	25 EIMEAR LYNG E. Ni Longáin The Rower-Inistioge	28 KELLY ANN COTTERELL C. A. Nic Chaitreall Tullagher
17 KEEVA FENNELLY C. Ni Fhionnalaigh Ballyhale Shamrocks	20 AOIFE FITZPATRICK A. Nic Giolla Phádraig St. Lachtain's	23 SIOBHÁN MURPHY S. Ni Mhurchú Tullagher	26 CLAIRE AYLWARD C. Ni Aighleart Mullinavat	29 KATE McDONALD C. Nic Dhombhaill Thomastown
18 AISLING DUNPHY A. Ni Dhonnchadh St. Brigid's	21 ANN MARIE PHELAN A. M. Ni Fhaoilín Windgap	24 ÁINE FAHY Á. Ni Fhathaigh Emeralds	27 EMMA STAUNTON E. Nic an Mhíle Paulstown	30 EILEEN FITZPATRICK E. Nic Giolla Phádraig St. Lachtain's

ROGHNOIRÍ: Ann Downey (Bainisteoir), Paul Murphy, John Loneragan, First Aid: Charlie Foley, Backroom Team: Marina Downey, Noel Ryan.



Back (from left): Laura Kavanagh, Áine Fahy, Eileen Fitzpatrick, Emma Staunton, Julianne Woodcock, Ann Marie Phelan, Elaine Aylward, Denise Gaule, Catriona Ryan, Marie O'Connor, Aoife Fitzpatrick, Edwina Keane. Middle (from left): Paul Murphy (selector), John Loneragan (selector), Siobhán Murphy, Leann Fennelly, Claire Aylward, Amy Butler, Aoife Neary, Edel Maher, Collette Dormer, Deirdre Delaney, Aisling Dunphy, Ann Dalton (capt.), Therese Muldowney, Ann Downey (manager). Front (from left): Keva Fennelly, Lizzie Lyng, Eimear Lyng, Katie Power, Jacqui Frisby, Michelle Quilty, Catherine Doherty, Kelly Ann Cotterell, Kate McDonald.



**KILKENNY
MANAGEMENT
TEAM:**

ANN DOWNEY
(Manager)

Selectors:

PAUL MURPHY
(left)

JOHN LONERAGAN
(below left)



CILL CHAINNIGH

CATRIONA RYAN
Tullagher
Age: 26.
Occupation: Accountant.
Catriona played in goal on the All-Ireland Senior final team in 2001 against Tipperary. An All-Ireland Colleges medal holder, she went on to capture a Junior title in 2002 and was a member of the successful National League-winning team last year. Senior debut: 2001.

LEANN FENNELLY
Mullinavat
Age: 19. Occupation: Student. Leann's father, Liam, gave distinguished service to Kilkenny in the forward line, whereas she has shown her mettle in the backs. She already has six All-Ireland medals in her collection – one Under-16, three Minor, one Colleges and one Intermediate from 2008. Senior debut: 2009.

CATHERINE DOHERTY
St. Anne's
Age: 28.
Occupation: Purchaser. She played corner-forward on her first final appearance in 2001. Hoping to follow in the footsteps of her brother, Noel, who won an All-Ireland Intermediate medal last year. Another brother, Wail, has also donned the county colours in various grades while an uncle, Joe Doherty, played Senior with Kilkenny in 1965. Catherine won a Purcell Cup medal with Carlow L.T. and was picked on the combined Purcell team in 2005. She played camogie/shinty for Ireland in Centenary Year and represented Leinster in the Gael Linn in 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2009. Has won a National League and Leinster Junior and Senior titles with Kilkenny, as well as Junior and Intermediate medals with the club.

JACQUI FRISBY
Ballyhale Shamrocks
Age: 24.
Occupation: Accounts Assistant. An All-Ireland Junior medal winner in 2002, Jacqui added a National League crown last year. Holds Leinster titles in the Under-14, Under-16, Under-18, Junior and Senior grades along with an All-Ireland Schools 'B' medal. Her brother, Tom, represented Kilkenny at under-age level. Senior debut: 2001.

ELAINE AYLWARD
Mullinavat
Age: 24.
Occupation: Bank Official. A defender whose forceful runs paid big dividends in the semi-finals, Elaine won a Junior All-Ireland in 2002 and added a National League medal last year. Has won a Gael Linn medal with Leinster as well as three provincial Senior titles. Senior debut: 2002.

AMY BUTLER
Mullinavat
Age: 22.
Occupation: Trainee Accountant. Amy is hoping to win her first All-Ireland medal with Kilkenny today, having collected a National League Division 1 title when Galway were defeated in the 2008 final. She also holds a Colleges Division 1 league medal from 2006. Senior debut: 2006.

LIZZIE LYNG
The Rower-Inistioge
Age: 26. Occupation: Social Worker. Another player who is bridging an eight-year gap today after featuring at midfield on Kilkenny's last final appearance in 2001. Has won Leinster medals in the Under-14,

COLLETTE DORMER
Paulstown
Age: 20.
Occupation: Student. An Ashbourne All Star earlier this year when she helped W.I.T. to glory before adding a Division 1 Colleges league medal to her collection. Collette has won Under-16, Minor (two) and Intermediate All-Ireland medals. Her brother, Stephen, who trained the Kilkenny Under-16 team, was joint manager of the year for 2008 along with Liam Dunne. Senior debut: 2006.

ANN DALTON
St. Lachtain's
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student. An Ashbourne Cup medal-winner with W.I.T. earlier this year, Ann has won All-Ireland Minor and National League titles with Kilkenny. The stylish captain has collected three All-Irelands, four Leinsters and six county crowns with her club, and has provincial titles at inter-county level in Under-14, Under-16 (three) and Under-18 (four). Senior debut: 2007.

EDWINA KEANE
St. Martin's
Age: 18. Occupation: Student. The Leinster 'Young Player of the Year' in 2008, Edwina added the I.T. Trollee 'Sportsperson of the Year' award for

DENISE GAULE
Windgap
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. The name on everybody's lips after the All-Ireland semi-final against Galway when she scored three line points, just one week after helping Kilkenny to yet another All-Ireland Minor title, and her second in the grade. Also holds two All-Ireland Senior colleges medals and won an All-Ireland Intermediate crown last year when she was declared player of the match in the final. Senior debut: 2009.

KATIE POWER
Piltown
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. A star forward on the All-Ireland winning under-age teams, Katie has won two Under-16 and three Minor titles as well as a National League medal in 2008. Holds Leinster medals in Under-14 (two), Under-16 (two), Minor (three) and Senior (two), along with a county Junior title. A colleges inter-provincial winner, she has collected Munster and All-Ireland 'C' titles and a Munster Senior 'A' league. Senior debut: 2006.

MICHELLE QUILTY
Mullinavat
Age: 19.
Occupation: Student. An Ashbourne Cup and league medal-winner with W.I.T. earlier this year. Michelle's brother, Martin, is Vice-Chairman of the Ga. Camogie Board. She won two Under-16 and two Minor All-Irelands, along with a National League in 2008 and Leinster honours in Under-16 (two), Minor (three) and Senior (two). Senior debut: 2007.

EMMA STAUNTON
Paulstown
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. Emma has shared in many of Kilkenny's recent under-age successes, winning three Under-16 All-Irelands from 2005 to 2007 and adding another three Under-18 titles in 2007, 2008 and 2009. A Leinster Under-14 wall ball winner in 2005, she also captured a schools inter-provincial medal with the province this year. Senior debut: 2008.

ANN MARIE PHELAN
Windgap
Age: 20.
Occupation: Pharmaceutical Student in Aberdeen. Ann Marie hasn't allowed

AOIFE NEARY
James Stephens
Age: 24.
Occupation: Cardiac Technician. Aoife's father, Paddy, was a determined corner-back with Kilkenny in the early 1980s and went on to serve as an inter-county referee, while her aunt, Catherine, is Chairperson of the County Board. An All Star last year when she won a National League medal, Aoife was on the Junior All-Ireland winning side of 2002 and holds Leinster titles in the Under-14 (two), Under-16 (three), Minor (three), Junior and Senior (three) grades. Has captured Gael Linn Junior and Senior honours with Leinster, Under-16 (two), Junior and Minor titles with her club, and an All-Ireland Senior 'B' Colleges medal. Senior debut: 2001.

EMMA STAUNTON
Paulstown
Age: 18.
Occupation: Student. Emma has shared in many of Kilkenny's recent under-age successes, winning three Under-16 All-Irelands from 2005 to 2007 and adding another three Under-18 titles in 2007, 2008 and 2009. A Leinster Under-14 wall ball winner in 2005, she also captured a schools inter-provincial medal with the province this year. Senior debut: 2008.

AOIFE FITZPATRICK
St. Lachtain's
Age: 24.
Occupation: Employment Support Specialist. A sister of panel member, Eileen, their younger sibling, Lydia, captained the Kilkenny Under-14 team this year, while brother John was a county Minor in 2006 and 2007. Won an All-Ireland Junior medal in 2002 and has three Under-18 Leinster titles. Her impressive list of club wins includes one All-Ireland Feile na nGael, nine county Senior, six Leinsters and three All-Irelands. Senior debut: 2003.

AISLING DUNPHY
St. Brigid's
Age: 17. Occupation: Student. Another up and coming player. Aisling has won three All-Ireland Under-16 and four All-Ireland Minor medals as well as two All-Ireland inter-

the academic year 2008-09 to her collection. She has won three All-Ireland Minor titles as well as two Under-16s, and Leinster medals in all under-age grades. A National League title-holder from last year. Senior debut: 2006.

THERESE MULDOWNEY
St. Brigid's
Age: 22.
Occupation: Trainee Social Worker. Therese has won Under-16 and Minor provincial titles with Kilkenny as well as a schools All-Ireland in the Senior 'B' grade. Her brother, Gáin, is a well-known trainer and club player with Conahy Shamrocks, and she has made a big impression in her first year on the squad. Senior debut: 2009.

the fact that she is pursuing her studies in Scotland to dampen her enthusiasm for camogie, showing great commitment to the cause. Won an All-Ireland Minor medal in 2006 and added an Intermediate title to her collection last year. Senior debut: 2004.

MARIE O'CONNOR
St. Lachtain's
Age: 25.
Occupation: Garda. Marie is a niece of Bridie McGarry, winner of nine All-Ireland Senior medals and captain of the Kilkenny team that beat Cork in the 1987 final. Marie won a Junior All-Ireland medal in 2002 and added National League honours in 2008 when she captained Kilkenny. On the club scene she has ten county, five Leinster and three All-Ireland medals, and scored the most precious goal of her career to date in the semi-final win over Galway. Senior debut: 2000.

CLAIRE AYLWARD
Mullinavat
Age: 22.
Occupation: Teacher. An All-Ireland Schools medal-winner in the 'B' grade, Claire was a key member of the Kilkenny Intermediate squad which defeated Cork to claim outright honours in the 2008 campaign. Senior debut: 2006.

... a national Junior colleges crown. She has eleven Leinster medals for Under-14 (two), Under-16 (three) and Minor (six), and also won two All-Ireland colleges seniors titles and two Leinster Junior colleges. Senior debut: 2009.

DEIRDRE DELANEY
St. Lachtain's
Age: 24.
Occupation: Sales representative.
One of the mainstays of the all-conquering St. Lachtain's team, Deirdre has assisted the Freshford side to ten county, six Leinster and three All-Ireland club titles. Has won provincial inter-county medals in the Under-16 and Minor grades. Senior debut: 2006.

KEEVA FENNELLY
Ballybale Shamrocks
Age: 22.
Occupation: Financial Reporter.
The W.I.T. Ashbourne Cup and league-winning captain earlier this year, Keeva's father, Ger, and uncles all gave distinguished service to Kilkenny. She has two first cousins, Leann Fennelly and Kelly Ann Cotterell, on today's panel, while another cousin, Michael Fennelly, captained the Kilkenny Seniors this year. Won an All-Ireland Junior medal in 2002 and enjoyed National League success last year. Senior debut: 2007.

KATE McDONALD
Thomastown
Age: 18. Occupation: Student. A National League medal-winner last year, Kate has an impressive tally of nine All-Ireland medals already - two Senior colleges, three Under-16 and four Minor. Has also won seven Leinster titles in all in the Under-16 and Minor grades. Senior debut: 2007.

KELLY ANN COTTERELL
Tullagher
Age: 22. Occupation: Student. Kelly Ann won

a National League medal with Kilkenny in 2008 when they accounted for Galway in the final in Nowlan Park. Was a key figure earlier this year when W.I.T. forged a notable double over keen rivals U.C.D., beating them in the Ashbourne Cup and Division 1 league finals. Holds Leinster Under-14, Under-16 and Senior medals, and won an All-Ireland Junior football crown with Kilkenny in 2007. Senior debut: 2002.

AINE FAHY
Emeralds
Age: 22.
Occupation: Student.
Aine has already enjoyed a successful year, helping W.I.T. to victory in the Ashbourne Cup and Division 1 league finals. Won National League and Intermediate All-Ireland medals with Kilkenny in 2008 and also has a Senior 'B' league title to her name. A Leinster medal-winner in the Under-14, Under-16, Minor and Senior grades. Senior debut: 2004.

EIMEAR LYNG
The Rover Instigue
Age: 27.
Occupation: Primary Teacher.
A National League medal-winner with the county in 2008, Eimear will be hoping to follow in the footsteps of her first cousins, Aoife and Claire O'Connor, who tasted All-Ireland Senior glory with Wexford here two years ago. Collected an All-Ireland Junior title in 2002 and has Leinster Under-14, Under-16, Minor and Senior medals. Senior debut: 1999.

EDEL MAHER
St. Anne's
Age: 24.
Occupation: Student - U.I.L. Graduate.
Edel was the Junior inter-provincial player of the year in 2001 and added an All-Ireland medal in the grade in 2002. Won two Ashbourne Cups with U.I.L. and has Leinster titles in the Under-14, Under-16, Minor and Senior grades. A talented all-

rounder, she was the national B.U.M. sprint record-holder at Under-13 level and has six All-Ireland 'A' basketball medals, as well as helping U.I.L. to the All-Ireland Super League title. Senior debut: 2000.

SIOBHAN MURPHY
Tullagher.
Age: 22.
Occupation: PE and Irish Teacher. A National League winner in 2008, Siobhán has Leinster medals in the Under-14 and Under-16 grades and will be hoping to collect her first All-Ireland medal today. Senior debut: 2007.

EILEEN FITZPATRICK
St. Lachtain's
Age: 22.
Occupation: Primary Teacher.
A sister of panel member Aoife, she won a Junior All-Ireland in 2002 and was the Loretto school player of the year in 1999 and 2003. Won three Leinster Under-18 titles, a colleges Fresher medal, along with the following with her club: All-Ireland Féile, nine county Senior, six Leinster and three All-Irelands. Senior debut: 2006.

LAURA KAVANAGH
Emeralds
Age: 21.
Occupation: Student.
A Minor All-Ireland medal-winner, Laura added an Intermediate title to her collection last year. On the club scene she has captured county titles in the Under-16, Under-18, Under-21, Junior and Intermediate grades. Senior debut: 2006.

JULIANNE WOODCOCK
Danesfort
Age: 22.
Occupation: Physiotherapist.
Julianne has been prominent on the third level colleges scene with U.C.D. in recent years, winning two Ashbourne Cups. Collected a National League medal last year and is aiming to add the 'big one' to her collection today. Senior debut: 2004.

'THE ONE YOU'RE IN IS THE ONE TO WIN'

says Aoife Neary

By: JACKIE CAHILL

AOIFE NEARY never thought that it would take eight years to return to camogie's biggest day. She was just 16 in 2001 when Kilkenny lost out to Tipperary in the All-Ireland Senior final but, armed with the innocence of youth, the James Stephens star presumed that success was lying just around the corner.

With a relatively young age profile, it seemed that the Cats would challenge consistently for honours, but it's been a long road back to final day at Croke Park.

Neary reflected: 'I suppose we didn't have a particularly old team or a team at the end of its tether. We never thought that it would take us eight years and every year you start out, you wonder is this going to be the year'.

Neary (24) naturally celebrated Kilkenny's success in last Sunday's All-Ireland Senior hurling final, but she also took careful note of opponents Tipperary. That was also Tipp's first final since 2001 but the experience didn't unnerve 12 first-timers in BLUE AND GOLD.

Neary said: 'Having made the final, people are probably saying that we're inexperienced and could be overawed, but a lot of us have been seven or eight years waiting for these days. The one you're in is the one to win and we'll be giving it everything we can.'

Neary, a cardiac technician based at Waterford Regional hospital, was Kilkenny's sole All Star in 2008, honoured for a string of scintillating attacking displays.

Off the field, life can be just as challenging but she explained: 'I'm lucky enough to be working Monday-Friday, 9-5. I don't do shift work or have to be on call. Training is no real problem either because while I live in Kilkenny, the journey to Waterford is under the hour, 50 minutes.'

'I've always worked in Waterford and travelled up and down. I'm used to it at this point. I'm really enjoying my job and every day is different.'

This afternoon, Kilkenny start as underdogs against a Cork side chasing a second successive Gala All-Ireland Senior title, and a fourth success in five seasons. It's a daunting task and memories of last year's championship meeting between the two sides are still fresh.

Cork won by 5-11 to 0-7 on a dark day for Kilkenny and Neary said: 'Last year we lost by 19 points and we knew this year would have to be different. We've worked harder in training and we're playing better.'

'We're under no illusions about the enormity of the task that faces us. Cork have been in the last

seven finals and if they were a hurling team, people would be writing books about them.'

'But we can't get bogged down thinking about what Cork will come out with; we have to focus on what we can do.'

A patchy league campaign culminated in a heavy defeat against Tipperary at Semple Stadium earlier this year, but Kilkenny turned the tables when the teams met again in the championship.

Neary revealed: 'The dressing-room after the league game was like a morgue. It was ten weeks from then to the first round of the championship, when we played Tipp again, and there were a lot of lessons to be learned.'

'We dredged up the DVD to see where we went wrong but that day was a turning point for us. When it came to the first round, we were ready for whatever Tipp were going to throw at us.'

'We had trained so hard for the ten weeks to get things right and we hadn't beaten Tipp for so long, so it was a real catalyst for our championship campaign.'

Kilkenny were competitive against Cork in their next outing, shaving 15 points off last year's losing margin, and a hard-fought victory over Dublin then set up that memorable semi-final meeting with Galway.

Neary said: 'I was glad that we got Galway. People lost sight of the fact that Galway haven't beaten us in the championship for a very long time. We beat them last year, have a good record and had nothing to fear.'

'Playing in Nowlan Park was a huge advantage for us and, while the result was dramatic, as the second-half went on it was looking more and more likely.'

'When the ball hit the back of the net, the whole stand lifted and we were absolutely delighted. While it's a horrible way to lose, it was a great way to win and now we find ourselves in the final.'



when we had been going for a three in a row, we were really looking forward to the challenge of reversing the previous year's result.

My abiding memory of that day is getting to share the playing field of Croke Park with my heroes of those earlier years, and of the titanic struggle it was to beat Kilkenny. The game went down to the wire as all encounters with Kilkenny at

SINEAD MILLEA (Kilkenny)

THE All-Ireland final of 1995 saw Kilkenny putted against Cork in what was a much-anticipated and eagerly-awaited clash. Although 14 years ago now, vivid memories abound of that day. For the most part however, these memories relate to the manner in which this game dramatically ended.

I recall lining out at wing-forward and being marked by the fleet-footed defender, Sandie

that time did. One of the turning points was the introduction of Vivienne Harris to midfield, at 15 years of age making her inter-county debut.

A strong link from that final is of course the two managers of this year's finalists, Denise Cronin and Ann Downey, who marked each other at midfield. Both of these great players appeared to have a few lucky omens for big match day.

Fitzgibbon. I remember a minute before going out onto the field and Angela Downey leading the team in the recitation of the Hail Mary. As it transpired, neither God nor lady luck were on our side that day.

In the dying moments the Kilkenny defence cleared a ball and it fell to Linda Mellerick in the middle of the field. She sent a speculative high, looping ball towards the square. The ball evaded the grasp of the defence and Michelle Fennelly in goal, and hit the back of the net.

From the resulting puck-out, Kilkenny scrambled to gain possession in a frantic attempt to tie or win the game. Almost immediately the final whistle sounded and the strong Cork contingent roared and cheered to fill the Croke Park evening air. Seconds away from elated celebrations for Kilkenny had cruelly turned to heartbreak and devastation.

I remember the long, lonely walk to the dressing-room

I remember watching All-Ireland finals where Ann Downey would at the end of the parade move to the dug-out to get her white socks which she wore. I often wondered what it was about those socks! Denise had a little pocket sewed to the inside of her skirt by her mother where she used to place her lucky omens.

I wonder what lucky charms they will have for this year!

afterwards, the eerie silence and dumbfounded faces, Ann and Angela sitting side by side - no words spoken. This would turn out to be Angela's last All-Ireland final appearance. All the hard work, all the effort... a missed opportunity.

Kilkenny for so long had been Cork's nemesis, today it was their turn to bask in the glory. Such is sport. Fortunately I have happier memories of this famed stadium which give me ample reason to smile and I have been lucky to have been part of All-Ireland day - something many players never get to experience.

May I take this opportunity to wish all the Kilkenny players and management the very best of luck today. I hope they reap the rewards of their hard work. Seize the day!



KILKENNY connections

Leann Fennelly's father, Liam, has the distinction of being the last All-Ireland hurling winning captain to lift the old MacCarthy Cup and the first to accept the new one, in 1992 and 1993. Leann is cousin to Mary Fennelly, former Kilkenny winning captain and former President of Camann Camógaiochta na nGael. Keava Fennelly is daughter of Ger (brother of Liam), another former Kilkenny star and team captain in 1979. Michael Fennelly, Michael's son and a first cousin of Leann and Keava, captained the Cats to glory last Sunday, and his brother, Colin, is on today's Under-21 team.

Ann Downey, Kilkenny manager and former star player, and Martin Fogarty from Castlecomer, who is a selector and trainer of Kilkenny's All-Ireland hurling squad, are first cousins. This relationship is on the maternal side of the family. Ann's sister, Angela, was one of the greatest forwards ever, and both have twelve All-Ireland medals. Their father, Shem, won an All-Ireland Senior medal in 1947.

Can history repeat itself? Ann Downey captained Kilkenny to All-Ireland glory in 1994. She is a twin, and so too is Ann Dalton who leads the county today.

Denise Gaule is cousin to John Dalton of Carrickshock, a member of the Kilkenny Senior hurling panel.

The Kilkenny backroom team



Denise Gaule aims for the posts in Kilkenny's Gala All-Ireland Senior championship semi-final win over Galway in Nowlan Park.

includes Paul Murphy, a Limerick man who is teaching in Clonmel, and John Loneragan from Tipperary who is a teacher in Piltown.

Bridget Mullally won three All-Ireland Senior medals with Kilkenny, while her brothers, Richie and Paddy, also featured on MacCarthy Cup-winning teams.

Terry Leahy scored the winning point in Kilkenny's triumph of 1947. His sister, Tess, had played full-back for Dublin in the All-Ireland camogie final six years earlier.

The Kilkenny camogie panel for the 1995 All-Ireland final included Catriona Carey whose brother, D.J., won every honour in hurling and is regarded as one of the all-time greats.

Ursula Grace, an All-Ireland medal-winner in 1974, was daughter of Paddy who won Senior hurling medals in 1939 and 1947.

Joe Millea won an All-Ireland Senior title in 1969 and his daughters, Tracy (married to another medal-winner, Brian McEvoy) and Sinéad, went on to capture Minor and Senior honours. Likewise Pa Dillon, winner of three All-Ireland Senior medals, had the pleasure of seeing his daughter, Gillian, savouring O'Duffy Cup success.

Brian Cody, Kilkenny's outstanding manager, is married to Elsie (nee Walsh) who helped Wexford to win the 1975 All-Ireland Senior title and inspired Buffers Alley to take five All-Ireland Club crowns.

CILL CHAINNIGH
Dulaisín... Dubh agus thairn

1 MICHELLE NI FHOINNLAIGH Michelle Fennelly Carrickshock	2 DEIRDRE NI MHAOLFOIN Deirdre Malone St. Brigid's	3 MAIRÉAD NI ICI Margaret Hickley St. Lachtain's	4 SINEAD NÍ COISTEALA Sinéad Costelloe St. Lachtain's	5 BRID BHARNABHÁ Bridget Barnwell Ludlow	6 MAIRÉ NI MHEACHAIR Marie Maher Tullamore
7 KEEVA NI DHUNAEIGH Keava Fennelly Ludlow	8 KEEVA NI DHUNAEIGH Keava Fennelly Ludlow	9 SINEAD NI MHAOLAEIDH Sinéad Millea St. Brigid's	10 BRID NÍ THOMAS Bridget Thomas Tullamore	11 ANGELA NI DHUNAEIGH & BRID Angela Downey & Bridget Ludlow	12 GILLIAN NI DHUNAEIGH Gillian Dillon St. Lachtain's

MAIDAITHE:
TRACY NI MHAOLAEIDH
PATRIC NI CONNORDE
CARRICKSHOCK NI DHUNAEIGH

St. Brigid's
St. Lachtain's
Ludlow
Galway

Gala All-Ireland Senior Championship - O'Duffy Cup PATHS TO THE FINAL

GALA ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP 1 DETAILS

DATE	VENUE	RESULT	REFEREE
June 20	Páirc Uí Rinn	Cork..... 3-21	Dublin..... 1-07
June 27	Seimle Stadium	Kilkenny..... 1-14	Tipperary..... 1-11
July 11	Nowlan Park	Cork..... 2-05	Kilkenny..... 0-07
July 18	Parnell Park	Tipperary..... 2-12	Dublin..... 1-10
Aug. 1	Páirc Uí Rinn	Cork..... 1-13	Tipperary..... 0-14
Aug. 1	Ballyboden	Kilkenny..... 2-14	Dublin..... 0-04

GALA ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP GROUP 2 DETAILS

DATE	VENUE	RESULT	REFEREE
June 20	Hospital	Wexford..... 5-20	Limerick..... 0-06
June 27	Athenry	Galway..... 3-17	Clare..... 1-04
July 11	Wexford Park	Galway..... 3-07	Wexford..... 2-06
July 18	Cusack Park	Clare..... 2-08	Limerick..... 1-10
Aug. 1	Bodyke	Wexford..... 2-15	Clare..... 0-03
Aug. 1	Athenry	Galway..... 1-16	Limerick..... 0-08

GALA ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP SEMI-FINAL DETAILS

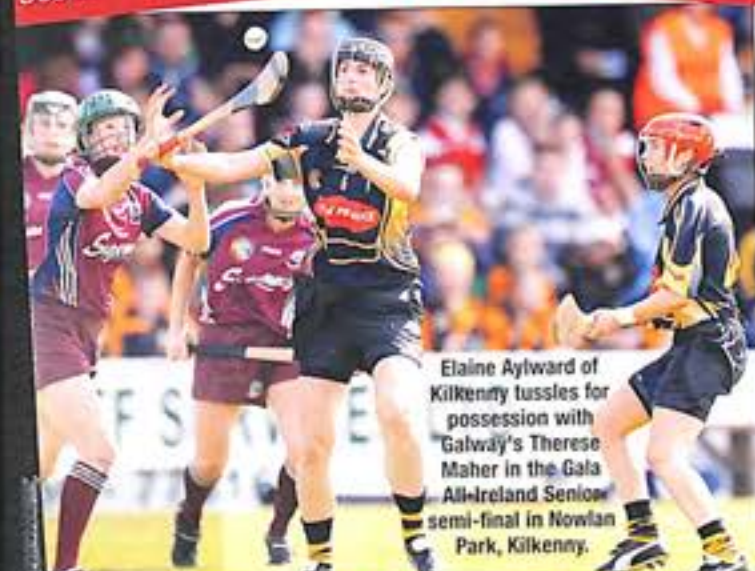
DATE	VENUE	RESULT	REFEREE
Aug. 15	Nowlan Park	Kilkenny..... 1-13	Galway..... 1-11
Aug. 15	Nowlan Park	Cork..... 2-13	Wexford..... 1-10

GROUP 1 TABLE

	P	W	D	L	Pts
CORK	3	3	0	0	6
KILKENNY	3	2	0	1	4
TIPPERARY	3	1	0	2	2
DUBLIN	3	0	0	3	0

GROUP 2 TABLE

	P	W	D	L	Pts
GALWAY	3	3	0	0	6
WEXFORD	3	2	0	1	4
CLARE	3	1	0	2	2
LIMERICK	3	0	0	3	0



Elaine Aylward of Kilkenny tussles for possession with Galway's Therese Maher in the Gala All-Ireland Senior semi-final in Nowlan Park, Kilkenny.



In the final, Kilkenny will face Galway. The first-time winner of this prestigious accolade will be announced today.

The Kilkenny team comprises mainly young players, most of whom have had multiple All-Ireland success at Under-16 and Under-18, however a Senior All-Ireland final against Cork will be a major test.

They need a flying start to settle the nerves. They have nothing to lose and are very skilful. It is difficult to go against the champions but Kilkenny have self-belief too.

AILBHE KELLY (Galway)

GIVEN CORK'S experience of the big day, I'd have to go with them for this one. Kilkenny are a young and competitive side and their success at under-age is promising for the future.

Denise Gaule in particular has had a good year for the Cats, but the experience of Gemma



O'Connor and Brieg Corkery will be the telling factor on the day I think. Best of luck to both teams in the final.

DEIRDRE MURPHY (Clare)

IT SHOULD be a fantastic game between two outstanding teams. Cork's greater experience might prove decisive.

Gemma O'Connor, Brieg Corkery and Orla Cotter are brilliant hurlers and also have a level of athleticism that is very difficult to match for a whole game.

Kilkenny's forwards are very talented and will probably need to score a few goals to win. Captain Ann Dalton is having a terrific year, while last year's Minor stars, Katie Power and Edwina Keane, are flying it at Senior level.

I think it will be very tight. If Kilkenny get a good start anything could happen, but they'll probably have to wait another year to get their hands on the O'Duffy Cup.



Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship TOP SCORERS

LEADING CHAMPIONSHIP SCORERS 2009

NAME	COUNTY	GOALS	POINTS	OVERALL TOTAL	FROM PLAY
AISLINN CONNOLLY	GALWAY	1	24	27	1-6 (9)
RACHEL MOLONEY	CORK	0	21	21	0-7 (7)
NIAMH MULCAHY	LIMERICK	0	19	19	0-9 (9)
AOIFE NEARY	KILKENNY	0	19	19	0-3 (3)
KATE KELLY	WEXFORD	1	15	18	0-4 (4)
ROSE-MARIE BREEN	WEXFORD	4	4	16	4-4 (16)
VERONICA CURTIN	GALWAY	3	7	16	3-7 (16)
EMER O'FARRELL	CORK	5	1	16	5-1 (16)
URSULA JACOB	WEXFORD	1	11	14	1-8 (11)
CLAIRE GROGAN	TIPPERARY	1	9	12	0-3 (3)



Niamh Mulcahy

Aislinn Connolly of Galway, the championship's current top scorer, displays the new Gala Performance Award. The first-time winner of this prestigious accolade will be announced today.

CORK SCORERS

	1	2	3	4	TOTALS
RACHEL MOLONEY	0-10	—	0-3	0-8	0-21
EMER O'FARRELL	1-0	2-0	1-1	1-0	5-1
GEMMA O'CONNOR	0-3	0-1	0-3	0-1	0-8
SILE BURNS	0-3	—	0-3	0-1	0-7
BRIEG CORKERY	0-1	—	0-2	1-1	1-4
EIMEAR O'SULLIVAN	1-2	—	—	—	1-2
ORLA COTTER	—	0-2	0-1	0-1	0-4
EMER DILLON	0-2	0-2	—	—	0-4
AMANDA O'REGAN	1-0	—	—	—	1-0
UNA O'DONOGHUE	—	—	—	0-1	0-1



KILKENNY SCORERS

	1	2	3	4	TOTALS
AOIFE NEARY	0-9	0-4	0-1	0-5	0-19
MICHELLE QUILTY	1-3	0-1	0-3	0-1	1-8
KATIE POWER	—	0-1	0-4	0-2	0-7
ANN DALTON	0-2	—	0-2	0-1	0-5
MARIE O'CONNOR	—	0-1	—	1-1	1-2
DENISE GAULE	—	—	0-1	0-3	0-4
EDWINA KEANE	—	—	1-1	—	1-1
COLLETTE DORMER	—	—	1-0	—	1-0
THERESE MULDOWNY	—	—	0-1	—	0-1
ANN MARIE PHELAN	—	—	0-1	—	0-1

Rachel Moloney



Michelle Quilty

PLAYERS GIVE CORK THE FINAL VERDICT

WE ALL HAVE OUR OPINIONS ON THE LIKELY OUTCOME TODAY, BUT THERE ARE FEW BETTER QUALIFIED TO COMMENT THAN THE PLAYERS FROM THE OTHER COMPETING COUNTIES. HERE'S A SAMPLE OF THEIR VIEWS:

AOIFA SHEEHAN (Limerick)

THIS HAS the makings of a serious game – in the red corner Denise Cronin has six All-Irelands to her credit while her opposite number today, Ann Downey, has 12. I remember seeing some of the games between them in the '90s and they were all crackers.

Where to start with the Cork camp – they are very strong in all positions but especially down the centre with Mary O'Connor, Gemma O'Connor, Brieg Corkery and, being their eighth consecutive final, these girls are very experienced.

I played with the St. Mary's (Charleville) girls, Anna Geary and Elaine O'Riordan, in my schooldays – pity they are just over the border, we would welcome them in Limerick. Wexford beat them in 2007 and they will be facing an equally hungry side today in Kilkenny.

Ann Downey's side have serious talent – Aoife Neary, Lizzie Lyng, Elaine Aylward and Ann Dalton are playing well so they will be well equipped to cope with Cork.

I was impressed by the manner in which they came from behind to beat last year's finalists and a very fancied Galway in the semi-final. Hopefully the pitch will be dry and we'll see a good game of camogie!

KATE KELLY (Wexford)

THIS MATCH should be a closely contested encounter. Kilkenny are back on the scene after an

eight-year absence, bringing with them youth and a genuine sense of determination in players like Ann Dalton and Katie Power who should be driving forces today.

Cork on the other hand have been in the All-Ireland for eight consecutive years – an experienced team with players of the calibre of Brieg Corkery and Gemma O'Connor. It will be a tightly-fought final but I think the experienced Cork side will have the edge on Kilkenny.

LOUISE O'HARA (Dublin)

I THINK if Cork play to their potential they will win. They have such talent that when they attack from the half-back line it is very difficult to stop them.

If things are not going well for them they also have a very strong bench to call on – no other county can match them in that department.

SUZANNE KELLY (Tipperary)

THIS CORK team is similar to the Kilkenny hurlers, successful, experienced, composed, wily and used to the big occasion that is All-Ireland day.



Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael pays tribute to 125 years of the GAA

Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael marked the 125th Anniversary of the GAA at the recent Gala All-Ireland Senior semi-finals. Young Camogie players from Carrickshock, Conahy Shamrocks, Naomh Brid (Ballyraggett), Slieverue and the Coillte Development Squads from Armagh, Kildare, Kilkenny and Wicklow were led on to Nowlan Park by the Kilkenny District Band.

The bedrock of the GAA is the club structure, loyalty to native place, pride in the jersey and a passion for our Gaelic Games. It has spread around the world with clubs and structures in Great Britain, Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Australia and North America. It is like a necklace around the globe. This

necklace was reflected by the young players in circle formation on the pitch who released 125 balloons to celebrate the GAA.

Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael wishes the GAA a happy 125 birthday and acknowledges the support given at Club, School, College, Third Level, County, Provincial and National level. We celebrate all those who have contributed and are contributing now to making it a national treasure.

We celebrate the fun and strong bonds of friendship that bind us all. Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael is proud to be part of the vibrant, unique and wonderful association that is the family of Gaelic games.



ALL-IRELAND SENIOR CAMOGIE FINALS 1932-2008

A SIGNIFICANT milestone is reached today - the 75th anniversary of the first All-Ireland Senior camogie final to be played in Croke Park. To mark the occasion, we avail of Mary Moran's excellent records to publish the full details of all finals from 1932 to 2008. Mary is in the process of researching the history of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael which will be published in 2010. If you have an interesting tale to tell or information to share, she would be delighted to hear from you - please call 021-4542891 (h), 086-0526710 (m) or e-mail marymoran@iol.ie.

YEAR DATE	VENUE	RESULT	REFEREE
1932 July 30	Sportfield, Galway	Dublin3-02	Stephen Jordan (Galway)
1933 Dec. 18	Killester	Dublin9-02	Julian McDonnell (Meath)
1934 Oct. 29	Croke Park	Cork4-03	Tommie Ryan (Tipperary)
1935 Nov. 23	Cork Athletic Grounds	Cork3-04	Tommie Ryan (Tipperary)
1936 Oct. 12	Croke Park	Cork6-04	Peg Morris (Galway)
1937 Nov. 28	Croke Park	Dublin9-04	Lil Kirby (Cork)
1938 Oct. 25	Cork Athletic Grounds	Dublin5-00	Peg Morris (Galway)
1939 Nov. 12	Croke Park	Cork6-01	Vera Campbell (Tyrone)
1940 Oct. 13	Croke Park	Cork4-01	Vera Campbell (Tyrone)
1941 Oct. 10	Croke Park	Cork7-05	Peg Morris (Galway)
1942 Oct. 11	Croke Park	Dublin1-02	Seán Gleeson (Tipperary)
Oct. 25	Mardyke, Cork	Dublin4-01	Seán Gleeson (Tipperary)
1943 Oct. 17	Croke Park	Dublin8-00	Vera Campbell (Tyrone)
1944 Nov. 5	Corrigan Park	Dublin5-04	Vera Campbell (Tyrone)
1945 Sept. 16	Capposquin	Antrim5-02	Seán Gleeson (Tipperary)
1946 Sept. 29	Corrigan Park	Antrim4-01	Michael Hennessy (Clare)
1947 Oct. 26	Corrigan Park	Antrim2-04	Celia Mulholland (Galway)
1948 Oct. 23	Croke Park	Dublin11-04	James Byrne (Waterford)
1949 Oct. 30	Roscrea	Dublin8-06	Celia Mulholland (Galway)
1950 Dec. 4	Croke Park	Dublin6-05	Celia Mulholland (Galway)
1951 Aug. 19	Croke Park	Dublin8-06	Celia Mulholland (Galway)
1952 Aug. 5	Croke Park	Dublin5-01	Celia Mulholland (Galway)
1953 Aug. 2	Croke Park	Dublin8-04	Lily Spence (Antrim)
1954 Aug. 22	Croke Park	Dublin10-04	Noreen Murphy (Cork)
1955 Aug. 21	Croke Park	Dublin9-02	Lily Spence (Antrim)
1956 Sept. 30	Croke Park	Antrim5-03	Kathleen O'Duffy (Dublin)
1957 Oct. 13	Croke Park	Dublin3-03	Noreen Murphy (Cork)
1958 Aug. 10	Croke Park	Dublin5-04	Nancy Murray (Antrim)

1959 Sept. 13	Croke Park	Dublin11-06	Mayo1-03	Nancy Murray (Antrim)
1960 Nov. 13	Croke Park	Dublin6-02	Galway2-00	Eithne Neville (Limerick)
1961 Oct. 8	Croke Park	Dublin7-02	Tipperary4-01	Maeve Gilroy (Antrim)
1962 Aug. 12	Croke Park	Dublin5-05	Galway2-00	Maeve Gilroy (Antrim)
1963 Sept. 8	Croke Park	Dublin7-03	Antrim2-05	Gloria Lee (Kildare)
1964 Oct. 4	Croke Park	Dublin7-04	Antrim3-01	Vera McDonnell (Mayo)
1965 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Dublin10-01	Tipperary5-03	Nuala Kavanagh (Sligo)
1966 Sept. 18	Croke Park	Dublin2-02	Antrim0-06	Bernie Byrne (Monaghan)
1967 Sept. 17	Croke Park	Antrim4-02	Dublin4-02	Eithne Neville (Limerick)
Oct. 15	Croke Park	Antrim3-09	Dublin4-02	Eithne Neville (Limerick)
1968 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Wexford4-02	Cork2-05	Nancy Murray (Antrim)
1969 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Wexford4-04	Antrim4-02	Lil O'Grady (Cork)
1970 Sept. 20	Croke Park	Cork5-07	Kilkenny3-02	Nancy Murray (Antrim)
1971 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Cork4-06	Wexford1-02	Lily Spence (Antrim)
1972 Sept. 17	Croke Park	Cork2-05	Kilkenny1-04	Lily Spence (Antrim)
1973 Sept. 16	Croke Park	Cork2-05	Antrim3-01	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
1974 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-08	Cork4-05	Jane Murphy (Galway)
Oct. 6	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-03	Cork1-05	Jane Murphy (Galway)
1975 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Wexford4-03	Cork1-02	Jane Murphy (Galway)
1976 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Kilkenny0-06	Dublin1-02	Jane Murphy (Galway)
1977 Sept. 18	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-04	Wexford1-03	Mary Lynch (Monaghan)
1978 Sept. 17	Croke Park	Cork6-04	Dublin1-02	Helena O'Neill (Kilkenny)
1979 Sept. 9	Croke Park	Antrim2-03	Tipperary1-03	Sheila McNamee (Dublin)
1980 Sept. 28	Croke Park	Cork2-07	Limerick3-04	Rosina McManus (Antrim)
Oct. 14	Croke Park	Cork1-08	Limerick2-02	Rosina McManus (Antrim)
1981 Sept. 13	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-09	Cork3-09	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
Oct. 4	Croke Park	Kilkenny1-09	Cork0-07	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
1982 Sept. 13	Croke Park	Cork2-07	Dublin2-06	Belle O'Loughlin (Down)
1983 Sept. 26	Croke Park	Cork2-05	Dublin1-06	Kathleen Quinn (Galway)
1984 Sept. 9	Croke Park	Dublin5-09	Tipperary2-04	Kathleen Quinn (Galway)
1985 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Kilkenny0-13	Dublin1-05	Miriam Higgins (Cork)
1986 Sept. 14	Croke Park	Kilkenny2-12	Dublin2-03	Betty Joyce (Cork)
1987 Sept. 27	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-10	Cork1-07	Anne Redmond (Dublin)
1988 Sept. 14	Croke Park	Kilkenny4-11	Cork3-08	Belle O'Loughlin (Down)
1989 Sept. 24	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-10	Cork2-06	Kathleen Quinn (Galway)
1990 Sept. 23	Croke Park	Kilkenny1-14	Wexford0-07	Miriam Murphy (Cork)
1991 Sept. 22	Croke Park	Kilkenny3-08	Cork0-10	Miriam O'Callaghan (Offaly)
1992 Sept. 27	Croke Park	Cork1-20	Wexford2-06	Aine Derham (Dublin)
1993 Sept. 26	Croke Park	Cork3-15	Galway2-08	Miriam O'Callaghan (Offaly)
1994 Sept. 25	Croke Park	Kilkenny2-11	Wexford0-08	Maria Pollard (Waterford)
1995 Sept. 24	Croke Park	Cork4-08	Kilkenny2-10	Aine Derham (Dublin)
1996 Sept. 22	Croke Park	Galway4-08	Cork1-15	Aine Derham (Dublin)
1997 Sept. 7	Croke Park	Cork0-15	Galway2-05	Biddy Phillips (Tipperary)
1998 Sept. 6	Croke Park	Cork2-13	Galway0-15	John Morrissey (Tipperary)
1999 Sept. 5	Croke Park	Tipperary0-12	Kilkenny1-08	Aine Derham (Dublin)
2000 Sept. 3	Croke Park	Tipperary2-11	Cork1-09	Aine Derham (Dublin)
2001 Sept. 16	Croke Park	Tipperary4-13	Kilkenny1-06	Aine Derham (Dublin)
2002 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Cork4-09	Tipperary1-09	Aileen Lawlor (Westmeath)
2003 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Tipperary2-11	Cork1-11	Aine Derham (Dublin)
2004 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Tipperary2-11	Cork0-09	Una Kearney (Armagh)
2005 Sept. 18	Croke Park	Cork1-17	Tipperary1-13	John Pender (Kildare)
2006 Sept. 10	Croke Park	Cork0-12	Tipperary0-04	Fintan McNamara (Clare)
2007 Sept. 9	Croke Park	Wexford2-07	Cork1-08	John Morrissey (Tipperary)
2008 Sept. 14	Croke Park	Cork2-10	Galway1-08	Eamonn Browne (Tipperary)

ALL-IRELAND JUNIOR CAMOGIE FINALS 1968-2008

YEAR DATE	VENUE	RESULT	REFEREE
1968 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Down2-03	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
1969 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Derry4-02	Anne Ashton (Dublin)
1970 Sept. 20	Croke Park	Dublin4-02	Vera Mannion (Mayo)
1971 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Dublin2-02	Nancy Murray (Antrim)
1972 Sept. 17	Croke Park	Galway3-06	Lil O'Grady (Cork)
1973 Sept. 16	Croke Park	Cork4-04	Teresa Byrne (Wicklow)
1974 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Clare3-02	Mary Lynch (Monaghan)
1975 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Dublin5-00	Eithne Neville (Limerick)
1976 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Down3-04	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
1977 Sept. 18	Croke Park	Limerick2-07	Miriam Higgins (Cork)
1978 Sept. 17	Croke Park	Derry3-04	Phyllis Breslin (Dublin)
1979 Sept. 9	Croke Park	Galway4-03	Carrie Clancy (Limerick)
1980 Sept. 28	Croke Park	Cork4-04	Kathleen Quinn (Galway)
1981 Sept. 13	Croke Park	Clare3-02	Belle O'Loughlin (Down)
1982 Sept. 13	Croke Park	Louth1-07	Kathleen Quinn (Galway)
1983 Sept. 26	Croke Park	Cork2-05	Brid Stokes (Limerick)
1984 Sept. 9	Croke Park	Cork5-08	Rita Whyte (Dublin)
1985 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Galway8-07	Sile Wallace (Dublin)
1986 Sept. 14	Croke Park	Clare1-13	Rose Ryan (Dublin)
1987 Sept. 27	Croke Park	Kildare2-10	Kitty McNicholas (Clare)
1988 Sept. 14	Croke Park	Galway3-04	Rose Merriman (Kildare)
1989 Sept. 24	Croke Park	Kildare3-11	Aine Derham (Dublin)
1990 Sept. 23	Croke Park	Kildare2-14	Miriam O'Callaghan (Offaly)
1991 Sept. 22	Croke Park	Down3-13	Mary Connor (Louth)
1992 Sept. 27	Croke Park	Tipperary6-13	Maria Pollard (Waterford)
1993 Sept. 26	Croke Park	Armagh3-09	Biddy Phillips (Tipperary)
Oct. 10	Breifni Park	Armagh2-10	Biddy Phillips (Tipperary)
1994 Sept. 25	Croke Park	Galway2-10	Catherine McAllister (Antrim)
1995 Sept. 24	Croke Park	Limerick3-07	Maria Pollard (Waterford)
1996 Sept. 22	Croke Park	Limerick6-05	Fiona McKenna (Antrim)
1997 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Antrim7-11	Mary Connor (Louth)
1998 Sept. 6	Croke Park	Galway3-11	Catherine McAllister (Antrim)
1999 Sept. 5	Croke Park	Cork1-13	John Morrissey (Tipperary)
2000 Sept. 3	Croke Park	Derry3-15	John Pender (Kildare)
2001 Sept. 16	Croke Park	Offaly1-07	Aislin Woods (Armagh)
2002 Sept. 15	Croke Park	Tipperary4-16	Una Kearney (Armagh)
2003 Sept. 21	Croke Park	Kilkenny2-11	Eamonn Browne (Tipperary)
2004 Sept. 19	Croke Park	Galway1-12	Aileen Lawlor (Westmeath)
2005 Sept. 18	Croke Park	Cork4-05	Una Kearney (Armagh)
Oct. 8	Bur	Dublin1-07	Una Kearney (Armagh)
2006 Aug. 19	Tullamore	Clare1-04	Cathal Egan (Cork)
2007 Aug. 19	Croke Park	Derry1-07	Cathal Egan (Cork)
2008 Aug. 19	Croke Park	Clare2-14	Una Kearney (Armagh)
2009 Aug. 19	Croke Park	Offaly1-10	Una Kearney (Armagh)

SENIOR TITLES	JUNIOR TITLES
DUBLIN26	CORK7
CORK23	GALWAY7
KILKENNY12	DUBLIN5
ANTRIM6	CLARE4
TIPPERARY5	DERRY4
WEXFORD4	DOWN3
GALWAY1	KILDARE3
	LIMERICK2
	TIPPERARY2
	ANTRIM1
	ARMAGH1
	KILKENNY1
	LOUTH1

Cashel are crowned Kilmacud All Ireland 7's champions

THE 56th Kilmacud All-Ireland 7's final was a thrilling affair between Cashel of Tipperary who defeated Galway side Athenry 3-9 to 4-5. Tipperary star and player of the Tournament Claire Grogan finished the day with a hat trick of goals in the final. The winners were a point ahead at the break 1-6 to Athenry's 2-1, Brenda Kerins netting the two Galway goals.

The Sean Flynn Shield Final was an equally exciting affair between two Down sides, Ballycran and Clonduff who won 4-12 to Ballycran's 3-4 with Down star Sara Louise Carr finishing with 2-2 for the winners.

Well done to the Stillorgan club who once again put on a great tournament with over 50 teams taking part including Fr Murphy's from London. Uachtarán Joan O'Flynn was there early on meeting and greeting the many players from all over the country and later in the afternoon made the presentations to winners and runners up at the end of a very fruitful day.

Details:
Cup semi-finals:

Cashel, Tipperary 4-8, Moneygall, Tipperary 0-3
Athenry, Galway 3-2, St. Martins, Wexford 2-0

Shield semi-finals:

Clonduff, Down 4-5, Myshall, Carlow 4-4
Ballycran, Down 3-6, Bellaghy, Derry 2-4

Finals:

Cup:
Cashel, Tipperary 3-9, C Grogan 3-4 (0-2F), J Mc Grath 0-4, J Horan 0-1
Athenry, Galway 4-5, B Kerins 2-1, T Maher 1-1, L Linnane 1-0, J Gill 0-3

Shield Final:

Clonduff, Down 4-12, S L Carr 2-2, O Maginn 2-1, P Gribben 0-5, K Gribben, F Carr 0-2 each
Ballycran, Down 3-4, L Hughes 1-2, C Mc Gouty 1-1, N Braniff 1-0, N Morgan 0-1

Denise Lynch of the Kilmacud club in Clare was the winner of the Kilmacud Poc Fada. Well known for her lengthy puck outs as the Banner custodian, she is a previous winner of the Martin Donnell All Ireland Poc Fada in the Cooley Mountains.



Back (from left): Marie Connell, Toni O'Byrne, Catherine Ledwidge, Noreen Fleming, Yvonne Redmond, Anne Thorpe, Carmel O'Byrne. Front (from left): Una Crowley, Barbara Redmond, Mary Mernagh, Germaine Noonan, Ann Colgan (capt.), Marion Conroy, Joan Gormley, Bernie Toner, Edel Murphy.

her fellow Celtic colleagues, Marion Conroy, Una Crowley, Marie Connell and Noreen Fleming, were facing their clubmate, Deirdre Lane, in the Tipp colours. Deirdre is currently with Na Fianna and is sister of former Tipperary hurler, the late Noel Lane.

Goals from Marie Connell, Joan Gormley, Germaine Noonan, Una Crowley and points by ace free-taker Edel Murphy saw Dublin home.

Ann remembers that for the first time, the All-Ireland winners were entertained in RTE where they were interviewed and got to see a replay of the game. After that it was on to the Montrose Hotel. 'After that I'm not telling,' she says.

A cruciate knee injury in 1988 in the first 15-a-side exhibition game in Croke Park effectively ended her playing career although, the mother of two sons, Alan and David, has filled the goalkeeper's jersey for her club Naomh Peregrine over the years where she is actively involved as a coach.

Twenty-five years later, Germaine Noonan, then a U.C.D. student, remains heavily involved in the game and is the current manager of the St. Vincent's Senior team. She has fond memories of the 1984 squad.

'Yvonne

DID YOU KNOW?

Edel Murphy, a member of the successful Dublin team of 1984, was RTE player of the match on the first camogie 'Sunday Game', and Liz Howard, President of the Association from 2006 to 2008, was the analyst.

Redmond was a top-class keeper, very agile, and her sister, Barbara, was another great player. Like the Redmonds, Bernie Toner, Mary Mernagh and Edel Murphy went on to win an All-Ireland club title with Crumlin in 1985.

Edel's brothers, John and Denis, also hurled for Dublin

and both are deeply involved in the game in St. Oliver Plunkett's-Eoghan Ruadh and Skerries Harps respectively. Edel is married to Eamonn O'Shea, coach to the Tipperary hurling team which came so close to stopping Kilkenny's bid for four-in-a-row last Sunday.

Marie Connell is the sister of former Dublin footballer, Senan. 'Catherine Ledwidge was another great player and Carmel O'Byrne at 16 years of age was the youngest on the panel. Toni O'Byrne was the sub 'keeper,' recalls Germaine.

Four of the squad – Yvonne Redmond, Noreen Fleming, Anne Thorpe and Marion Conroy – now live in the U.S.A., and Yvonne and Noreen have made the journey home.

Ann Colgan has never forgotten the 'magnificent' day in 1984, and she's optimistic that Dublin's current work at Senior and under-age levels will see the Dubs return to centre stage in the not too distant future.

ANN AND GERMAINE LOOK BACK WITH PRIDE Dublin – Jubilee Team 1984

By: GERRY O'SULLIVAN

A QUARTER of a century has passed since Dublin last laid claim to the O'Duffy Cup, but with 26 titles in the bag the Dubs still lead the pack. The gap might have been greater as the Dubs contested five finals between 1982 and 1986, but the side lost by a point and two points to Cork in '82 and '83 before falling to Kilkenny in '85 and '86 as that formidable outfit went on to clock up seven All-Irelands on the trot.

That five-year spell sandwiches a glorious day in Croke in 1984 as the Dubs claimed victory by 5-9 to 2-4 over Tipperary, having seen off the challenge of the Rebels in the semi-final thanks to a last-minute goal by Joan Gormley in Parnell Park.

A sweet victory, and the ironic thing about the win was that Dublin

was captained by Liscarroll native Ann Colgan who had won All-Ireland Senior medals with Cork in 1972 and 1973. She also has the distinction of playing in the All-Ireland Junior final of 1971 when Cork were beaten by Dublin.

Born as Ann Keane into a hurling-mad family, Ann starred with Buttevant in her early days before marriage saw her move to the capital in 1978. Her brother, Johnny, recently managed the Cork Intermediate hurlers to an All-Ireland title win over Kilkenny.

She began her association with Dublin camogie like so many others in the Phoenix Park. 'I turned up in the Park one Sunday and met some girls from Presentation Terenure and they asked me to join. I played with them in Bushy Park for a year or two before joining Celtic.'

A central player with club and county, Ann usually filled the centre-back, centrefield or centre-forward shirts.

Training for the games took place in Islandbridge under the

eye of legendary Dublin hurler, the late Christy Hayes, and selectors Síle Wallace, Phyllis Breslin, Carmel Cooper and Pat Rafferty.

Fellow team member Germaine Noonan remembers: 'Christy was inspirational and his wife, Nora, and daughters, Noreen and Niamh, were steeped in camogie.'

The final threw up an added conundrum as Ann and

DUBLIN 1984

1	Yvonne Redmond (Crumlin)	5	Catherine Ledwidge (Phoenix)
2	Marion Conroy (Celtic)	8	Barbara Redmond (Crumlin)
3	Germaine Noonan (U.C.D.)	11	Edel Murphy (U.C.D.)
4	Bernie Toner (Crumlin)		
6	Una Crowley (Celtic)		
7	Mary Mernagh (Crumlin)		
9	Joan Gormley (U.C.D.)		
10	Ann Colgan (Capt.) (Celtic)		
12	Marie Connell (Celtic)		

Subs: Toni O'Byrne (Phoenix), Noreen Fleming (Celtic), Anne Thorpe (An Caisteán), Carmel O'Byrne (Marino)

Aoife NEARY (Kilkenny)

Q Biggest influence on your career

A My Mam and Dad, Dad because he knows what it takes to succeed and Mam because, credit where it's due, she has been to every match I've ever played.

Q Achievement you treasure most

A Junior All-Ireland 2002.

Q Funniest player on panel and why?

A Catherine Doherty – she always has something witty to add!

Q If a transfer market was in place what player would you buy?

A Jane Adams from Antrim.

Q Book you enjoyed most

A 'It's Not About The Bike' by Lance Armstrong.

Q Film you enjoyed most

A Zoolander (I do a mean Zoolander impression).

Q Fantasy date

A A DVD, pasta and chips (I am a VERY cheap date!!!)

Q If you were marooned on a desert island what three things would you take with you?

A 1) my Nintendo DS; 2) a six-pack of Chickatees crisps; 3) hair serum for taming the frizzies in the humidity!

Q Guest at All Stars 2009

A Brian Cody.

Q Three sports people you admire most

A 1) Eoin Larkin (go on the Village!); 2) Ann Downey (come on people, every little helps when trying to make the team!); 3) Paul O'Connell (for coining Ann Downey's most infamous phrase: 'if the team spirit is right, anything is possible').

Q A talent you have that people are not aware of

A Cooking: I can essentially whip up a meal out of anything and let's face it, what doesn't work with beans!

Q Three words to describe yourself

A 1) Bloodthirsty; 2) Fanatical; 3) Grumpy (who knew?).

A Little Bit of Fun!

Joanne O'CALLAGHAN (Cork)

Q Biggest influence on your career

A My parents and my club and county trainers.

Q Achievement you treasure most

A Captaining Cork to win the All-Ireland in 2006 (pictured).

Q Funniest player on panel and why?

A Brieghe Corkery and/or Elaine O'Riordan... you're always guaranteed a mad night out with them.

Q If a transfer market was in place what player would you buy?

A Eimear McDonnell because at least then I wouldn't have to worry about trying to run around marking her.

Q Book you enjoyed most

A Confessions Of A Shopaholic

Q Film you enjoyed most

A The Hangover (definitely something I could see happening my friends and me in Vegas).

Q Fantasy date

A Simon Cowell – a man with money and a sense of humour. I would just have to sort out his dress sense first though.

Q If you were marooned on a desert island, what three things would you take with you?

A 1) a good-looking man; 2) a case of Lucozade; 3) some baby oil for the tan.

Q Guest at All Stars 2009

A Tommy Walsh from Kerry (especially for my friend Sarah).

Q Three sports people you admire most

A 1) Larry Tompkins; 2) The Kilkenny hurlers; 3) Brieghe Corkery.

Q A talent you have that people are not aware of

A Great to skip a queue in Reardon's Bar in Cork.

Q Three words to describe yourself

A 1) Shopaholic; 2) Outgoing; 3) Friendly.



There was less delirium surrounding the rather clinical demolition of Kilkenny by Cork's relentlessly efficient camogie side in the preceding final.

It was Cork's fifth win of the decade, their fourth in five years and the second time they have achieved back-to-back titles in the last few years.

The steady, smothering brilliance of the Cork defence restricted the young Kilkenny side to just two points from play in the hour.

There was yet more glory for Brieghe Corkery, who represents the county in the football final in a fortnight's time.



Cork's experience and class tilt the balance

Top: Offaly manager Joachim Kelly reacts as his team celebrate their junior camogie final win. Below: Cork's Amanda O'Regan lifts the cup after winning the senior camogie championship. Photographs: Dara Mac Donail and Lorraine O'Sullivan. Inpho



Cork

0-15

Kilkenny

0-7

IT WAS a grind more than a fluid performance but that was still enough for Cork as they eventually pulled away from Kilkenny to claim their 24th Gala All-Ireland senior camogie title at Croke Park.

Cork were never really firing on all cylinders but they still held too much class and experience for the youthful Cats.

Most of the game's most effective performers were in both defences and neither side created a genuine goal opportunity until Cork goalie, Aoife Murray was called upon to stop Marie O'Connor's close-range ground stroke four minutes from time.

Kilkenny's full-back line of Leann Fennelly, Catherine Doherty and Jacqui Frisby were particularly effective, while team captain Ann Dalton was the game's dominant midfielder, but Ann Downey's side lacked any sort of attacking thrust.

The Noreiders managed just two points from play as they struggled to escape the shackles of the outstanding Catriona Foley, Rena Buckley and Mary O'Connor.

O'Connor was poised personified as she won her 11th senior All-Ireland in total, her seventh camogie medal joining the four football mementoes in her trophy cabinet.

The unrelated Gemma O'Connor thundered into proceedings at centre-forward in the second half as Cork gradually pulled away for a deserving eight-point victory.

The game got off to a particularly cagey start even though the accurate Rachel Moloney pointed a free for Cork in the opening minute. It was another seven minutes before Aoife Neary equalised from a placed ball.

Eimear O'Sullivan flighted over the first point from play from tight on the right touchline to restore Cork's advantage, but Dalton equalised with a sensational 13th minute effort.

The St Lachtain's dynamo was on her knees when she won possession out around the middle, before somehow wriggling free of two Cork players, driving forward and slotting over the bar expertly.

That was the signal for the Rebels to up a gear and their response was mightily impressive, as they shot five of the next six points to go four clear.

Moloney provided three of those, two of them frees, and it was her centre that broke for Una O'Donoghue to arrow one over. Emer O'Farrell also got in the act but Michelle Quilty's score kept Kilkenny in touch, at just 0-8 to 0-5 behind.

Gemma O'Connor and Katie Power were booked just prior to the interval after an off-the-ball exchange of shoulders. That certainly seemed to fire the Cork player up and she won ample pos-

session after the restart.

By the time she sent over a mighty score from 46 metres, Denise Cronin's charges had doubled their half-time advantage. Moloney (free) and Eimear O'Sullivan having added points earlier.

Aoife Neary stopped the rot for Kilkenny with a 42-minute free, just after Murray had done well to bat Dalton's effort for a point clear from under her crossbar while under substantial pressure.

Kilkenny needed a slice of luck and a goal then might have got them back into proceedings.

Nearly tried to raise the green flag from a 21-yard free 10 minutes from the end but Brieghe Corkery bravely blocked her drive and cleared. Cork continued to play the ball intelligently down the flanks and they finished with a flourish as Kilkenny wilted in the glorious sunshine.

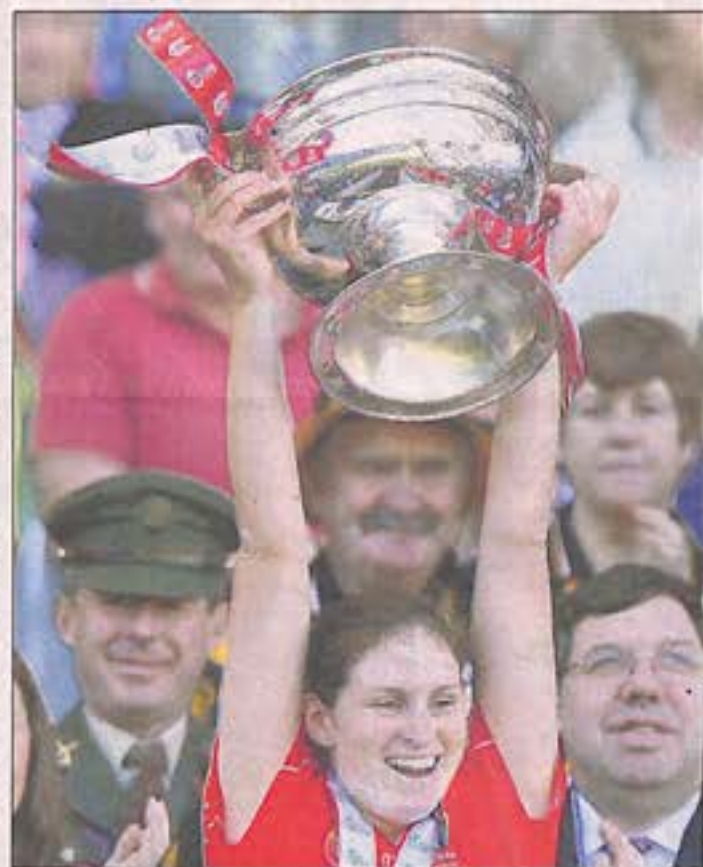
Moloney registered her seventh

point of the day from a free before feeding substitute Katriona Markey, who added her name to the scoresheet.

Cork introduced team captain Amanda O'Regan two minutes from the end and the Douglas woman could start readying her victory speech when Gemma O'Connor took a pass from Corkery to conclude the scoring.

Corkery to conclude the scoring.
CORK: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley; J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes; B Corkery, D Cotter; E O'Sullivan (0-2); G O'Connor (0-3), U O'Donoghue (0-2), S Burns, R Moloney 0-7 (six frees), E O'Farrell (0-1). Subs: K Mackey (0-1) for O'Farrell (37 mins); E Dillon for O'Donoghue (47); A O'Regan for Burns (58); L O'Connell for O'Callaghan (60).
KILKENNY: C Ryan, L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby, L Lyng, A Butler, E Aylward, C Dorrner, A Dalton (0-1); T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane; M Quilty (0-1), D Gaule, A Neary 0-5 (four frees, one 45). Subs: A Dunphy for Muldowney (17 mins); D Delaney for Lyng (37 mins); M O'Connor for Quilty (50); K Fennelly for Dorrner (58).
Referee: U Kearney (Armagh)

Referee: U Kearney (Armagh)



Storming finish secures title for Offaly



Offaly

3-14



Waterford

2-8

TWO GOALS in the space of two minutes in the second half finally broke Waterford's dogged resistance and helped Offaly secure their first ever Gala All-Ireland junior camogie title.

Elaine Darmody scored a goal and five points in the first half as Joachim Kelly's side raced into a 1-11 to 0-4 half time lead.

But Waterford fought back and Patricia Jackman's 35th minute

goal cut the deficit to six points.

That was still the margin with 13 minutes still remaining, but Siobhán Flannery and Arlene Watkins shook the Waterford net to knock the stuffing out of the Déise girls, for whom Aine Lyng goaled late on.

OFFALY: A Kennedy, F Stephens, L Keena, K Brady, S Sullivan, M Morkan, L Sullivan; A Watkins 1-1, M Crean; A Kelly E Darmody 1-6 (four frees), M Davis

0-3; T Hannon 0-1, K Nugent 0-1, S Flannery 1-2. Subs: J Brady for Flannery (56); A Corrigan for Kelly (60); E Dunne

WATERFORD: A O'Brien; V Gaffney; S O'Grady; K Heame; G Kenneally; M O'Donnell; S Kiernan; M Murphy; C Rafter; S Curran; K Kelly 0-2 (one free); N Morrissey 0-2 (one free); P Jackson 1-1; A Lyng 1-3 (two free); A Breathnach. Subs: J Simpson for Curran (nt); A Kelly for Breathnach (53); M Russell for Gaffney (59).
Referee: P Walsh (Armagh).

Classy Cork crush Cats

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL



Jim O'Sullivan

Croke Park

Cork.....0-15

Kilkenny.....0-7



NOTHING was as vital to Cork's retention of their GAA All-Ireland senior camogie title in Croke Park yesterday as the steadiness of their full-back line under pressure and, once more, the absolute dependability of Aoife Murray's goalkeeping.

Combined with a greater attacking threat that was underlined by excellent free-taking from Rachel Moloney, it meant that a comparatively inexperienced Kilkenny team could never mount a really serious challenge.

Appearing in their first final since 2001 - Cork have been contestants each year, winning five of those deciders - Kilkenny did manage to put up a highly creditable performance.

They were at their most competitive in the first half and led briefly through top scorer Aoife Neary in the 16th minute. However, they hadn't the overall strength to prevent Cork from assuming a gradual control on the resumption.

Scores were level three times in the game, up to the 18th minute when centre-forward Gemma O'Connor (one of the key contenders for the player-of-the-game award) pointed to cancel out Neary's score. However, five minutes earlier Neary was denied a goal by the first of three major stops by Aoife Murray, following which the quick reaction of the inside Cork backs stopped Therese Muldowney from getting in a second shot.

During this stage of the game, Cork's defensive strength was crucial, because it severely limited a Kilkenny attack which over the course of the game was to create more goal chances. Rena Buckley was first to make an impact in the left corner before Catriona Foley began to establish a dominance at full-back that was complemented by dual star Mary O'Connor's consistency in the centre.

Jenny Duffy was also prominent at times at right-half, Orla Cotter was contributing from the early stages at midfield and former captain Gemma O'Connor was providing important leadership at centre-forward, maintaining a strong physical presence and distributing the ball well.



Kilkenny's Deidre Delaney gets to grips with Cork's Emer O'Farrell in yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park, and below, Cork manager Denise Cronin joins her players in the celebrations.

Pictures: Sportsfile/Inpho

Murray keeps Cork in mint condition



Therese O'Callaghan

Croke Park

CORK are now just two wins away from equalling Dublin's record of 26 All-Ireland senior camogie titles, claiming four of the last five All-Ireland finals to boot. Yesterday their character and resilience shone through again as Kilkenny fired everything at them in Croke Park. And while they were never comfortable on an energy-sapping day, the Cork girls had the ability to up their performance when it mattered.

Cork have pitched the game to a higher level over these past few years, just as Tipperary did before them. And while Ann Downey's young Kilkenny side put it up to them for 40 minutes, Cork kept driving them back. Their experience came to the fore and when they needed leaders, one need look no further than Cork goalkeeper, Aoife Murray.

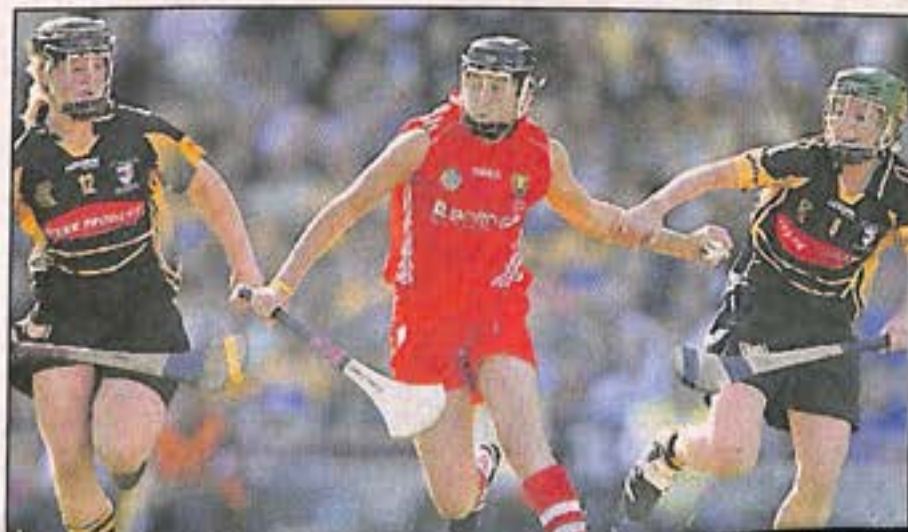
For the second Sunday in a row, fans were treated to spectacular shot-stopping exhibition at GAA headquarters. Catriona Ryan in the Kilkenny goal also brought off some fantastic saves, but Murray's memorable display was top-drawer, repelling Kilkenny attack, after attack.

It isn't the first time the Cork-based quantity surveyor has managed to impress on centre stage.

She was awesome in the 2008 decider against Galway. And despite receiving a knock to the head in the first half yesterday, the Cloughduv girl went on to repel all-comers.

When the game was there for the taking 10 minutes into the second half, Murray stepped up to the plate magnificently. Twice on her back foot, she controlled the ball superbly and cleared to safety.

And even when super sub Marie O'Connor (who got that late winning goal against Galway) came towards her one on one, Murray was up to the task. An awkward line ball which could have ended up in the net did not evade her either. Kilkenny had their chances, and this morning Downey



winning a lot of 'breaking ball' - and the excellence of their combination play which was to enhance the role of the forwards. Eimear O'Sullivan got in some good work on the right wing. Moloney was also to the forefront after moving out from full-forward and Kattriona Mackey also did well after coming on. However, it was Gemma O'Connor who made the most positive contribution at centre-forward.

Kilkenny were awarded a 21-yard free in the 49th minute and Cork had six players on the goal-line and a further two in front. And, it was Briege Corkery (in the 'first' line) who stopped Aoife Neary's powerful low shot.

After that, Aoife Murray did well to stop an angled shot from a line ball be-

Kilkenny's backs, too, coped well when under pressure, getting in some timely tackles and turning over possession at times. Catherine Doherty was very solid at full-back and Elaine Aylward as influential at left-half as she had been in the victory over fancied Galway in the semi-final. And, what was especially notable, team captain Ann Dalton was much more effective at midfield than respected opponent, Briege Corkery, who had to wait until the second quarter before having an involvement.

That began with Cork opening up a three-point gap, with Moloney putting over a 21st minute free, then availing of a misplaced puck-out to score from play and Una O'Donoghue quickly following with another. While it had them 0-8 to 0-5 ahead at the break, Aoife Neary again promised a goal in injury time until the vigilance of the Cork backs prevented her from taking the ball through on the ground.

Cork's Gemma O'Connor makes a break past Kilkenny's Edwina Keane and Amy Butler.

Picture: Inpho



Cork's Sile Burns battles with Kilkenny's Elaine Aylward and Jacqui Frisby and right, Cork's Amanda O'Regan lifts the cup.

Pictures: Inpho



Just as they had in the semi-final, Cork improved their standard in the second half, doubling their advantage within seven minutes before Kilkenny got what proved to be their first of only two further scores.

With Joanne O'Callaghan steadier at right corner-back, Cathiona Foley emphasised the importance of her role by getting in a vital tackle on Michelle

Quilty after Murray had batted down a high ball.

Further outfield, Cork's growing confidence was evident in the amount of possession they won — especially

fore making her best save of the game in diving to deny substitute Marie O'Connor.

That was four minutes from the end of normal time and while a goal would have been a just reward for Kilkenny's heroic efforts, it would have been too late to stop Cork from winning.

Scorers for Cork: R Moloney 0-7 (0-6 frees); E O'Sullivan 0-3; G O'Connor 0-2; U O'Donoghue, E O'Farrell and K Mackey 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: A Neary 0-5 (0-4 frees, 0-1 '45); A Dalton and M Quilty 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley; J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes; B Corkery, O Cotter; E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue; S Burns, R Moloney, E O'Farrell.

Subs: K Mackey for O'Farrell (37th minute); E Dillon for O'Donoghue (47th); A O'Regan (capt.) for Moloney (57th); L O'Connell for O'Callaghan (59th).

KILKENNY: C Ryan; L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby; L Lyng, A Butler, E Aylward; C Dormer, A Dalton (capt); T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane; M Quilty, D Gaulie, A Neary.

Subs: A Dunphy for Muldowney (17th minute); D Delaney for Lyng (37th); M O'Connor for Quilty (50th); K Fennelly for Dormer (57th).

Referee: Una Kearney (Armagh).

may wonder would things have been different if Cork didn't have such an impenetrable obstacle between the sticks.

This wasn't a classic final but it will matter little to Cork. A 10-minute spell before the break, when they hit four points on the trot, gave them breathing space. Gemma O'Connor and Rachel Moloney were influential at this stage. Both sets of backs were dogged and yielded little to their opponents. And even though Kilkenny went in at the break three points behind, we wondered how long more their superb defensive play would hold out.

Jacqui Frisby, Catherine Doherty and Leann Fennelly did really well, as did their half-back line and midfield.

But they were getting nothing soft from Cork. Despite the Kilkenny crowd growing, their youthful attack could not get past players like Rena Buckley, Jenny Duffy, Cathiona Foley and Mary O'Connor. Gemma O'Connor excelled too, as did Orla Cotter, and later Briege Corkery, around the middle.

Whereas Kilkenny's defence soaked a lot of pressure, they were unable to exert anything sustained up front.

Perhaps their birth certificates provide the answer — four of their forwards are under 20. They will have benefited from the experience and having not appeared in a final since 2001, they will return with much greater self belief next year.

But for now, it is about this all-conquering Cork side and their manager Denise Cronin, who has secured back-to-back wins.

It also brought back memories of the last time these two teams met, in 1995, when Downey and Cronin wore the opposing number seven shirts.

In the curtain-raiser Offaly showed they will be able to compete in the intermediate grade next year.

Joachim Kelly had his charges in flying form following last season's heartbreak. He obviously learned much from that defeat.

During the week he said "winning an All Ireland is not everything, it's the only thing".

Cork and Offaly know all about this today.

Congratulations to Cork's Senior Camogie team on their All-Ireland victory



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BORD GÁIS
NETWORKS

Cronin chasing three in-a-row

by Jim O'Sullivan

WINNING manager Denise Cronin has no doubt that the current Cork senior camogie team is good enough to complete an elusive treble in 2010 — but only if they 'deserve it,' she said after yesterday's eight points win over Kilkenny.

Suggesting that a defeat might have prompted a number of retirements, she expressed confidence that it can be accomplished.

"I think the push will be on for three-in-a-row, they know what it takes to win it," she commented.

"We lost against Wexford in 2007 and they players said they were a little lack-lustre on the day.

"Wexford wanted it more. That was the thing and they deserved it.

"And Cork have to deserve three in a row.

"They just don't turn up any more; the teams are too close."

Cronin, who was the winning captain in 1995 when Cork defeated Kilkenny in the last meeting of the counties, admitted to finding it strange at the final whistle.

"It hasn't sunk in. I don't know if it's because there were no supporters on the field or everyone being so

far away ... I can't really believe it!"

Agreeing that Kilkenny created more goal chances, she said: "at half time I thought we could have been in a small bit of trouble.

"It was just about getting the 15 that were out there 'right' for the second half, see how they progressed and if we still needed to make changes, there was loads of time.

"We were three points up and we have played well against the wind. We weren't two worried."

She praised 'keeper Aoife Murray for being outstanding 'again' and said that the full-back trio had 'set the standard.

"They continued it for the second half. They were amazing," she added. Overall, it was 'fabulous.'

Praising wing-back Sarah Hayes for her dedication after returning from a shortened honeymoon last Monday, she agreed it had been pleasing to bring on team captain Amanda O'Regan near the end. "We had a meeting and the girls stood up and said how amazing she has been all year through everything that has happened."

Saying that she was 'thankful' for the opportunity of coming on for the last few minutes — "I even got to the ball."

Cork reaction

18 year-olds.

"It all comes down to experience. You can't buy it. The Cork players had it," she commented. "I'd be happy enough with our backs. Cork didn't have that many goal chances. Our backs

Kilkenny reaction

worked really hard and so did our centre-fielders — we just didn't get the rub of the green to be honest.

"We came out in the second-half, Cork upped a notch and we weren't able to match them for pace.

"And, when we did get the few chances we weren't able to take them."

Other than that, she felt that they were 'a little bit unlucky with some frees that went against them,' in addition to others 'they didn't get.'

Downey: Kilkenny will take lessons on board

by Jim O'Sullivan

MEDAL-LADEN Kilkenny senior camogie boss Ann Downey is satisfied that the lessons learned in defeat in yesterday's Gala All-Ireland final will enhance her team's chance of bouncing back to win an overdue title.

"They are a great bunch of girls. We will be back next year ... no doubt about it," she said.

Downey, who won her 12th medal in the last of Kilkenny's title victories over Wexford in 1994, felt that her team lost because of two key factors — inexperience primarily and a lack of physical strength in attack.

She pointed out that two of their forwards were

But she was philosophical, adding: "at the end of the day you have to be able to create your own chances and we weren't able to do that in the second half.

"I am delighted that they didn't leave themselves down, but I'm disappointed that we didn't win.

"We came up with high hopes that we were going to be able to match Cork.

"On the day I think it was experience that helped them.

"One or two of our players were 'struck' by the whole thing before we even hit a ball.

"I'm sure they will be disappointed in the morning when they know themselves that they didn't play as well as they could.

"But, having said that, they really battled."



CLIONA FOLEY

CORK 0-15
KILKENNY 0-7

GALA ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE FINAL
IT'S not often that hurley-wielding Cats lose one final, let alone two in the same afternoon at Croke Park, but their women could certainly have no quibbles yesterday.

Their young side came up considerably short against the defending All-Ireland senior camogie champions who proved their mettle yet again by racking up a phenomenal fifth title from eight consecutive finals.

And as the final whistle sounded the question was inevitably posed: can the Rebelettes can now go on to clinch the three-in-a-row which has always eluded them, most recently in 2007?

To her credit, manager Denise Cronin didn't dodge the question or pretend that it won't be next on their agenda.

"If we'd lost one today you might have seen a lot of players retire but I think the push will be on for the three in-a-row and they know what it takes to win it," she said.

"Whether I'm there or not, that team should win one," she stressed proudly. "They're an amazing bunch of girls and, if you keep slotting (new) people in, I think they will do it."

Cronin's confidence is well-placed because her side won yesterday without playing all that well.

STANDARD

Dual superstar Briege Corkery - who will be a huge loss to the county next year as she's taking time out to travel - was below her usual stratospheric standard.

Apart from Gemma O'Connor, their forwards really never cut loose in a match in which both sides' full-back lines starred and it was actually the Kittens who had all of the game's goal chances.

Yet despite those chances, and a brave, nerveless start which actually saw them lead in the 16th minute, Kilkenny's team of rookie finalists ultimately couldn't match Cork's superior stamina, strength and guile.

Not for the first time the bedrock of Cork's latest victory was their defence, where All Star goalkeeper Aoife Murray, Cathriona Foley, Rena Buckley, Mary O'Connor and Sara Hayes (just a week back from her honeymoon!) were outstanding during several periods of heavy aerial bombardment, mostly engineered by excellent Kilkenny captain Ann Dalton.

At times in the second half it was like 'women against girls' which, in many cases,



Emer O'Farrell, Cork, in action against Jacqui Frisby, Kilkenny in yesterday's All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship final. Below: Cork captain Amanda O'Regan lifts the O'Duffy cup

Bullish Cronin eyes treble after taming kittens

was true as Ann Downey's young side were contesting their first final in eight years and 'giving away' plenty of pounds in experience and nous.

Within 16 minutes, she had introduced schoolgirl Aisling Duffy (17) to a forward line that already included four teenagers but, yesterday, burgeoning stars like Katie Power, Edwina Keane and Denise Gaule (all 18) couldn't filch even a point between them.

Kilkenny's only two points from play came before half-time and they only scored twice in the second half.

In contrast, five of Cork's starting forwards scored and 17-year-old Katriona Mackey (whose twin is also on the panel) scored off the bench which also yielded the highly deco-

rated Emer Dillon. After being held level for the first quarter Cork noticeably then surged four points clear and went in three points up (0-8 to 0-5) at half-time.

Yet, as ever, they had All Star 'keeper Murray to thank for never veering into the danger-zone.

The Cloughduv star was alert, after just 16 minutes, to a long-range shot from Aoife Neary and subsequently made three crucial second-half stops. Her second save, blocking a dangerous overhead ball on the line after 42 minutes, was her most important because a goal at that stage could have given Kilkenny new oxygen.

Neary also had goal on her mind when she stepped up to a 20m free in the fourth quarter which Corkery parried and from there Cork essentially suffocated them with their ruthless defensive efficiency and superior teamwork.

It may not have been a showstopper like the 2007 and '08 finals but Cork showed they can win any way; grinding out this victory with unfussy graft and selfless teamwork, exemplified by

the likes of Foley and Gemma O'Connor, who showed massive leadership up front when all around her were being held.

"The way Kilkenny play they hold their positions while we tend to drift out and sometimes it could be six against our three and we tried to work on that with low ball to our half-forwards the second-half," manager Cronin revealed.

"We said if there's an opportunity just take your scores, points could win this game," she added, which certainly proved prophetic.

Kilkenny's full-back line of Leanne Fennelly, Catherine Doherty and Jacqui Frisby deserved huge credit for holding the Cork full-forwards to just two points from play and Amy Butler had a cracking tussle with Gemma O'Connor.

But as beaten manager Downey said: "you can't buy experience."

"I'd be happy with our backs, they worked really hard and we just didn't get the rub of the green," she said.

"Cork upped it a notch in the second half and we weren't able to match

THE GAME AT A GLANCE

PLAYER OF THE MATCH

Cathriona Foley (Cork)
Aoife Murray, Rena Buckley and Gemma O'Connor were also contenders but the Cork full-back held several players scoreless and was rock-solid throughout.

TURNING POINT

A short puck-out after 21 minutes backfired to give Rachel Moloney her second point in quick succession and within five minutes Cork had pulled four points clear and Kilkenny were always chasing the game.

TALKING POINT

Cork's bench strength. Emer Dillon was 'Player of the Match' in the 2005 final and is back after an absence of a year, while another of their subs was one of the young Mackey twins, 17-year-old Katriona.

REF WATCH

From a whistle-happy past, camogie refs are finally letting the game go, as Una Kearney did here, and as a spectacle, the game certainly benefits.

THEY SAID

"We said if there's an opportunity, take your scores, points could win this game. But it was Kilkenny who got in and our goal was blessed a lot of the time. Our full-backs set the standard and Aoife Murray was outstanding again today."

Denise Cronin (Cork manager)

"One or two of them were probably struck by the whole thing before we'd even hit a ball and will be disappointed that they didn't play as well as they could. But they really battled, they've got the experience now and we'll be back."

Ann Downey (Kilkenny manager)

MATCH STATISTICS

Wides: Cork 8 (5), Kilkenny 4 (1)
Frees: Cork 16 (7), Kilkenny 15 (7)
Yellow Cards: Cork 1 (G O'Connor 31), Kilkenny 2 (A Neary 19, K Power 31)
Red Cards: 0
Attendance: 25,924

them for pace, and when we did get the few chances we weren't able to take them," she added.

"I'm delighted that the girls didn't let themselves down but disappointed that we didn't win because we had high hopes.

"But on the day I think it was the experience that helped them. They closed us down every chance we got in the second half and were hunting in packs.

"But that's experience and we've to go back and build on today. We've a very young team and they've got that experience now and we'll be back next year," she vowed.

SCORERS: - Cork: R Moloney 0-7 (6), G O'Connor 0-3, E O'Sullivan 0-2, U O'Donoghue, E O'Farrell and K Mackey 0-1 each.
Kilkenny: A Neary 0-5 (1/45), A Dalton, M Quilty 0-1 each.
CORK: - A Murray 8, J O'Callaghan 7, C Foley 8, R Buckley 8, J Duffy 7, M O'Connor 8, S Hayes 8, B Corkery 7, O Cotter 7, E O'Sullivan 8, G O'Connor 8, U O'Donoghue 7, S Burns 8, E O'Farrell 8, R Moloney 7. **Subs:** K Mackey 8 for O'Farrell (37), E Dillon 8 for O'Donoghue (47), A O'Regan (capt) for Burns (58), L O'Connell for O'Callaghan (59).
KILKENNY: - C Ryan 8, L Fennelly 8, C Doherty 8, J Frisby 8, L Lyng 8, A Butler 7, E Aylward 6, C Donnan 8, A Dalton (capt) 6, T Muldowney 8, K Power 8, E Keane 7, M Quilty 7, D Gaule 6, A Neary 6. **Subs:** A Murphy 7 for Muldowney (16), D Delaney 7 for Lyng (28), M O'Connor 7 for Quilty (50), K Fennelly for Donnan (57).
REF: - U Kearney (Armagh).



GALA ALL-IRELAND FINALS:

Senior All-Ireland Final,
Cork, 0-15, Kilkenny 0-7

Junior All-Ireland Final,
Offaly, 3-14, Waterford 2-8

Kilmacud All Ireland 7's
Finals:

Cup final:

Cashel, Tipperary 3-9, C Grogan 3-4 (0-2f), J Mc
Grath 0-4, J Horan 0-1
Athenry, Galway 4-5, B Kerins 2-1, T Maher 1-1, L
Linnane 1-0, J Gill 0-3

Shield Final:

Clonduff, Down 4-12, S L Carr 2-2, O Maginn 2-1, P
Gribben 0-5, K Gribben, F Carr 0-2 each
Ballycran, Down 3-4, L Hughes 1-2, C Mc Gourty 1-
1, N Braniff 1-0, N Morgan 0-1

Cup semi-finals:

Cashel, Tipperary 4-8, Moneygall, Tipperary 0-3
Athenry, Galway 3-2, St. Martins, Wexford 2-0

Shield semi-finals:

Clonduff, Down 4-5, Myshall, Carlow 4-4
Ballycran, Down 3-6, Bellaghy, Derry 2-4



Amanda O'Regan captained Cork to secure their 24th Gala All Ireland senior camogie title

OFFALY TAKE GALA JUNIOR CAMOGIE HONOURS

Sunday, 13 Sep 2009

Gala All-Ireland Junior Camogie Championship Final

Offaly 3-14
Waterford 2-8
By Colin Duffy
At Croke Park

Offaly bounced back from last year's All-Ireland final defeat to claim Gala All-Ireland Junior Championship success this afternoon following a nine-point win over first time finalists Waterford at Croke Park.

It was a brace of fourth quarter goals in the space of a minute from corner forwards Siobhan Flannery and Arlene Watkins which confirmed a historic All-Ireland success for the Midlanders.

Although playing against a stiff breeze in the opening half Offaly began brilliantly confining Waterford to just one point in the first quarter.

Joachim Kelly's side showed great hunger early on as points from Arlene Watkins, Elaine Dermody, and a brace of Michelle Davis scores ensured a 0-04 to 0-01 lead by the 12th minute, with Aine Lyng scoring Waterford's opening point.

Indeed Offaly were firmly on top in all sectors, and were unlucky not to have a goal in the fifth minute, after Siobhan Flannery was brought down by Waterford captain Sally O'Grady for a penalty.

However Elaine Dermody was unable to dispatch the resulting penalty shot to the net, with Waterford defending superbly.

Offaly eventually found their opening goal in the 20th minute following a sustained period of pressure, with Dermody having passing the ball to the back of the net to ensure a 1-05 to 0-02 lead.

Waterford were only able to notch two points before the interval as Offaly and their full-forward Dermody gave an exhibition of point-scoring.

Dermody bagged four more points before half-time, with scores also from Siobhan Flannery and Tina Hannon to ensure the Faithful County led by 1-11 to 0-04 at the break.

Waterford began the second half in determined fashion as Offaly were left on the backfoot in the opening minutes after the restart.

The home side were in impressive form, and outscored their opponents by 1-02 to 0-01 in a ten-minute spell.

Andy Moloney's charges firmly make amends for a poor first-half showing, as they cut the deficit to six points with Aine Lyng slugging over two pointed frees, while Patricia Jackman broke through for a 35th minute goal.

Resigning All-Ireland Poc Fada winner Jackman showed tremendous pace and vision as she latched onto a Nicola Morrissey pass, before planting the ball in the past of the Offaly net past goalkeeper Audrey Kennedy.

However Offaly staged a strong final quarter with goals in the space of a minute from Flannery and Watkins paying the price for a comfortable victory.

Aine Lyng bagged a late goal for Waterford with three minutes remaining, but this was mere consolation as Offaly held out for a first All-Ireland success.

After the game Offaly captain Marion Crean received the New Ireland Cup from Uachtaran Cumann Camogaiochta na hEireann Joan O'Flynn.

Final: A Kennedy, K Brady, L Keena, F Stephens; L Sullivan, M Crean, S Sullivan; K Nugent, M Morkan; A Kelly (0-1), (0-2), M Davis (0-3); S Flannery (1-1), E Dermody (1-6, 4f), A Watkins (1-1). Subs: J Brady for Flannery (55); O'Farrell (37); E Dillon for O'Donoghue (47); A O'Regan for Moloney (57); L O'Connell for O'Callaghan (59).

Waterford: A O'Brien; V Gaffney, S O'Grady, KM Hearne; G Kenneally, M O'Donnell, Skernan; M Murphy, C Raher; S Curran, A Lyng (1-3, 2f), N Morrissey (0-1); P Jackman (1-1), K Kelly (0-3, 2f), A Breathnach. Subs: J Simpson for Curran (47); A Kelly for Breathnach (52); M Russell for Curran (59).

Referee: Pat Walsh (Armagh)

CORK CLAIM 24TH GALA SENIOR CAMOGIE TITLE

Sunday, 13 Sep 2009

Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship Final

Cork 0-15
Kilkenny 0-7
By Colin Duffy
At Croke Park

Cork manager Denise Cronin leapt for joy as the Rebellettes claimed back-to-back Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie Championship titles, following a hard-earned eight-point win before 25,924 at Croke Park this afternoon.

Free-taker Rachel Moloney was in superb form with seven points, six from placed-balls while Cork goalkeeper Aoife Murray kept her side on top in the closing stages with some vital match-winning saves.

Although Cork were convincing winners at the finish, there was nothing to separate the sides in the opening stages with the counties level on three occasions by the 18th minute.

Moloney slotted over the first of her seven points, with a well-earned score after 58 minutes - but defences were firmly on top in the next six minutes - with Kilkenny's defence performing strongly despite Cork's attacking prowess.

Aoife Neary was also strongly pushing for scores, with the opening goal chance falling to the James Stephens corner-forward in the 13th minute, but Cork custodian Murray pulled off a superb save.

Kilkenny continued to go in search of scores as points from Ann Dalton and Neary pushed the Cats 0-03 to 0-02 clear by the 16th minute.

But Cork firmly took control with six of the next eight points to ensure a 0-08 to 0-05 interval lead.

Rachel Moloney led the charge with three points before the break, while Una O'Donoghue and Emer O'Farrell were also on target.

Kilkenny went in search of goals in the second half, with full-forward Denise Gaule gifted an excellent opportunity within 30 seconds of the restart.

However Gaule's effort blazed wide of the target, as Cork kept their momentum going with points from Moloney, Eimear O'Sullivan and O'Connor to take a 0-11 to 0-5 lead by the 37th minute.

Kilkenny failed to give up with Aoife Neary leading their comeback, and although her side were gifted plenty of goal-scoring chances in the second half - they couldn't find the vital three-pointer which they required to bring them back into contention.

Cork were simply sublime throughout this game, with Moloney's sixth point ensuring a 0-12 to 0-6 lead as the game entered the final quarter.

Kilkenny showed great work rate throughout, but couldn't match the hunger of a determined Cork outfit who closed out this victory with points from Moloney, substitute Katrina Mackey and Gemma O'Connor to ensure an eight-point win.

After the game Amanda O'Regan accepted the O'Duffy Cup from Uachtaran Cumann Camogaiochta na hEireann Joan O'Flynn.

CORK: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, C Foley, Rena Buckley; J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes; B Corkery, O Cotter; E O'Sullivan (0-2), G O'Connor (0-3), U O'Donoghue (0-1); S Burns, E O'Farrell (0-1), R Moloney (0-7, 6f). Subs: K Mackey (0-1) for O'Farrell (37); E Dillon for O'Donoghue (47); A O'Regan for Moloney (57); L O'Connell for O'Callaghan (59).

KILKENNY: C Ryan; L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby; L Lyng, A Butler, E Aylward; C Dormer (0-1), A Dalton (0-1); T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane; M Quilty (0-1), D Gaule, A Neary (0-5, 4f, 1 45). Subs: A Dunphy for Muldowney (17); D Delaney for Lyng (37); M O'Connor for Quilty (50); K Fennelly for Dormer (57).

Referee: Una Kearney (Armagh)



Katriona Mackey

Mackey happy to get one over Cats

Katriona Mackey SEVENTEEN-year-old Katriona Mackey has suffered defeat at the hand of Kilkenny at both U16 and minor levels so yesterday was particularly satisfying for her.

"We lost to Kilkenny in the U16 final last year and my twin Pamela was captain when we lost to them again in the minor All-Ireland championship and to be honest we just always seemed to be second to them, so today it was great to beat them."

"I really wanted to beat them and not be second beat again to them."

"A lot of the Kilkenny players that were on those teams that beat us were playing today and it was a great feeling to come on and win a senior medal and my first All-Ireland medal and it was special because we have lost to them so many times."

Katriona didn't expect to be called into the fray yesterday but she settled and played well.

"To be honest I was surprised to be called on, I had come on in a few games but I never thought I would be going on today."

"I was told warm-up and I did and just went on and really the players around me were great, they gave me huge encouragement and I just tried to keep the ball moving and keep the pressure on the Kilkenny defence."

Now that she has tasted success Katriona Mackey is determined to be back for more.

"It was incredible out there today and I enjoyed every minute of it the whole atmosphere was unreal and I hope we can go on and win a lot more."

"Kilkenny are a young team and they have very good underage teams to build on but I am looking forward to getting back to Croke Park hopefully in the years ahead, but today was just brilliant and I am delighted to have been part of a great Cork team."

IF THIS was a hurling match it would have been labelled men against boys.

It was the old heads against the pretenders to the throne, as the crafty and experienced champions Cork had too much skill for a Kilkenny side whose expected strong challenge failed to really materialise.

Time and again we saw that little bit of craft from Cork, the flick at the right time, the blocking and hooking timed to perfection, while their positioning off the ball was spot on all afternoon.

We saw Mary O'Connor on one occasion step back to simply allow the play develop a few steps in front of her, before smartly stepping behind a cluster of players and clearing the ball up field.

Cork played to a well-rehearsed match plan and, coached to perfection in what was required, they proceeded to stamp their authority on the game from the first minute forcing Kilkenny to play a chasing game all through.

Kilkenny battled hard but they never really had the class of champions as Cork, playing in their eighth final in a row, looked comfortable all through.

At stages over the hour Cork looked just like a team playing in their own back garden — cool and composed under pressure, they knew just what they had to do and they did it well.

From the throw-in the Cork defence was excellent and they never allowed the Kilkenny attack too much room, as a unit they stood firm, ably assisted by superb goalkeeper Aoife Murray, who made vital saves at crucial times.

An indication of the Cork defence's superiority was that Kilkenny could only manage two scores from play and you simply cannot expect to win an All-Ireland title with that performance.

Indeed, in the second half, Kilkenny failed to score from play as they struggled to keep pace with Cork who added four from play and three from frees in the second half.

From one to 15 and beyond Cork were a team. They distributed the ball well, picking out their team-mates with precision passes, always having the ability to get themselves out of danger when under pressure, and their composure at the back was superb as they never showed any panic despite a few scary moments when Kilkenny came in search of goals.

It was Kilkenny who created all of



Cork's Cathriona Foley and Rena Buckley combine to stop Kilkenny's Michelle Quilty during their Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie final clash at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

By MARY NEWMAN

Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie final

the goal chances as Cork were always content to pop the ball over the bar and build up their lead, again something that comes with experience.

They just kept working away, taking every opportunity that arose.

Cork hit some excellent long-range points, Eimear O'Sullivan and Gemma O'Connor in particular striking some beauties, while free-taker Rachel Maloney was again unerring, striking six from frees and one from play as all over the field Cork showed a fierce hunger for success.

Referee Una Kearney had a reasonably good outing, 31 frees in total. She

held a firm hold on proceedings but allowed the players plenty of leeway.

She consulted with her umpires and called play back on one occasion after she had missed a wide ball signal, she was up with the play and didn't over impose herself on the occasion.

Coming into this final a lot of emphasis was made on the huge underage success that Kilkenny have enjoyed four U16 and four minor titles in a row is a tribute to the huge amount of work they are putting in but yesterday the biggest test arrived and they were unable to cope.

They struggled in key areas, most notably up front, as their inside line met their toughest challenge to date and with just two of their six forwards getting on the scoresheet they failed

to make any head way.

Cork showed the strength of their bench introducing Emer Dillon, Amanda O'Regan and Lynda O'Connell three players who would grace any starting 15, while last year's U16 player Katriona Mackey showed plenty of maturity, landing an excellent point with four minutes remaining.

It was great to see captain Amanda O'Regan enter the fray with five minutes remaining and to see her leading her teammates to victory. Amanda had been unable to command a place in the starting 15 yet she continued to complete her duties as captain with dignity and enthusiasm, yesterday was a fitting reward for a player who has given so much.

O'Callaghan cherishes fifth All-Ireland success

Joanne O'Callaghan

EXPERIENCED defender Joanne O'Callaghan added a fifth Celtic Cross to her collection yesterday and the victory was as sweet as ever.

"Today was my eighth All-Ireland senior final and to be honest I was nervous in the first half because a few of us are that bit older we feel the nerves more."

"I think when you are younger you are not as aware of just how much it means."

Joanne felt that as the game progressed Cork's confidence grew.

"We hung in there in the first half and turned over three points ahead at the break."

"In the second half the forwards were flying and they picked off great points from all angles. Once they kept scoring our confidence grew."

Joanne felt that Kilkenny's inexperience told yesterday.

"So many of them are so young and I know they have won a lot at underage level but Croke Park is a big difference."

"Today they had a huge hunger but we matched that and it was crucial



Cork's Joanne O'Callaghan

that we got a good start and from there on we kept in front."

Joanne had huge praise for every one of her team-mates and the panel.

"We have a great squad and the younger players coming in have been superb."

"It was great today for Katriona Mackey who has lost so many underage finals to Kilkenny. To win her first All-Ireland medal in Croke Park is something special. Hopefully they will have lots of great years ahead."

Joanne aims to stick around and try and add to her collection.

"I suppose I will go for the even half dozen and sure if don't get it next year that will be it but we will give it a try and see how it goes."

much skill for Cats



Cork players celebrate after defeating Kilkenny at Croke Park yesterday. BELOW: Cork players Lynda O'Connell, Orla Cotter and Amanda O'Regan in jubilant mood. BELOW RIGHT: Cork selector Lillian Zinkant and trainer Frank Flannery celebrate in Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

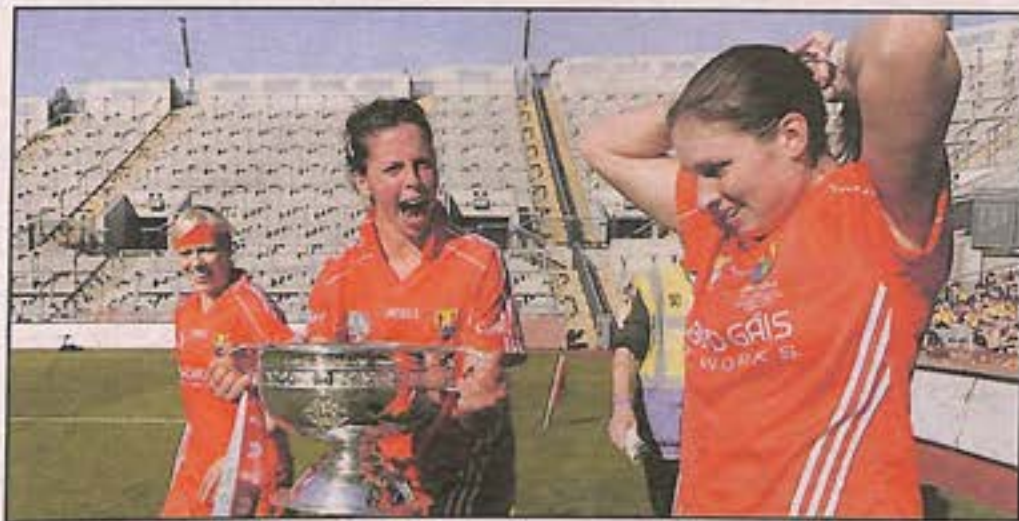
A lot of praise for yesterday's success must go to coach Frank Flannery.

In his first season in the job he brought it to a new level, and with manager Denise Cronin and selectors Lillian Zinkant and Michael O'Regan driving the side forward, they masterminded Cork's latest success.

Failure to win a game in the national league was not a priority as the Cork backroom team earmarked back-to-back All-Ireland titles.

They spent long hours since early March working towards reaching their goal and yesterday they reached the top of the mountain.

They are truly magnificent champions.



Coach Flannery heaps praise on his All-Ireland winners

Frank Flannery

Coach Frank Flannery was beaming at the full-time whistle as he celebrated with his back-room team.

He was quick to heap praise on his charges but felt that victory was never in doubt.

"I don't think victory was ever in doubt after half-time. At the break we had a good talk and in the second half we went back to moving the ball faster. We were a bit slow in the first half.

"We also made sure all through

that we had players back behind the ball and we defended well when they came at us. We played well and every player on the panel gave it everything they had."

It was a huge achievement for Frank in his first season with the team. "To be honest my job was an easy one. Today was all about the players. Anyone could coach these girls. The main thing was to keep their minds happy and to keep them interested. The rest they did themselves. I don't think we played to our full potential today. There is a huge



Cork's Frank Flannery and Gemma O'Connor.



amount of talent in this squad, I have seen it in the training all year."

Frank indicated that he might not

be around next year.

"I think a change is good for a team, it helps keep things fresh. I really can't better today, can I?"

Pressed further about staying on for the three in-a-row Frank replied: "Maybe I will consider it, we will see in March, it's a long way down the road. Now we will take a break and enjoy and savour our victory."

Gemma O'Connor

ONE player who played herself to a standstill yesterday was Gemma O'Connor.

A member of the Irish defence

forces, Gemma is heading off to Chad on October 1 and she has been busy in the lead up to both the trip and the final.

"I suppose it has been a hectic few weeks, getting ready for the trip and preparing for today, but thank God all is going well and today's win is a great send off. I will be away for four months and will return in February. "I will be hanging up the boots for a few months but I will be back in time for the national league and hopefully to give the three-in-a-row a lash."

Cork eyes now

Defensive qualities to the fore for Rebels



LINDA MELLERICK

Cork 0-15
Kilkenny 0-7

THE bid for three in-a-row is on for 2010 after Cork retained the O'Duffy cup for the second year in a row in a sun-drenched Croke Park yesterday afternoon.

In truth, it was a game that Cork never looked like losing despite the fact that their full-back line and goalkeeper were the far busier of the two defences over the 64 minutes.

Cork's defence were superb throughout particularly Catriona Foley, Rena Buckley and Sarah Hayes. As a unit the entire defence hunted in packs and it is to their credit and the goalkeeping ability of Aoife Murray that Kilkenny scored only two points from play throughout the game.

A glorious day saw no wind advantage, Cork playing left to right having won the toss. They settled well, getting the better of exchanges in the opening six minutes or so, seven frees inside those opening minutes offering neither side a chance to move into a rhythm.

Aoife Neary got through for Kilkenny on a couple of occasions but Foley and Buckley snuffed out the threat.

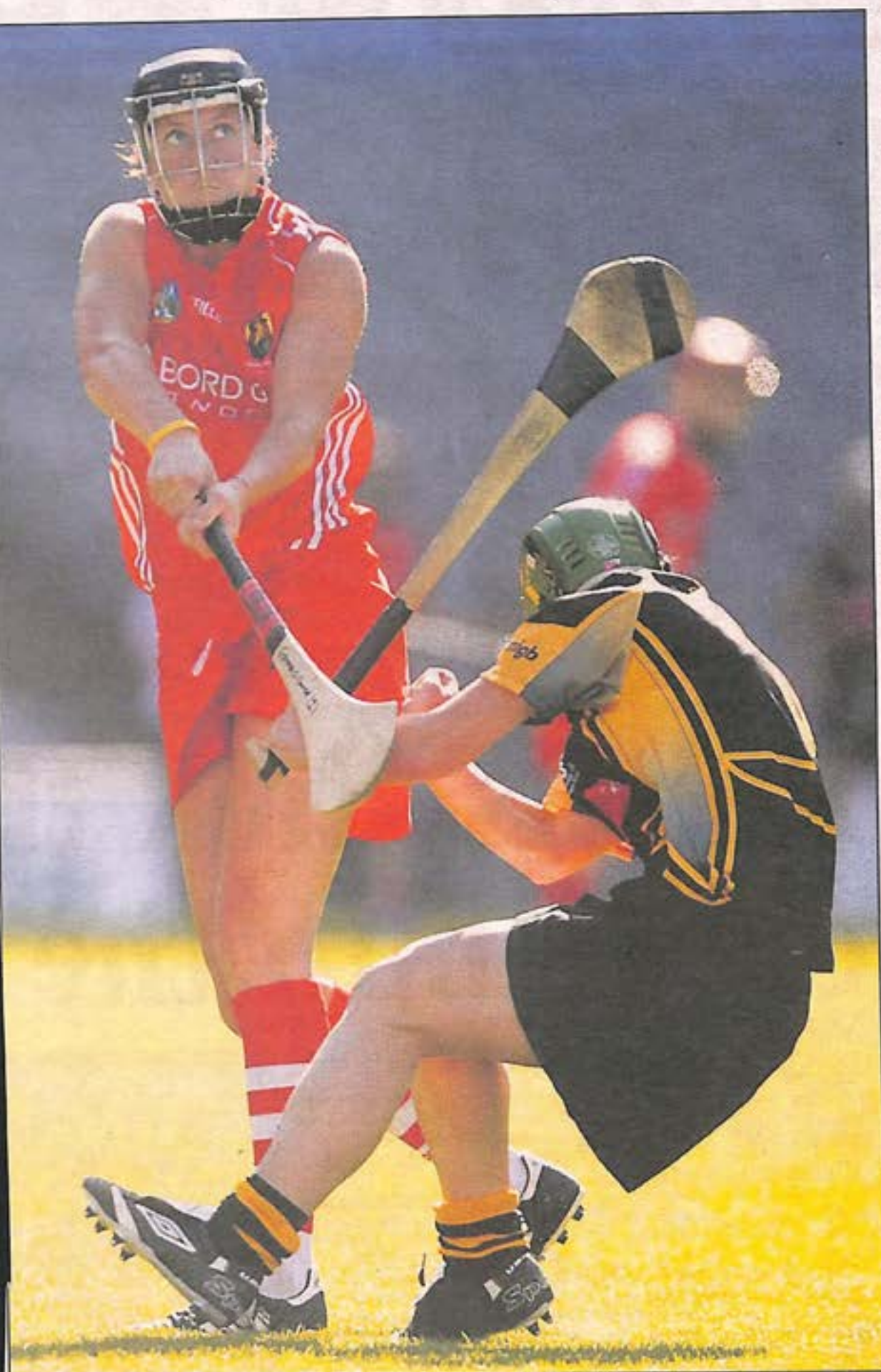
A Rachel Moloney free had Cork's first score on the board after a minute. Aoife Neary replied seven minutes later.

Cork were jittery around the middle of the field while Ann Dalton was making headway.

Twelve minutes in a good strike by Emer O'Sullivan had Cork's first score from play. Ann Dalton, who was now seriously making an impact, added an excellent point a minute later. Kilkenny took the lead for the first time through a Neary free on 16 minutes as the teams were still getting to know one another.

Katie Power, named at centre-forward, had switched to left half-forward and was now dragging Jenny Duffy out to the point that Power was almost playing as an additional wing back. She won a lot of ball and along with Dalton was putting Cork under pressure. It was obvious that Denise Gaule and Michelle Quilty were not coping with the physicality of Foley and Buckley, who answered the call every time Kilkenny broke through.

Up front Gemma O'Connor, who



Cork's Gemma O'Connor shoots past Kilkenny's Amy Butler during the Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Camogie

SENIOR ALL-IRELAND FINAL: Cork, 0-15, Kilkenny 0-7.
Junior All-Ireland Final: Offaly, 3-14, Waterford 2-8.
KILMACUD ALL-IRELAND SEVENS
Cup semi-finals: Cashel, Tipperary 4-8, Monaghan, Tipperary 0-3; Athenry, Galway 3-2, St Martin's, Wexford 2-0. Final: Cashel, Tipperary 3-9 (C Grogan 3-4, T J McGrath 0-4, J Horan 0-1) Athenry, Galway 4-5 (B Kerins 2-1, T Maher 1-1, L Linnane 1-0, J Gill 0-3).
Shield semi-finals: Clonsilla, Down 4-5, Myshall, Carlow 4-4; Ballycran, Down 3-8, Bellaghy, Derry 2-4. Final: Clonsilla, Down 4-12 (S L Carr 2-2, O Maginn 2-1, P Gribben 0-5, K Gribben, F Carr 0-2 each) Ballycran, Down 3-4 (L Hughes 1-2, C McGourty 1-1, N Braniff 1-0, N Morgan 0-3).

Player of the Match

THERE were a few contenders. Catriona Foley, Aoife Murray, Rena Buckley and Gemma O'Connor all had storming games along with Sarah Hayes. Catriona Foley was my player of the game.

Turning Point

CORK had this game won when on 47 minutes Aoife Neary had to go for a goal from a 21 yard free to give Kilkenny any chance of a comeback. It was well blocked by the solid Breige Corkery.

Score of the Game

GEMMA O'CONNOR'S magnificent strike almost on full time was my score of the game. An inspiring strike from 70 yards, it epitomised her performance throughout on the day.

Referee Watch

UNA KEARNEY was poor. 29 frees in a clean, open game is too much. Some frees are at the discretion of the referee. Played no advantage at times and failed to spot her umpires trying to get her attention.

on the treble

MATCH QUOTES



Cork players Aoife Murray (left) and Gemma O'Connor celebrate after defeating Kilkenny in the Gala All-Ireland Senior Camogie final at Croke Park yesterday.

Picture: SPORTSFILE

THREE REASONS WHY CORK WON

1 DEFENCE
CORK'S was the busier of the two full-back lines. Despite the fact that Cork won this game by eight points it was Kilkenny who had the goal opportunities. Aoife Murray, Castriona, Foley and Rena Buckley were inspirational.

2 EXPERIENCE
CORK'S experience was the deciding factor against a young Kilkenny, who never looked like they were going to win this sun-soaked final. Two points from play in an All-Ireland is an awful return.

3 GEMMA O'CONNOR
THE work ethic, strong play and three excellent points from this player were once again some of the games highlights. The powerful Barrs player was one of Cork's star performers yet again yesterday.

pointed after 18 minutes, was working hard.

Cork's forward division were playing a good defensive game when not in possession. With 20 minutes played and the score standing at three points apiece, Cork stepped up a gear.

Rachel Moloney converted a free before capitalising on the resultant short puck out to hit two points inside 15 seconds. The last 10 minutes were significant as Una O'Donoghue, Emer O'Farrell and Moloney again struck points, meaning that five Cork forwards had now scored from play. Neary pointed a free and Michelle Quilty struck on 30 minutes leaving the half-time score

0-8 to 0-5, with Cork surely the happier of the teams as they entered the dressing room.

Denise Gaule had the chance to narrow the gap with Kilkenny's first attack of the second half but struck wide. Likewise Cork had struck two wides by the fourth minute.

Moloney (free), Emer O'Sullivan and Gemma O'Connor had three points on the board by the sixth as Cork stretched their lead to six. One felt a Cork goal would help them to push on but it never came. It was Kilkenny who pushed and pushed for goal but once again found the magnificent Cork defence and goalkeeper Aoife Murray in impeccable form.

Breige Corkery became more involved as Dalton faded (both players playing loose over the hour).

Kilkenny were playing with an additional defender hanging around the square when the better option would have been to try and win the game.

A crucial moment came on 47 minutes with the score at 0-12 to 0-6. Kilkenny once again got as far as the 15-yard line but were pushed back. Winning a 21-yard free, their only option was to go for goal. Aoife Neary stood up. Cork packed their goal, with even Gemma O'Connor falling back. The low strike was blocked by Corkery and with it, one sensed, Kilkenny's last chance of res-

cuing the game.

Neary and Moloney converted. Again Kilkenny came back. With four minutes of normal time left Aisling Dunphy bore down on goal but the alert goalkeeping of Aoife Murray denied them once again.

Substitute Katrina Mackey pointed, stretching Cork's lead to seven points. With this Cork had the luxury of bringing further players off the bench to enjoy the moment.

The final say fell deservedly to the excellent O'Connor who hit a beauty from 70 yards to nail Cork their 24th All-Ireland title, their second in a row and fifth of the decade.

Scorers for Cork: R Moloney 0-7 (0-6 ft), G O'Connor 0-3, E O'Sullivan 0-2, U O'Donoghue, E O'Farrell, K Mackey 0-1 each.

Kilkenny: A Neary 0-5 (0-4 ft, 0-1 65), A Dalton, M Quilty 0-1 each.

CORK: A Murray, J O'Callaghan, C Foley, R Buckley, J Duffy, M O'Connor, S Hayes, B Corkery, O Cotter, E O'Sullivan, G O'Connor, U O'Donoghue, S Burns, R Moloney, E O'Farrell.

Subs: K Mackey for E O'Farrell (38), E Dillon for U O'Donoghue (47), A O'Regan for S Burns (57), L O'Connell for J O'Callaghan (58).

KILKENNY: C Ryan, L Fennelly, C Doherty, J Frisby, L Lyng, A Butler, E Aylward, C Doherty, A Dalton, T Muldowney, K Power, E Keane, M Quilty, D Gaule, A Neary.

Subs: A Dunphy for T Muldowney (18), D Delaney for L Lyng (36), M O'Connor for M Quilty (50), K Fennelly for C Doherty (57).

Referee: Una Kearney (Armagh).

EVERY Cork supporter was thrilled to see captain Amanda O'Regan take to the field during the final moments of yesterday's All-Ireland senior Camogie final.

Amanda failed to make the starting 15 but her team-mates wanted her on the field to lift the O'Duffy Cup at the final whistle yesterday.

She played down her leadership role, however: "I think being captain is a great title but I think that every player has to lead by example on the pitch and that's what they did."

It was fitting that almost all of the players who contributed throughout the championship got a run at some stage yesterday. It meant a huge amount to Amanda especially and she cherished the moment. "Being on the pitch for an All-Ireland final is where everyone wants to be and I'm thankful that the selectors gave me those last few minutes."

"We were in the zone really from the first whistle, everyone was just on their toes and we upped a gear as we needed to. Our backs were magnificent and I thought up front that we were finding the loose player. That made all the difference. We were finding the space today more so than when we played Kilkenny earlier in the championship."

Did Amanda ever feel that Cork were in danger of being overrun by Kilkenny? "I don't think so. We were picking off the points and I don't think they were ever ahead."

And talk of three in-a-row? Amanda replies: "We'll try anyway but we're just going to enjoy this one and we'll see what happens in January."

● Cork manager Denise Cronin looked almost in a daze as she entered the press room after the presentation of the cup.

"It hasn't sunk in. I'm was walking around the field and was saying that I don't know if it's because the supporters aren't on the field and everyone seems so far away or what but I can't really believe it."

Well believe it she must as Cork are All-Ireland champions.

How was she feeling at half-time?

"We could have been in a small bit of trouble but we knew that we had players on the bench to come in so it was just about getting the 15 who were out there right for the second half, see how they progressed and if we had to make a few changes we had loads of time. There was another 30 minutes and we were three points up. We had played well so we weren't too worried."

Despite always being comfortable it was Kilkenny who had the goal chances more so than Cork.

"They actually did," the Cork manager confessed. "Aoife Murray was excellent again, as was our full-back line. They set the standard and we said that at half time that the full back line was the standard for the rest of the lines out there on the field. They continued to play like that for the second half and were just amazing."

And the three in-a-row?

"Whether I'm here or not that team inside there should win three in-a-row. They're an amazing bunch of girls and if you keep slotting players in and keep the freshness I think that it can be done. If we had lost today you might have seen a lot of players retire but the push now will be on for the three in-a-row."