

125

6x12
in.

25

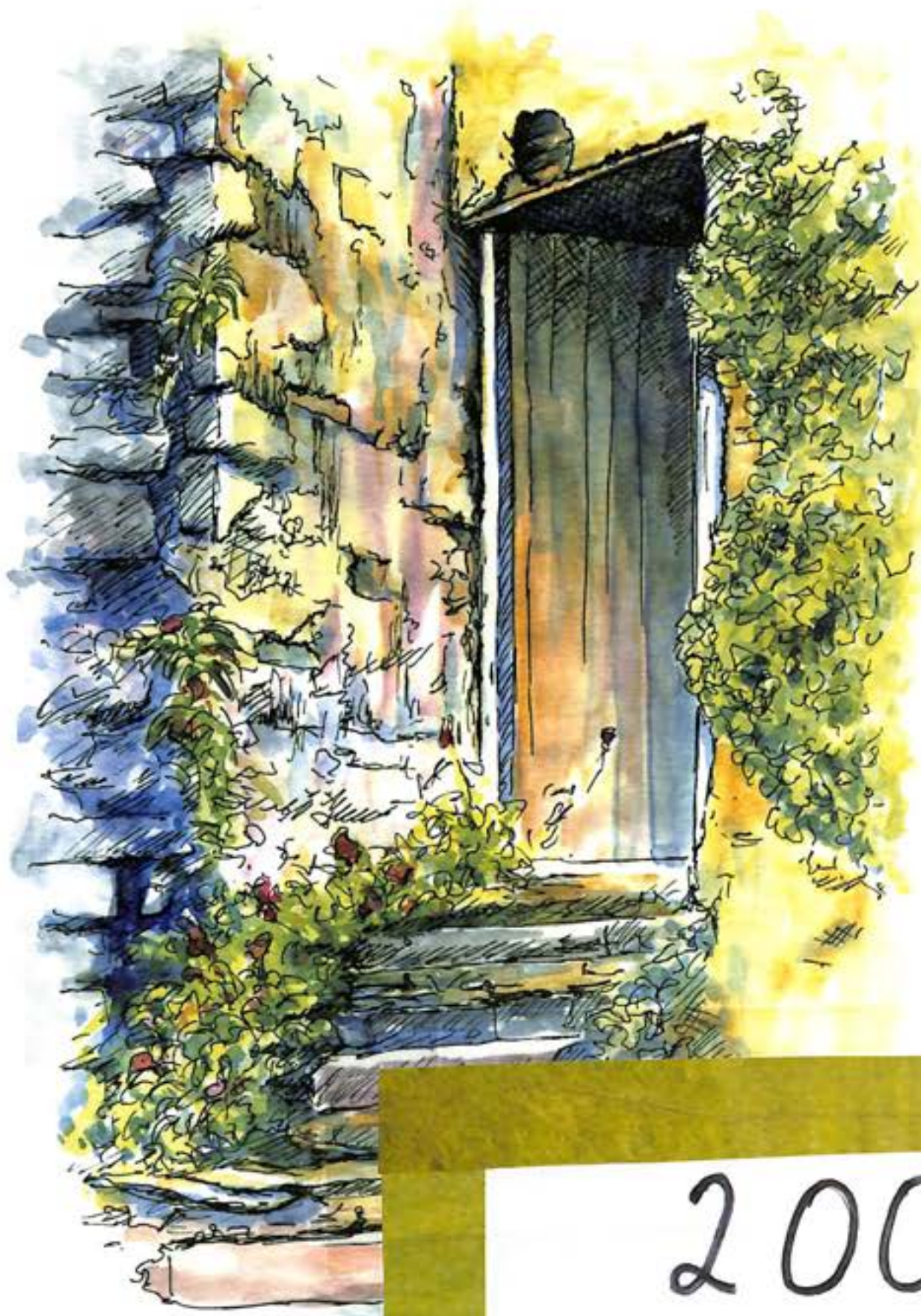
135
g/m²



Ref no: 405431612

LER~ROWNEY

st suitable for line and wash



2004

ALL-IRELAND FINALS

406 x 305mm

Made by Daler~Rowney, Bracknell, England
www.daler-rowney.com



Tipperary Juniors - Back row (l to r) - Caroline Greed, Siobhan Burke, Danielle O'Connell, Rosanna Kennelly, Fiona Loughnane, Annteneh D'arcy, Claire Ryan, Katie Ryan. Front row (l to r) - Maria Harkin, Threase Maxwell, Denise Ryan, Mary Ryan, Maria Jones, Linda Breen, Helena Costigan.

Tipperary Minor Camogie



Tipperary Minor Camogie Team 2004

Back row (l-r): Seán Johnston (Manager/Trainer), Máiréad Luttrell (Slievenamon), Michelle Kirwan (Moneygall), Ailish Langton (Slievenamon), Siobhán Bourke (Templemore), Ciara O'Sullivan (Cashel), Deirdre Ryan (Clonoulty/Rossmore), Siobhán McGrath (Drom/Inch), Sara Ryan (Holycross/Ballycahill), Linda Fanning (Holycross/Ballycahill), Antoinette Kennedy (Drom/Inch), Ciara Ryan (Silvermines), Marie Ryan (Templemore), Patricia McGrath (Drom/Inch), Lorraine Davies (Shannon Rovers), Roseanne Quirke (Clonoulty/Rossmore), Helena Ryan (Silvermines), Laura Coughlan (Roscrea), Patsy Carroll (Selector). Front row: Catriona Maher (Templemore), Fiona Ryan (Kilruane/Mac Donaghs), Ciara Heffernan (Slievenamon), Ciara Johnston (Drom/Inch), Alison Lonergan (Cashel), Tara Murray (Drom/Inch), Andrea Davies (Shannon Rovers), Catriona Walsh (Moycarkey/Borris), Eileen Harty (Drom/Inch), Sinéad Quinlan (Burgess), Aoife McLoughney (Shannon Rovers), Sara Morrissey (Cashel), Louise O'Brien (Roscrea), Therese Shortt (Drom/Inch), Fiona Kennedy (Silvermines), Sally O'Connor (Roscrea), Tommy Ryan (Selector).

FOR the third year in a row Cork and Tipperary clash in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie final.

Cork and Tipp set up a final showdown last Saturday with wins over Galway and Wexford respectively.

Cork, despite playing poorly, had a comfortable win.

Tipp were pushed to the pin of their collars by a strong Wexford outfit.

What of the final?

Both defences are strong. Joanne O'Callaghan and Stephanie Dunlea are experienced performers.

Rosarie Holland is playing her first season at full-back for Cork and has yet to be really tested.

If she remains in the position she will be marking the accomplished and lethal Deirdre Hughes. Rosarie is tall and this should help against a player who loves to catch the high ball.

Should the Cork management opt to put a more experienced player on Hughes they will need to be sure that their two corner-backs are fast to cope with 2003 Player of the Year Eimear McDonnell and Jill Horan.

Once these players turn you they are rarely caught.

Cork's half-back line of Paula O'Connor, Mary O'Connor and Rena Buckley is dependable but can't be exposed to continuous pressure. No defence can.

The entire defence will have their hands full coping with a star-studded forward line.

Claire Grogan, McDonnell, Horan and Hughes are top-class hurlers and potential match winners.

Horan is a relative newcomer to the squad and is a revelation.

One wonders where she was up to now. I saw her play with UCC this year against Carrigdhoun and was hugely impressed.

Last Saturday with McDonnell and Hughes relatively quiet it was Horan who split the Wexford defence. The supply going in to them has to be curtailed.

The Tipp half-back line of Sinead Nealon, Clara Gaynor and Therese Brophy is extremely experienced and, without doubt, is Tipp's launch pad.

Gaynor in particular, if left dominate, will drive the ball 60 or 70 yards into her forwards, putting the Cork backs under ferocious pressure.

They are physically very strong and Cork's half forward line of Jenny O'Leary, Emer Dillon and Rachel Moloney will have to give as good as they get.

Una O'Dwyer at full-back for Tipp likes to grab the ball and burst out of defence.

Emer Watson, if there, can't let this happen. Speed to the ball has to be Cork's answer.

Up front, they showed no real burst of pace last Saturday apart from Jenny O'Leary and need to up the ante in this department.

When beaten they have to fight like tigers to prevent long clearances. Cork's defence has to start with our forward line.

For the past number of years Tipp have tended to use a third midfielder, playing two full-forwards and three half-forwards.

They want to leave oceans of space inside to utilise their pace.

Cork's defence must hold their positions. Use the forwards if the extra midfielder proves a problem.



Cork's Elaine Burke under pressure from Galway players Lizzie Flynn and Sinead Keane during their All-Ireland semi-final Senior Camogie Championship match at Nowlan Park. Picture: Dan Linehan

Desire is the key as old rivals go for gold



Linda Mellerick

Cork's midfield partnership of Gemma O'Connor and Vivienne Harris is the best in the country.

Last Saturday both of the Tipp midfield players were substituted.

O'Connor and Harris have a lot of work to do on All-Ireland final day. They need to totally dominate here and I believe they can.

Both are capable of scoring from 60 yards and any chance must be taken. While maintaining a mid-field role they need to work their socks off.

Aoife Murray's puck outs are very important. Long high balls reigning down on top of her half-forward line will put Cork at a disadvantage.

Here, as I said, Tipp are tall and strong. Gaynor has a great hand.

In 2002 Emer Dillon won the battle against Gaynor and two or three wonderful overhead strikes by Dillon led to two goals for Cork.

Last year it was the centre back who won the battle and Tipp emerged victorious.

It is an area of huge importance for Cork and vital they win it.

Una O'Donoghue has been a regular on the Cork team since 1999.

She has failed to gain a place on

this year's starting 15 due entirely to a difficult work pattern which to date has prevented her training regularly with the squad.

It is hoped that for the next month this situation can be somewhat adjusted, allowing Una train as much as possible and regain the sharpness that makes her such an excellent player.

She isn't too far away and impressed when she came on early in the second half on Saturday.

Cork need her. They need her toughness, speed and most of all, her ability to put the head down and go for goal.

Throughout the championship Cork have fielded without the full forward line that won the title in 2002 and were runners-up last year.

Losing a complete line is difficult to overcome. O'Donoghue will be back. Fiona O'Driscoll retired this year and her leadership is a big loss.

Cork have yet to find the magic

that made them such a lethal scoring machine of past years.

But sometimes the unknown is a good thing. Youth has no fear and the big names of Tipp won't scare the likes of Watson or Collette Desmond if selected.

Cork have options up front. Shella Burns and Breige Corkery are other options for coach John Considine.

Tipp had a tough game against Wexford and were relieved at the fi-

nal whistle.

Once again it is 50-50.

Cork can win this final.

For the next four weeks they must eat, sleep and breathe September 19.

Working lives, personal lives, everything, has to play second fiddle in their thoughts.

They have to want this title more than anything else. Desire is the only thing which will separate the teams.



Cork's Rachel Moloney looking to stop this run by Galway player Orla Kilkenny at Nowlan Park. Picture: Dan Linehan

Two Paths Diverged

In 1991 Down and Tipperary met in the All-Ireland junior final and the title went north. The camogie fortunes in the counties have diverged spectacularly since then and later this month, Tipperary will contest the All-Ireland senior final while Down will contest the junior equivalent. In trying to establish the reasons for this divergence, Séamas MacGiolla Fhinnéin spoke to Tipperary's Deirdre Hughes and Down's Máirín McAleenan.

Down's victory in the 1991 junior final marked the high water mark for the county in camogie competition – their appearance in this month's junior final is their first since then. It has been all so different for Tipperary. The county had been re-graded from senior to junior in the late 1980s, and success was slow in coming. Defeat in the 1990 and 1991 finals was finally followed by success in the 1992 decider, and the Premier County has thrived since then.

The experience in Down has been different. Success at under-age level dried up and the county struggled badly to deal with the move from the 13 to 15 a side game. The measure of how far the teams have diverged is evidenced by the fact that Tipperary are seeking their fifth O'Duffy Cup, while Down are seeking to add to a

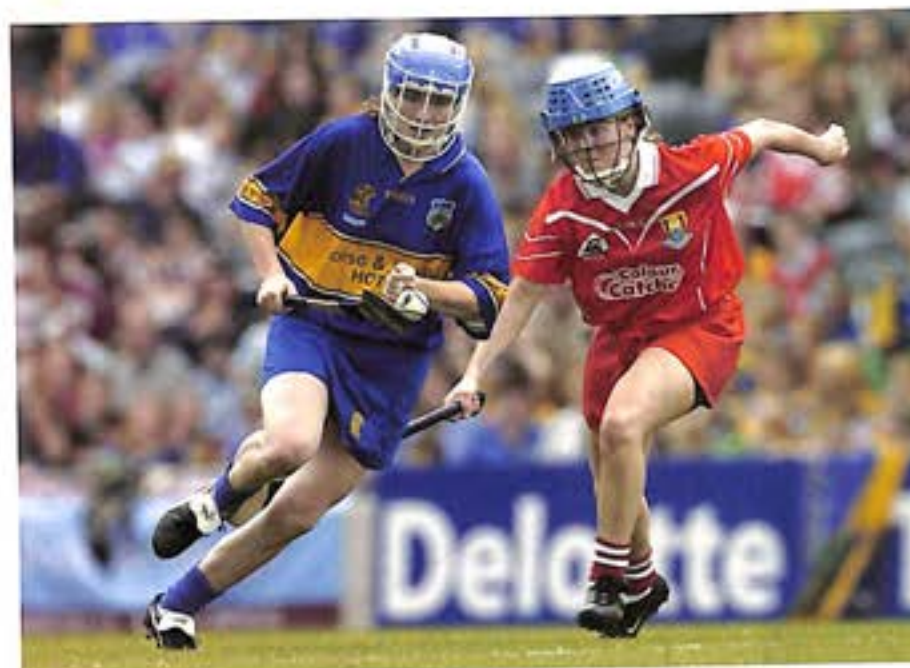
solitary intermediate title won in 1998.

But back to 1991. At opposite ends of the field that day were Tipperary's Deirdre Hughes and Down's Máirín McAleenan. Both are well placed to chart the fortunes of their counties in the intervening years. In the years that followed, Hughes has established herself as one of the leading exponents of the game and is the only current intercounty player selected on camogie's Team of the Century. She has been one of most exciting and direct forwards of recent times and her goal in this year's senior semi-final killed off a determined Wexford challenge.

This year, the Mourne County make their first appearance in the junior decider since then but their top-scorer Máirín McAleenan has crossed paths with Deirdre Hughes in many games since.

Máirín, a teacher in the Gaelscoil in Downpatrick, recalls that Down led Tipperary from early in the 1991 final. "Down had a couple of goals up and were working well against the wind through the second half. Then Jovita Delaney dropped a long free into our net and with about two minutes left Joan Tobin banged home another Tipperary goal." "I remember thinking we'd make it," Deirdre recalls, "but Down took a huge poc out, and Bonnie McGreevey ran right through the middle to bury a Down goal. It was devastating. We lost 2-14 to 3-13 in what many said was a fantastic game of camogie – but that wasn't much consolation." Deirdre scored three points that day, while Máirín – the Down free-taker then and now – shot nine.

The two counties met regularly in the new intermediate championship over the



Action from last year's final between Cork and Tipperary.

have contrasting views on what the future holds for their counties. Máirín is optimistic that Down will win the junior quite soon, if not this year, and go up through the grades again, citing the minors return to the winners' podium in Ulster as a significant development.

Deirdre is worried whether Tipperary can sustain their current level of success with 1996 being the county's last appearance in the All-Ireland minor final. "The senior successes were built on good minor teams of the late 1980s through to 1996. On the plus side, we have been bringing through to the senior team a player or two each year, and they have made their mark, Jill Horan has made a big impact this year for example. But other counties that are producing the successful under-age teams should be able to make the breakthrough soon." But does Deirdre not know that minor – or even junior – success doesn't always quickly translate into the same at senior level?

So, two of the top forwards in the country will carry the scoring hopes of their respective counties into Croke Park on the third Sunday of September. Deirdre and Máirín are both in their 30s and realise

that there might not be too many more big days out there. Perhaps they'll meet under the stands and share a moment reflecting on how fortunes have changed since that 1991 meeting.

Séamas Mac Giolla Fhinnéin is a member of Bridini Óga camogie club and Con Magees GAA club in County Antrim.

PATH TO THE SENIOR FINAL



TIPPERARY

Tipperary	4-8	Galway	0-8
Tipperary	4-27	Antrim	1-4
Tipperary	3-8	Kilkenny	2-10

Semi-final

Tipperary	1-10	Wexford	2-5
-----------	------	---------	-----



CORK

Cork w/o Derry			
Cork	4-16	Limerick	1-6
Cork	1-14	Wexford	0-8

Semi-Final

Cork	3-9	Galway	1-4
------	-----	--------	-----

All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final

Tipperary v Cork
19th September



Deirdre Hughes

However, she added that if Cork midfielder Gemma O'Connor can dominate, then the Rebels have a real chance. "Even though Cork beat Galway relatively easy in the semi finals, if she can control midfield and distribute ball then Cork might just shade it in end. It really will be down to the last poc of the game."



The September stroll



September means one thing for followers of Gaelic Games, a road to Croke Park Sunday after Sunday and why not when it is one of the great traditions of this country. By Máire Uí Scolai.

This year Cumann Camógaiochta na nGael will celebrate the All-Ireland finals in great splendour on Sunday the 19th September. Cork may have visited the hallowed turf the week before but their Camogie team will have their day in the sun when they take on their old enemy Tipperary in the Foras na Gaeilge senior All-Ireland final, while the Rebels make it a double journey when they entertain Down in the Junior All-Ireland final.

As this is centenary year, it is the wish of Ireland's largest female Gaelic Sport's organisation that this year's All-Ireland finals would be different and so they will. Many very honoured children will be given a once in a lifetime opportunity to take part in a mini game and also to take part in the formation of the figures 100 on the hallowed turf of Páirc an Chrócaigh.

It will mean that all thirty-two counties will be represented in this year's All-Ireland day final's activities. A huge amount of work has gone into Camogie this year by a large number of people and so it is hoped that record attendances can be broken in Croke Park this year.

Already this year the Foras na Gaeilge championship semi-finals were televised live for the first time ever and the reaction to this has been very good. Considering that so many people saw these matches live on television it is hoped that a lot of these viewers will attend on the day.

TICKET INFORMATION

The young generation of Ireland will be given a once off opportunity this September 19th when all children under twelve years of age will be admitted free of charge. These tickets have been available from Croke Park and a few may still be available by contacting the Camogie office in Croke Park at: 01 8364619 or by purchasing on line at www.gaa.ie or through any Ticket Master outlet.

Tickets can also be purchased from all county boards. There will be a cut off point on the Wednesday, September, 15th for the GAA on line. Should people travel on the day, tickets may be purchased from the mobile units situated at the corner of North Circular Rd and Jones's Rd as well as at the corner of the Bishop's Palace on the Drumcondra Rd. Many primary schools responded to this great offer prior to their summer holidays. It is hoped that all children will wear their club or county colours and thus make September 19th one of the most colourful days in the history of Croke Park. Ticket prices are as follows:

Adults 20, Students/Juveniles/OAPs 10, and children under 12 free of charge.

However, when the players step out on the field there will be one thing on their minds and that is to climb the steps of the Hogan Stand on the day.

Cork who suffered defeat last year from Tipperary will be more than anxious to make up for that loss. Already this season Tipperary beat them in the Munster championship final in Semple Stadium for the second year in a row (the provincial championship is different to the open draw).

Tipperary have so far made centenary year a season to recall for the county. They won the National League title for the first time since 1977. They added the Munster championship title and Deirdre Hughes became the only present day inter-county player to be represented on the team of the century. For good measure the first Texaco winner since 1986 also rests in the Premier County with Eimear Mc Donnell.

In the run up to this year's All-Ireland final they had a couple of near misses. Under Raymie Ryan they travelled to Nowlan Park for the third round of the championship as hot favourites. With time almost up they were relived when Claire Grogan sent a free over the bar. The defending champions had cleared the hurdles by a solitary point.

Through to the semi-final on the 21st of

August they knew they were meeting a hungry and determined Wexford side. Not having appeared in an All-Ireland final since 1994 the Slaney side gave the Premier County a fright and almost pulled off a famous victory. The Model County girls were gutted; the Tipperary girls were relieved when the final whistle blew.

So when Evelyn Quigley's last minute shot at the Tipperary goal hit the cross bar, what saved them? According to Raymie Ryan it was the fact that the cross bar was a square style rather than round! So will he be examining Croke Park cross bars from now on? He will be hoping that his charges will not be in the same position with time almost up with just a point in the difference.

Searching for the key to the door, Cork's 21st All-Ireland will not come any easier to them than any of the others before now.

Both sides are likely to line out differently from the semi-final. One must respect this great Tipperary side who are making their sixth All-Ireland final in a row. Since they hit the big time in 1999 when they won their first title their rags to riches story became better and better. They have eleven of their starting fifteen from 1999 still available to them! That speaks volumes in terms of experience. Cork, however, under former Cork hurler John Considine will not be overawed by this.

One can expect a great encounter between these two sides, and don't be too surprised if the Rebels pull off victory.

JUNIOR ALL-IRELAND PAIRINGS - A RECALL OF 1968

Cork will be hoping to make it a double victory on the day, but the girls from the Mournes are not travelling just to make up numbers! Back in 1968, these two counties met for the inaugural junior All-Ireland championship final. On the day, Down entered the history books by claiming the New Ireland Cup for the first time. Since then Down added a further two, their last title being in 1991 when they defeated Tipperary, 3-13 to 2-14.

As we know when any team from Down come to headquarters they travel in large numbers and we have heard rumours that the Mourne mountains will be rather derelict on Sunday 19th following a lot of very good PR work recently in the county.

Expect a classic here with perhaps the junior All-Ireland title heading to Ulster this year.

MARTIN DONNELLY POC FADA COMPETITION

With so many events including Camogie this year for the first time, this year's Martin Donnelly Poc Fada competition in the famous Cooley mountains was another great event.

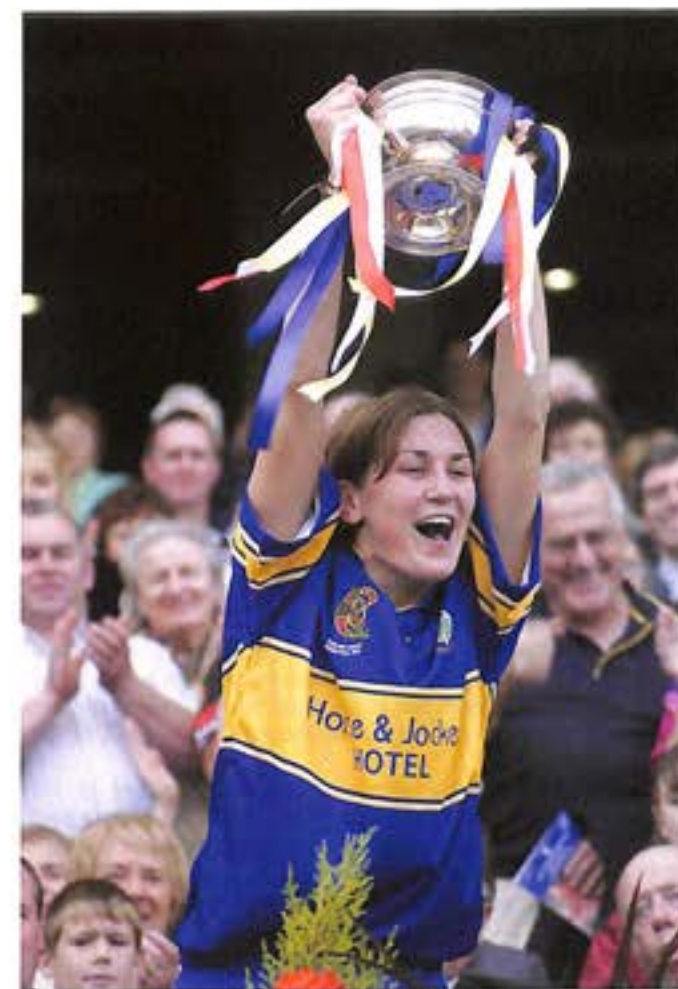
This year a player from each province was chosen as well as a player from North America and London. Unfortunately, the USA did not make it but all other players were there on the day.

The winner was Stephanie Gannon of Galway who only the week before that won her first Minor All-Ireland title with the Galway minors. She topped that event by picking up the player of the match award for a great display in goals.

Interestingly she beat the great Galway senior star Sharon Glynn in the Connacht final of the competition. No mean achievement as we all recall what a mighty strong poc the great Sharon had.

KILMACUD CROKES SEVENS...

As usual there is no better place to be on the eve of the three All-Ireland finals than the famous Stillorgan club in County Dublin. This year, the Camogie Sevens have attracted a record entry of over sixty clubs and according to



Una O'Dwyer lifts the All-Ireland trophy in 2003 - where will it go this season?

Ann Noctor they will all be catered for. "Extra pitches have been given to us for the day and so we are looking forward to a great day," commented Ann who has given sterling service to the club and still lines out for the purple and gold. Expect something different as well in the day's line up! Here's to a great Camogie All-Ireland weekend. Be there to tell the forthcoming generations of this great day.



Cork's Denise Cronin chases Tipperary's Deirdre Hughes in last year's final



Miriam O'Callaghan presents the Poc Fada silverware to ladies winner Stephanie Gannon and mens champion, Brendan Cummins

CHAMPS LIVE DANGEROUSLY

The reigning All-Ireland camogie champions Tipperary, who have won four of the last five titles, were fortunate to make it into this year's decider after a tense 1-10 to 2-5 win over Wexford, an emerging force in the game. Having beaten Wexford by just four points in the league final in late May, helped by three first-half goals from Team of the Century forward Deirdre Hughes, they were expecting a tough ordeal. So it proved.

Team manager Raymie Ryan, the former Tipperary star, was greatly relieved to make the final on September 19. "They (Wexford) played a very tactful game, their defence was very tight, without a doubt they are the next team on the way up. But great praise is due to our own players who only allowed Wexford one score from play, the opening goal of the match from Michelle Hearne."

Wexford showed great steel and for three-quarters of the tie looked set to cause a major upset. But then the experienced and wily Hughes again proved their nemesis when she fielded a high ball between two defenders and turned to shoot the important goal. The score settled Tipp down and despite a late goal scare and a clearance off the line, they held out for victory.

Tipperary rose to camogie prominence when winning their first All-Ireland senior championship in 1999, the start of a three-in-a-row, overcoming Kilkenny in two finals and Cork in the 2000 showdown. They beat Cork, winners in 2002, again in last year's final. Now they face their arch rivals once more. "We are delighted to be getting another crack at Cork," said Ryan, "and we hope we can celebrate the centenary with the O'Duffy Cup, but we have more work to do before September 19."



Tipp's Jill Moran goes past Wexford's Aishling Moran

Cork safely into final



Cork are firmly back on the All-Ireland camogie title trail after dispatching a stubborn Galway challenge in the semi-finals, their class eventually seeing them draw clear to win by 3-9 to 1-4. Their star was Jennifer O'Leary, who opened their scoring account and went on to torment the Galway defence. But it wasn't all one-way traffic. Galway had an early goal and point from Orla Kilkenny and Anne Marie Hayes to take a shock lead.

Despite the set-back the Rebels were quick to compose themselves and got their reward when Elaine Burke pounced for a goal on 14 minutes, which was followed by a similar strike from O'Leary 90 seconds later, driving them into a 2-6 to 1-1 by the break. Lourda Kavanagh raised Galway hopes of a comeback with two points on the restart but O'Leary's second goal put nine points between the sides, 3-6 to 1-3, with over twenty

minutes left to play.

Though Galway missed a penalty there was no way back from there. But it still amounted to a significant gain on last season for the Connacht side - a year ago when they were annihilated by Cork. Their principal aim, with eight new players in the panel, was to restore pride in Galway camogie and they achieved that much. Cork have also tweaked their team during the season and look to be hitting form at just the right time.

"We used the league to introduce players who were at the edge of the team and it has worked well for us," said team boss John Considine. Cork are aiming to win the county's 21st senior title on September 19.



Sharon Wilson under pressure from Galway's Sinéad Cullen

Now
it's the
girls'
turn...

Cork's
camogie
team
aims for
GAA
double:
See
Pages
8/9



The O'Connors - Jerry, Paula and Ben preparing for their big day



Plus:
Mini-marathon
final countdown
— Page 5

O'Connor sister act plans final encore

by Therese O'Callaghan

THESE are happy times in Newtownshandrum.

Ben and Jerry O'Connor led Newtown's Cork contingent on All-Ireland final Sunday, writing the latest chapter in a remarkable year for the tiny club.

But they must move from centre-stage in the home for a few days as sister Paula heads to headquarters on Sunday hoping to capture another medal for this remarkable family.

But it was all so different 12 months ago with defeat in both codes being felt hard in the O'Connor household.

"It was heartbreaking to see the boys lose and then I had to try to prepare mentally for my final. Without a doubt their loss affected me as I was heading into my match," she recalled.

"Collectively we were going for three medals 12 months ago and we returned with none. It was a horrible feeling and one I would not want to experience again. This weekend we will be heading up to Dublin with so much more enthusiasm and I will do everything in my power to come home with another medal.

"Over the past few weeks our house has been mental. It is always a bit mental with 10 children but the last few days have been unbelievable.

"My family is steeped in hurling. Since I was a tot we all trained together on the lawn. I was a pure tomboy and I could be as rough as I wanted," reveals the 24-year-old, who has miraculously maintained ownership of the same hurley for the past four years.

"It has got numerous facelifts," she laughs. "My dad made it especially for me and it has been mended over and over again. It is my favourite hurley and there is no way I would part with it. It is almost creaking," she quips.

But it has served her through good and bad times, including the most recent loss in a decider, along with All-Ireland wins in 2002 and 1998.

Much change has come about too since then. The game has moved to a higher level and is played at a much faster pace. Scores are of a superior standard and the skills are more noticeable. However, there are alterations she would like to see applied. "The hand-passed goal and the dropping to the hurley to give a pass should be done away with. They slow down the game. I would also like it to get more physical, a bit more contact would do no harm. Maybe a bit more like the boys' game," she adds.



On a mission: Paula O'Connor aims to add an All-Ireland senior camogie medal to the O'Connor family's collection against Tipperary on Sunday, following Ben and Jerry O'Connor's victory with the Cork senior hurlers in last Sunday's All-Ireland final. Picture: Denis Minihane

Forever in blue genes as Nealon carries torch

by Therese O'Callaghan

SINEAD NEALON was always destined to play camogie for Tipperary. The hurling heritage associated with her surname is one of the most affluent in the Premier County — her father Donie won five All-Ireland SHC medals, while grandfather Roddy captured a junior crown and represented Ireland in the Tailteann Games in 1924.

However, the latest sensation has already created her own bit of history in the famous household boasting the unique record of minor, junior, intermediate and senior All-Ireland medals.

Sinead began her career with the local boys' team in Burgess. She lined out at corner-back with twin Nuala at corner-forward.

"From then Burgess developed a

camogie team," she recalls.

"We are a very strong senior team now with four players on the panel next Sunday. Hurling/camogie is something my family has always been involved in. I had three older brothers, and with my father training the team we all went to the matches. He is very interested in camogie and its development.

"I don't know any other lifestyle. That is the way I was brought up. This is my 14th season with Tipperary and up to 1999 the cupboard was pretty bare at senior level. We fell on hard times but made an amazing breakthrough with Michael Cleary.

"We won our first senior All-Ireland in '99. It was simply amazing as most of us had been around for a while and were used to being beaten. The following year we won again — we were highly motivated because people said

it was a once-off. The third was fuelled by our three-in-a-row escapade, and last year we needed revenge for Cork's win in 2002."

A project manager in HR at WIT, Nealon faces a three-hour round trip for each training session. Not that she is complaining as the county bids for a Centenary All-Ireland title.

"It would be lovely to win in Centenary year. But this team doesn't need much motivation outside of just wanting to win. It is full of enthusiasm because we want to be successful and stay at the top for as long as possible.

"The majority of us have been around for some time. The last six years have flown and that is because of winning. The previous years were dogged with losing and we won't forget those too easily."

Though she is a vital cog in a thriving half-back line, Nealon is quick to

direct praise in other directions.

She acknowledges full-forward Deirdre Hughes as one of the most respected and talented players in the modern day game.

"Deirdre is a very modest person. We were absolutely delighted for her when she was honoured on the Team of the Century earlier this year. It was a tremendous achievement for herself, her family and for Tipperary. A great reward for all those years — even the dark ones."

So every cloud has a silver lining.

● There is just one change on the Tipperary team to face Cork on Sunday, captain Joanne Ryan winning back her place on the forty at the expense of Emily Hayden.

Tipperary: J. Delaney; S. Kelly; U. O'Dwyer; J. Kirwan; S. Nealon; C. Gaynor; T. Brophy; A. McDermott; P. Fogarty; N. Kennedy; J. Ryan (capt); C. Grogan; E. McDonnell; D. Hughes; J. Horan.

Cork play in both senior and junior finals on Sunday

ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE FINALS

REPRESENTATIVES from the four participating counties, Cork (senior and junior), Tipperary and Down were present in Croke Park on Tuesday of this week, ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland camogie finals.

In this, the centenary year of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, the Foras na Gaeilge senior final between champions Tipperary and Cork is the highlight of the playing year. Tipperary bid for their fifth title while Cork go for their 21st crown.

Down and Cork contest the junior final. Down won three junior titles, including the inaugural championship, while the Rebels hold six. Primary school children from the 32 counties will participate in a 16-a-side mini-game at half-time in the junior final.

Miriam O'Callaghan, uachtarán, Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, announced details of the weekend, starting with the Kilmacud 7s on Saturday. The largest number of clubs ever will take part, including an all-American born team from Milwaukee.

A torch run starts from Tailteann Park, Navan, on Saturday morning at 10.30 a.m. when Mr. Noel Dempsey, TD, Minister for Education, starts the run. Navan was the venue for the first ever competitive camogie game in 1904. Players from Meath camogie clubs will take the torch as far as KEPAC. The remainder of the run will be done from Dublin clubs and the final runner will be Stephanie Gannon from Galway, winner of the inaugural Camogie Poc Fada in 2004.

She will arrive in Croke Park at 2.40 p.m. approximately and will be joined by the winner of the Féile na nGael skills winner Patricia Jackman from Waterford, who will carry a bronze hurley.

Five young children will represent the

family of Gaelic games, Orla O'Callaghan from Tullamore, daughter of Miriam O'Callaghan, uachtarán Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, Julie Kelly of Kerry, daughter of Seán Kelly, president of Cumann Lúthchleas Gael, Emma Gray of Dublin, who will represent Cumann Peil Gael na mBan, Ryan Donnelly from Derry, representing rounders, and Cian O'Dálaigh Dublin representing handball.

Over 2,500 children from the primary schools of Ireland, wearing their school or club colours, will be part of a formation C100 on the Croke Park pitch. Marty Morrissey will provide commentary. Míchéal Ó Muircheartaigh will introduce the Antrim jubilee team. Musical entertainment will be provided by Tallaght Youth Band and the Garda Band.

The pre-All-Ireland media coverage will include a documentary being screened by *Breaking Ball* on Friday evening on RTE 1. TG4 will broadcast a Laochra Gael programme featuring the legendary Kilkenny camogie stars Angela and Ann Downey.

Dunlea on revenge mission

SENIOR camogie captain, Stephanie Dunlea has urged her teammates to follow the example of the hurlers and avenge last year's defeat to Tipperary on Sunday.

Now in her 11th campaign with Cork, she has witnessed many changes in camogie such as the switch to the full size pitch with 15 players instead of 12 which she thinks makes the game better to watch.

She is pleased with the increased coverage the game is receiving.

Stephanie says: "In 1995, the final was shown on the *Sunday Game* but this year the semi-finals were shown live as will be the final."

Captain Dunlea has also noted the average age of the players has dropped to around 22 with many players quitting around the age of 18.

She believes there are number of factors for this.

"When players finish playing Under-18 they go straight to



PJ Aherne

senior level. There is no under-21. Something is needed in between."

More and more girls of a very young age are playing in All-Ireland camogie finals.

Claire Grogan of Tipperary is one example. She won her first All-Ireland medal in 2000 at the age of 14 and she won her third medal last year at 17.

Stephanie Dunlea has also tasted success with Cork, but she feels if Cork defeat Tipperary it will be the sweetest victory of them all.

"Last year's defeat was hard to take. On the day we didn't play as well as we could have. Tipperary have dominated over the last few years."

"To dethrone them this year will be even sweeter."

This is the third time in-a-row the sides have met in the All-Ireland camogie final, with

Cork winning in 2002.

While players like Linda Mellerick and Fiona O'Driscoll have left the inter-county camogie scene and will be missed, Stephanie says they will cope without them.

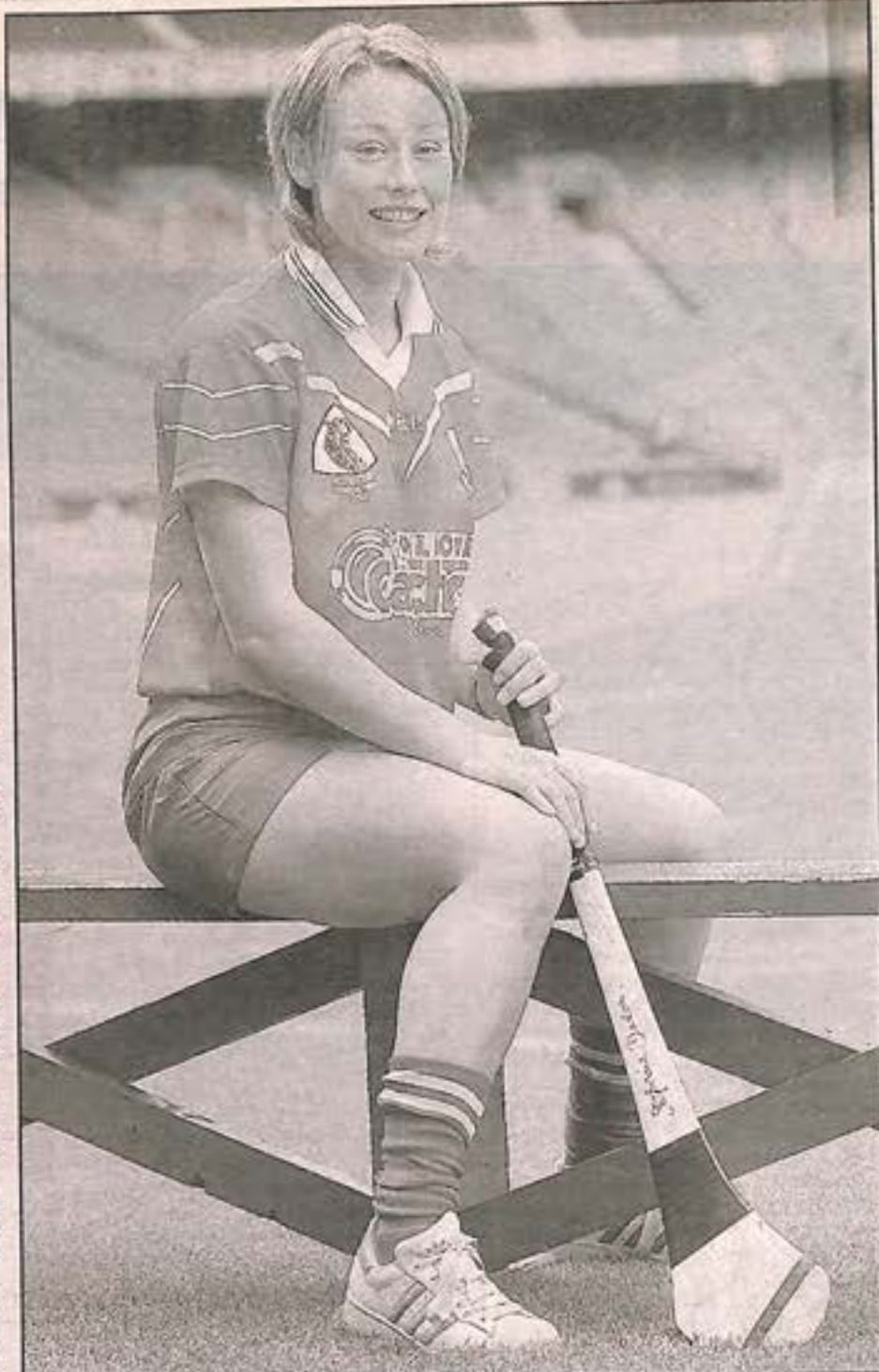
"Some of the girls have been around since 2000. They have played in a number of finals so while they are still maturing, they have a lot of experience behind them."

Stephanie acknowledges the support the team has been getting but admits they will never match the hurlers.

Cork camogie selectors and fans will be delighted to hear that Stephanie has no plans retire.

"I'll take it year by year but while I'm still enjoying it and as long as we are winning I have no plans yet."

Last year, she was one of four Cork players to win an Allstar, along with Mary O'Connor, Emer Dillon and Fiona O'Driscoll and hopes to add another All-Ireland medal to her collection.



Cork captain Stephanie Dunlea: "Last year's defeat was hard to take. To dethrone them this year will be even sweeter." Picture: Damien Eagers

Junior captain leads by example

VAL O'KEEFFE is cool, calm and collected and ideally trained to deal with crisis situations, not only are these the traits of a Garda officer, they are also the traits of captain.

On Sunday, she will lead out the Cork juniors against Down in the first match of the day.

Val says: "It'll be a great honour. It obviously brings its own pressure but it's a great honour to lead out your county in an All-Ireland final."

Working as a Garda based in Irishtown in Dublin has its draw-backs but doesn't prevent her fulfilling her training commitments in Cork.

Her dedication to camogie is an example of why she was chosen to lead the side.

"I sometimes feel the training has been cancelled out by the driving. But it is worth when you get to the final. I travel to Cork once a week and it is a long, tiring year but your always looking forward to the next match."

When she is not training in Cork, she keeps her fitness up



By PJ AHERNE

Camogie

by playing ladies football with the Garda club, which is based in Lucan. Last year the club reached the county semi-finals.

She has been based in Dublin since last December and returns to Templemore College next week to graduate.

Having played her club camogie with Kilbrittain, who were knocked out of the champion-

ship early this year, she has the opportunity to get her hands on silverware.

Val is a very experienced campaigner having played for a few seasons with the junior and intermediate panels and come Sunday she will be patrolling the midfield against Down.

"We don't know very much about Down, except they will be physically fit and very good. We will be taking nothing for granted, any team who gets to a final

deserves respect.

"We will come out with all guns blazing but we will also be cautious."

While she may be captain she says there are many leaders on the team and she will be there to offer encouragement and a few words in the dressing room, but they will all want to win as much as her.

"I am definitely looking forward to it. Hopefully both teams will come back with the cups."

Cork Junior Camogie captains Val O'Keeffe (left) with Jennifer Braniff (Down) at a photocall in Croke Park before Sunday's All-Ireland Junior Camogie Final in Croke Park. Picture: David Maher

WIN

CORPORATE TICKETS AT THE ALL-IRELAND CAMOGIE FINAL

On Sunday next Cork set them selves up for the double when they take on Down in the Junior final, and Tipperary in the Senior game. We are giving you the chance to win one of three pairs of Corporate tickets to Croke Park. Enjoy the game from the comfort of our Corporate Box which will include a full meal prior to the game.

To be in with a chance of winning one of these super prizes simply text your answer to the following multi-choice question to **53150**

Q: Who are Cork playing in the All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final on Sunday next?
a. Kerry b. Tipperary c. Waterford

TEXT: CORK followed by your answer (a, b or c) plus your name and address to **53150**

WINNERS CLOSE AT MIDNIGHT WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

Max text cost, Vodafone 60c and 02 71c, including VAT. Mobiles from other networks are not supported. SP: GlobeTech. Please send all queries to the keyword, answer and name/address details. No technical queries or difficulties call 021-4324558 or text 087 121 9688 during office hours. Usual Evening Echo rules and regulations apply. Judge's decision is final. Entrants must be over 18 years of age.

Evening Echo

Complete Your Day

Last weekend, Cork's hurlers set the Now it's the g

AFTER the Lord Mayor's Show, hopefully it will be the Lady Mayoress's Show! Cork camogie team will be aiming to emulate their male hurling counterparts this weekend when they do battle in the Senior All-Ireland Camogie Final.

The Rebel ladies face Tipperary at Croke Park and will be hoping to celebrate in similar style.

Vivienne Harris is part of the Cork team — and had to keep the lid on her celebrations after the men's success against Kilkenny.

"I was delighted with the win," she said. "But I don't think any of the girls on the camogie team went out to celebrate because we have our own match coming up soon."

"I didn't go out to celebrate because I'm sick. I watched it at home because I've got the flu and I'm on antibiotics, so I'm just trying to take it easy right now."

Vivienne says the Rebels' victory was well-deserved. "The first half of the match wasn't great. I think it took a while for the Cork team to settle down. But, in the second half Cork were the better team. I think they deserved to win it."

So can her camogie team pull off a dream double next Sunday? "We will give it our best and hopefully, our performance will be good enough," she says. "It would be great to have a double win, so hopefully everything will go well on the day."

For Vivienne, success would be the culmination of a dream she has worked hard to attain. This busy 25-year-old juggles work, college, family, friends and a relationship.

Vivienne, from Holly Hill in Cork city, started playing camogie aged 12. "I got into the game because of my two older brothers, Keith and Trevor," she says. "They played hurling at St. Vincent's Club. One day, I went to watch a match with my Dad, Pat. I was pucking a ball around when someone came over and asked me if I wanted to join the Bishopstown camogie team."

The youngster jumped at the chance and quickly proved herself on the field. However, camogie wasn't the only sport in her life. She also practised martial arts. In 1997, she won the women's Anglo-Irish Thai Boxing championship after she knocked out English girl, Jackie Hughes, in the first round.

Vivienne found success in camogie too. Since 1995, she has played for Cork in seven Senior All-Ireland Camogie finals — Sunday will be her eighth appearance.

Not surprisingly then, camogie takes up a lot of her time. "During the season, I train for two hours five nights per week and play matches on weekends," she says.

Live televised coverage of the camogie final has raised public awareness about the game in recent years but Vivienne says: "More needs to be done to promote the sport."

By TAMARA O'CONNELL



The Camogie Association appears to agree with the midfielder. It recently appointed a committee with the aim of modernising the sport's image.

The result was a slick marketing campaign called "Chicks with Sticks". The catchy slogan raised a few eyebrows, but Vivienne thinks the attempt to glamorise the sport is "a good thing".

She says: "A lot of people perceive camogie players as big, butch women. The "Chicks with Sticks" campaign helped people to realise that we are feminine, even though we play a tough sport like camogie."

Apart from training and competing, Vivienne works full-time at Fournier Pharma in Carrigtwohill. She is also doing a business studies course by night at Cork Institute of Technology. "I have classes from 6 to 10pm, three evenings per week. After this year, I'll have my diploma, but I intend to do a further year to get my degree," she says. "It can be tough trying to manage everything."

Not long after the All-Ireland final, Vivienne will be gearing up for another big event. But, it won't be a sporting one. Instead, it's a family affair. Vivienne is going to be a bridesmaid for her sister, Gillian, who is getting married on October 1. Vivienne, who will be wearing a mauve coloured dress, is "very excited about the wedding".

Later on next month, she plans to go on holiday with her boyfriend of two years, Kieran O'Brien.

"I usually try to get away in October after the season has finished. This year, I'm going to Portugal."

Leading such a busy life can take its toll, hence the recent bout of flu. Nonetheless, Vivienne feels confident that she will be fully recovered in time for the big match.

"I'm looking forward to playing in another All-Ireland final. Since 1995, Cork has won four senior titles and this year we are going for the fifth," she adds.

Tipperary won their first ever All-Ireland Senior Camogie title in 1999, beating Kilkenny by one point in the final.

Tipperary went on to win the 2000 and 2001 titles, making it three in a row.

In 2002, Cork prevented Tipperary from making it four in a row when they beat them in the final.

But, last year, Tipperary beat the Rebels in the final to win their fourth title.

"Cork and Tipperary are both strong teams," concludes Vivienne. "There's not much of a difference between them."

Let's hope the men's All-Ireland success can provide the inspiration for the Rebels this weekend.

All-Ireland Senior
Camogie Final
Croke Park,
Dublin, Sunday,
September 19

1pm: Down v Cork
(Junior All-Ireland
Camogie final)
3.30pm: Tipperary v
Cork (Senior final)
Tickets: Adults: €20
Students/OAPs:
€10
Children U12: Free



sporting world alight... irls' turn!



AT WORK AND PLAY: Vivienne Harris in the Cork colours (above), outside her place of work, Fournier Laboratories Ireland Ltd, Carrigtwohill (left), and at her desk (right)

Main picture: NEIL DANTON
Other pictures: LARRY CUMMINS

“ A lot of people perceive camogie players as big, butch women. “Chicks with Sticks” helped people realise we are feminine.



Hurling crazy O'Connors are chasing an All-Ireland triple

Linda Mellerick

I WONDER if there is a busier house in Ireland. The hustle and bustle is 'mental' as my interviewee puts it. Ten children, all sports mad.

All hurling mad. County medals, Munster medals, hurling All-Irelands, camogie All-Irelands, a hurling making factory as a back garden. It has to be the O'Connor family in Newtownshandrum. I got to know Paula in 1998 when she joined the Cork senior panel.

Like her brothers she does her talking on the field. Quiet but with a great sense of humour. I can't remember her ever being loud in the dressing room or on away trips.

You get many different characters when a panel of 30 or so get together. There'll be the jokers, the serious ones, the quiet ones, the leaders. But it's the combination that makes a team what they are. You need all these characters. Paula is a vital part of the present Cork set-up. Stylish, fast and strong at right half-back she is one third of a great half-back line.

She began playing camogie with Newtownshandrum at the age of 8 or 9 but being born into the O'Connor family meant that the stick was in her hand long before that.

"There was always hurling at home. The boys were always mad into it. So I joined them."

The boys' are Ben and Jerry, well established household names in the hurling world. Dad Bernie is synonymous with hurling bringing Newtownshandrum to incredible heights over the years.

As a player you meet many people who try to give you advice or an opinion. Some make great sense and you take it on board.

I only ever spoke to Bernie once in 2002 after we won the All-Ireland. I spoke to him about my intention of retiring and he said to me. "You'll know yourself when it's time to go. But there is one thing I'll say to you. When you're 25 and play a bad game, it's just a bad game. When you're 35 and play a bad game, you're finished!"

It was exactly how I felt. Paula won her first All-Ireland in her first year on the panel. "I got to run on to the pitch for the last few seconds of the All-Ireland final. I don't even think I hit the ball but I was absolutely delighted anyway." Of course she was but you may be sure she won't be running on this year.

A well established regular on the team since that day Paula had to wait another four years to win her second medal.

Sunday week could see her get her third.

With her brothers involved in such a high profile All-Ireland tomorrow, does she feel her quest for glory is over shadowed?

"No, I don't actually, not at all. There's still quite a lot of talk around Newtown about the camogie and at home we always talk about it. My mother was only on at me today about us having to win. "She actually gets more nervous before camogie matches than she does for the hurling games."

Having such talented children can cause problems at times. With three of her children playing at the highest level there have been occasions when the games have clashed.

Making the decision which game to attend is a tough. In 2002 for example, Newtown were in the county final.

That same day Paula was in Croke Park going for her second senior All-Ireland medal. In the end Paula's mum went to the camogie and the boys and Dad headed off to Pairc Uí Chaoimh.

"I felt sorry for my mother as she would have loved to have been at the boys' game as well. And the boys would have loved to have been in Croke Park."

"But that's the way it goes. They rarely clash and when they do it's disappointing but you get over it."

Many people would love to have the decision to make. So tomorrow Ben will lead his county out in what must be the proudest day of his life. Running behind him is brother Jerry.

Up in the stand the O'Connor family will watch with knotted stomachs.

Tomorrow week Paula will run out onto Croke Park. Again up in the stand the O'Connor family will watch.

A tense but proud week for any family. I put it to Paula that in the space of seven days there could be three All-Ireland winning senior medals taking pride of place at home.

"I know and it would be incredible", she says. "But we were in the same position last year and we came home with nothing. It would really be great if we did it this time."

Cork success can inspire camogie team

by Jim O'Sullivan

CORK'S Liam McCarthy success can inspire the county's senior camogie team against champions Tipperary in Sunday's Centenary All-Ireland final in Croke Park.

This is the belief of manager John Considine, an All-Ireland medal-winner in 1990 — and the fear of Tipperary captain Joanne Ryan.

Similarly, Cork juniors who take on Down, can benefit, according to manager Lillian Zinkant, whose late father George was a prominent hurler with Sarsfields in the Fifties.

The Cork senior team will include a sister of Cork hurling captain Ben O'Connor (Paula) and a cousin of full-back star Diarmuid O'Sullivan (Valerie) and will be captained by Stephanie Dunlea, already the holder of five All-Ireland senior and seven National League medals.

Newtownshandrum are expected to have a big travelling support, given that their county final two years ago clashed with the camogie decider. That year Cork were winners and prevented Tipperary from achieving the four-in-a-row. Considine, in his first year in charge of the team, is certain that there will be a spin-off from Cork's win at the weekend.

"In terms of pride, the girls will be saying that the hurlers have done it, 'now we can do it.' Most of them were here on Sunday. They will have seen the reaction to the team's victory. They will be looking for something similar."

Tipp captain Joanne Ryan, from the Drom/Inch club (and a three time All-Ireland senior medal-winner), feels that the champions may be under pressure on two fronts.

"We know that Cork are going to be 'up' for it after their hurlers' win — and we were lucky to make it to the final. We were 'steeped' in luck against Wexford in the semi-final, when we won by only two points. And before that we beat Kilkenny by a point."

Stephanie Dunlea, however, believes that Cork must improve their performance if they are to win. "We haven't been as successful as we would like to be this year. We lost out in the se-



Camogie captains from left: Stephanie Dunlea, Cork senior, Val O'Keeffe, Cork junior, Jennifer Braniff, Down junior and Joanne Ryan, Tipperary senior, at a photocall in Croke Park ahead of Sunday's All-Ireland camogie junior and senior finals.

Picture: Sportfile

mi-final of the League and in the Munster final against Tipp, after we beat them in the first round. We have introduced a lot of new players and didn't play to the best of our ability against Galway," she said. "We will be hoping for the best."

President Miriam O'Callaghan pointed out that while the senior and junior finals will be the highpoint of the weekend — and will again be at-

tended by President McAleese and the Taoiseach — a series of events have been planned around the games.

Their Jubilee team, Antrim, will be introduced on the field before the senior game and five young children will represent the "family" of Gaelic Games — rounders, handball, ladies football, the GAA and camogie. Amongst them will be GAA president Seán Kelly's daughter Julie and Miriam

O'Callaghan's daughter Orla. Additionally, more than 2,500 children representing primary schools from all over the country — wearing their school or club colours — will be part of a formation of C100 on the pitch.

On Saturday, a record 60 clubs — including an all-American born team will take part in the Kilmacud Sevens tournament. And, early in the day a torch run will set off from Navan (the

venue for the first ever competitive camogie game in 1904), ending in Croke Park on Sunday at 2.40.

Pre-media coverage will include a documentary on RTE on Friday night and a TG4 Laochra Gael feature on the Downey twins from Kilkenny, Ann and Angela, to be broadcast on Saturday night, along with a rerun of last year's All-Ireland final.

*Foras na Gaeilge are sponsors.



Galway captain Martina Carr, right, and Cork captain Stephanie Dunlea at a photocall in Croke Park. Despite the huge strides made by camogie ladies' gaelic football, soccer and hockey these past few years, there is an enormous amount of work still to be done in terms of promoting women's sports properly.

CAMOGIE: All-Ireland Final Focus

Horan bringing flavour of the desert to Croke

Máire Uí Scolai

CROKE PARK welcomes its first Saudi Arabian-born camogie player on Sunday when Jill Horan lines out for Tipperary against Cork in the All-Ireland Foras na Gaeilge championship final.

Jill, 20, who played at left corner-forward in the semi-final against Wexford, lived in Saudi for the first four years of her life.

From there her father John, a civil engineer, brought his family to Atlanta, Georgia, where they spent a further six years before returning to the Premier County.

The sports-mad family gradually took to Tipperary hurling, camogie and football while Jill also excelled at soccer on her return to Ireland — she won an All-Ireland Intermediate soccer medal with Cork outfit Wilton this year.

It was kind of inevitable that Jill would play at inter-county level as her grandmother played for Kilkenny.

Jill's older sister Claire also wore the Blue and Gold of Tipperary while brother Stan played minor football for the county last season.

"Our parents have been very supportive of us all and have driven us to so many venues. As I live in Drangan, South Tipperary, the nearest camogie club Clonoulty-Rossmore is about half an hour's drive," explained Horan.

To reach this year's All-Ireland final, Tipperary overcame Galway, Antrim and Kilkenny before meeting a fancied Wexford side in the semi-final last month. Two of Jill's grandparents were at the third round championship match when Tipperary



Jill Horan, who was born in Saudi Arabia but will represent Tipperary in the All-Ireland Camogie Final at Croke Park on Sunday.

escaped by a point from the Cats. "Gran was delighted for me that day, she now considers herself a Tipperary woman," quipped Jill.

The nippy corner-forward is at ease talking about Sunday's game. "I just can't wait for the All-Ireland. I am really enjoying my camogie and sometimes I can't believe I am playing with Deirdre Hughes and Jovita Delaney, who were my idols growing up."

"To me Jovita, is the most famous name in camogie while Dee (Deirdre) is great, she tells me so many little things to improve my game. It is great to have the chance to play in such a great full-forward line along side her and Eimear McDonnell."

Jill, who will have many members of her family in attendance on Sunday, has scored 3-9 in the championship, while fellow forwards Hughes (3-1) and McDonnell (4-5) are not far behind.

With one All-Ireland medal in her pocket already this year, the rising star is hoping to crown it with an All-Ireland honour on Sunday and then to cap it all with an Intermediate All-Ireland on October 3 when Tipperary take on Galway in the final. Remarkably, the holders will have 11 of the start-

ing 15 who made the historic breakthrough in 1999 under Michael Cleary. Since 2002, Raymie Ryan has been in charge and, predictably, he is wary of Cork. "Cork's biggest threat is likely to come from their half-backs and mid-field," he said.

Cork, who can call on eight of last year's starting 15 for Sunday, include Paula O'Connor, sister of All-Ireland champions, Ben and Jerry. While Valerie O'Sullivan will draw inspiration from cousin Diarmuid in the All-Ireland Junior final against Down, for whom Fionnuala Carr, daughter of Ross, is a key player.

On a hectic camogie weekend, the sport is the focal point of RTE's *Breaking Ball* on Friday evening (7.30), while the Downey twins, Angela and Anne, who have won 20 All-Ireland senior medals between them, star in a TG4 documentary on *Laochra Gael* on Saturday night (9.05).

The ever-popular AIB All-Ireland Kilmacud Crokes Camogie Sevens has drawn 64 four teams to south Dublin on Saturday, including one from Milwaukee and three from Britain. The competition gets under way at 10.30 with the final scheduled for 5.30.

Cork Camogie sides hope for centenary glory

by Mary Newman

IT'S ladies day on Sunday next as the Cork Camogie teams head to Croke Park in their quest of a unique Centenary double. For the seniors it's a renewal of old rivalry as they once again face Tipperary in what is sure to be another classic while the junior side come face to face with Down in what will be a first time meeting since 1968 at this level.

Cork head the roll of honour with 20 senior titles, but certainly Tipperary have without doubt been the top team of recent times taking four titles since 1999, when they arrived on the scene with a flourish defeating Kilkenny to take title number one. Last year they had revenge on Cork, stripping the Leesiders of crown after Cork had stopped their quest for four in a row in the 2002 decider. Now it's time for another meeting and certainly it's shaping up to be a close call.

Cork are captained for the second year in a row by Stephanie Dunlea who will want to put last year behind her and hopefully celebrate the county's 21st title in style with a centenary year All Ireland. Already 2004 has been special for Steph as in the first week of the year she walked down the aisle with Martin Murphy. Now the aim is to walk up the steps of the Hogan Stand with only Tipperary and Joanne Ryan standing in her way.

The Cork defender is no stranger to Croke Park, and with four senior All Ireland medals under her belt will be more than capable of dealing with anything the Tipperary attack throws at her. The juniors are chasing title number seven and are captained by Dublin based guard Val O'Keefe from the Kilbrittan/Timoleague club.

Down are the form team having disposed Derry to take the Ulster title they dispatched Roscommon in the semi final. All Ireland Intermediate champions in 1998 eight of that side line out on Sunday. The Cork team is coached by Sarsfields Lillian Zinchant while ironically coach to the senior side is none other



Cork senior camogie players (from left) Rosalie Holland, Colette Desmond and Joanne O'Callaghan pictured at the press night at Páirc Uí Chaoimh in advance of Sunday's final.

Picture: Denis Minihane

er that former All Ireland senior hurler John Considine who also played all his hurling and football with the Sars/ Glanmire club.

While the junior side have lost Rena Buckley, Anna Geary and Sile Burns to the senior side since the junior semi-final the panel is a strong one and very much focused on the task ahead.

Down feel they have something of the Indian sign over Cork. As P R O Paul Walsh explained to me in 1968 they took their first junior crown defeating Cork, 1974 saw a first minor at the hands of Cork and in 1998 Down at Intermediate championship and junior national league level took titles. This Cork team are in no mood to make more records for the northern side. Followers are urged to make the journey to Croke Park and get behind the team a special train will run on Sunday next while several coaches will also travel. Tickets will be on sale this evening in Páirc Uí Rinn from 5p.m to 7p.m, and followers are reminded that no money will be taken at the gates in Croke Park as it's an all ticket game.

Tipperary make one change

Cliona Foley and Máire Uí Scolai

REIGNING All-Ireland champions Tipperary have made one change for Sunday's Foras Na Gaeilge Centenary Final against Cork at Croke Park.

Team captain Joanne Ryan (Drom-Inch), who because of illness was not named in the starting line-up for the semi-final clash with Wexford but came off the bench, comes back in at centre-forward in place of Emily Hayden.

With the exception of this year's two impressive newcomers, teenage corner-back Julie Kirwan (17) and Clonoulty corner-forward Jill Horan, the team otherwise mirrors last year's victorious outfit.

Horan is their leading scorer to date with 3-9. Cork have made two changes from their semi-final victory over Galway last month. Captain Stephanie Dunlea moves into the full-back position in a direct swap with Rosalie Holland, who will now wear the No 4 shirt.

The only other change sees the 2002 captain Una O'Donoghue come in for Elaine Burke at right full-forward.

The Leesiders beat Tipp (3-7 to 1-6) in the round-robin section of the league this season, while Tipp gained revenge when beating the Rebelettes in the Munster final by a point.

TIPPERARY (SC v Cork) — J Delaney, S Kelly, U O'Dwyer, J Kirwan, S Nealon, C Gannon, T Brophy, A McDermott, P Fogarty, N Kennedy, J Ryan, C Grogan, E McDonnell, D Hughes, J Horan.
CORK (v Tipperary) — A Murray, J O'Callaghan, S Dunlea, R Holland, P O'Connor, M O'Connor, R Buckley, V Harris, G O'Connor, R Moloney, E Dillon, J O'Leary, U O'Donoghue, E Dillon, C Desmond. **Subs:** G Casey, E Burke, A Geary, S Burns, N Ahern, L O'Connell, R Curtis, C Healy, B Colliery.
CORK (JC v Down) — E Clifford, G Kearney, E O'Riordan, N Goulding, J Browne, A O'Regan, M Holland, V O'Sullivan, V O'Keefe, M O'Connell, S O'Donovan, E Bugler, E O'Farrell, M Deasy, M Jago. **Subs:** G Harrington, M Hegarty, J Duffy, K Hickey, G Collins, M Coleman, L Hawkes, M Buckley, H O'Regan.



Rosari Holland from Barryroe, Co Cork



Classy wingback Sinead Nealon keeps family name flying in Tipp colours.

WHAT a week and still more to come..... yes the time has finally arrived as camogie followers head to Croke Park with the Junior and Senior teams in search of a centenary double and a chance to write the county into the record books once again.

For the seniors it's a renewal of old rivalry as they face Tipperary while the junior side come face to face with Down in what will be a first meeting of the side's since 1968 at this level.

Senior's take on Tipp

LAST year we headed to Dublin full of confidence as we set about defending our crown but alas it was not to be as Tipperary avenged the previous years result to take the O'Duffy Cup, now the tables are turned and this Cork team are on a mission.

Twice already they have met this year with Cork taking the national league points while Tipperary were crowned Munster champions. Cork are in search of title number twenty one and what better way to celebrate you're coming of age but by taking a centenary title.

Tipperary have been the team of the fifteen a side game taking four titles since 1999 after they arrived on the scene with a flourish defeating Kilkenny to take their first.

They had revenge on Cork last year stripping them of their crown after Cork had stopped their quest for four in a row in the 2002 decider.

Now once again they come face to face and certainly the hunger is still very evident in both camps.

Coach John Considine is no stranger to Croke Park, the All-Star and All-Ireland medal winner is in his first season with the team and has worked hard towards Sunday and while preparations have been low key, John has built up great unity within the panel.

Cork are captained for the second year in a row by Stephanie Dunlea who is one of the games most experienced players.

The Cork defender is no stranger

to Croke Park and with four senior All-Ireland medals under her belt, she will be more than capable of dealing with anything the Tipperary attack throws at her.

Injuries have robbed the seniors of Catriona Foley and Breige Corkery and certainly two players of their calibre are a huge loss to the panel.

Tipp were lucky to survive their semi-final clash with Wexford the crossbar saving them in the last second. The big question is have Tipp had their fright and is the element of surprise gone? I think not, Cork have gone about reaching this final in a business like fashion and are determined to end Tipp's reign.

Tipp as champions will be favourites but this will suit Cork, it will be close but there is a hunger in this young Cork side and I have a feeling they will not let us down.

Make the journey to Croke Park

FOLLOWERS are urged to make the journey to Croke Park and get behind the teams; a special train will operate from Kent Station on Sunday morning.

Centenary year is a big occasion and certainly it's the hope and dream that All-Ireland camogie titles comes Leeside with your support the dream will be a reality.

KEEP THE FLAG'S FLYING FOR THE GIRLS

ANYBODY who takes in their flags or bunting's before Sunday's camogie finals will have to answer to me.....

...and yes that includes you

my friend PJ, by the way, thanks for the mention on Tuesday morning it seems to have done the trick we will definitely keep you in the job.



"Catch me if you can", says the Cork Camogie side! Emer Dillon (captain) Stephanie Dunlea & Emer Watson of the Cork Senior Camogie team washing the team kit with Colour Catcher at Duds'n'Suds Douglas St. Picture: Provision

JUNIORS FIRST INTO ACTION

IN the curtain raiser the junior's are chasing title number seven and are captained by Dublin based Garda Val O'Keeffe from the Kilbrittan/Timoleague club.

They take on a Down side that defeated holders Derry to take the Ulster title and went on to defeat Roscommon in the semi final.

All-Ireland Intermediate champions in 1998 eight of that side line out on Sunday.

The Cork team is coached by Sarsfields Lillian Zinchant who herself is the holder of three All-Ireland junior championship medals.

Wexford were defeated in a nail biting semi-final, but have lost Rena Buckley, Anna Geary and Sile Burns to the senior side since that game but the panel is a strong one and very much focused on the task ahead.

With no injury worries Lillian is looking forward to Sunday and a chance to atone for the defeat in 2002 at the hands of Kilkenny. Down are confident and feel they have something of the Indian sign over Cork.

In 1968 they took

their first junior crown defeating Cork, 1974 saw a first minor at the hands of Cork and in 1998 Down took the Intermediate championship and also the junior national league title.

Cork though look good enough to get the day off to a winning start.

CONGRATS

FINALLY before I finish well done to Ben and the lads on their victory on Sunday last, hopefully on Monday evening we will another two pieces of silverware on the Banks of the Lee.

Cork make two changes for Tipp clash

CORK have made one change in personnel and one positional switch ahead of Sunday's Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland senior camogie final against Tipperary in Croke Park (3.30pm).

The triumphant 2002 captain, Una O'Donoghue, gets the nod ahead of Elaine Burke for the number 13 shirt.

In the only other alteration, captain Stephanie Dunlea moves to full-back in a direct swap with Rosalie Holland, who now occupies the left-corner back post.

The Cork juniors are minus four players from their dramatic semi-final victory over Wexford for their All-Ireland decider with Down.

Rena Buckley has secured a starting slot with the seniors, Anna Geary and Sile Burns have opted for the senior panel, while Catriona Foley is sidelined with a knee injury.

Consequently, Gearóidín Kearney comes in at right-corner back; Jennifer Browne lines out a right wingback and Marie O'Connell will play at right-wing forward, while Liz Bugler starts in the other wing.

All-Ireland champions Tipperary will announce their team tomorrow night.

Cork senior team: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, S Dunlea (capt), R Holland; P O'Connor, M O'Connor, R Buckley; G O'Connor, V Harris; R Moloney, E Dillon, J O'Leary; U O'Donoghue, E Watson, C Desmond.

Cork junior team: E Clifford; G Kearney, E O'Riordan, N Goulding; J Browne, A O'Regan, M Holland; V O'Sullivan, V O'Keefe (capt); M O'Connell, S O'Donovan, L Bugler; E O'Farrell, M Deasy, M Jagoe.

Girls leave men in shade

Cliona Foley
Camogie

ARE inter-county camogie players as committed and hard-working as their male equivalents?

With Tipperary taking on Cork in the Centenary All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park on Sunday, that question is even more pertinent than usual - and Cork manager John Considine is well placed to answer it.

Considine managed the Cork minor hurlers to All-Ireland finals in 2000 and 2001, a team which included players like John Gardiner, Kieran and Brian Murphy and Setanta O'hAilpin, who all progressed to senior glory.

He took over the county camogie team from Pa Finn this season and he can see the huge differences in how they are treated.

"I would say the girls are just as committed but it is a different type of commitment they have to give," stressed Considine, whose charges include Paula O'Connor, a sister of Cork hurling's twin terrors Ben and Jerry.

"It's fair to say that they don't train as much as the men. But there's a huge difference in what the girls have to give to the game."

"At this stage the Cork hurlers probably just turn up to training with their boots. Everything else is handed to them. They get the best of everything."

"The camogie team have to do so much more for themselves but get nothing like the same rewards."

"Apart from the jersey, they have to buy most of their own gear and finance their own transport and, yet, they train and take their game very seriously."

Considine has also seen a noticeable difference between the hurling genders, which indicates that the so called 'weaker sex' might, in fact, be the tougher one!

"I don't know why it is but the boys, if they're injured, or even when they're not sometimes, are not slow about telling you."

"One problem I've had with the girls is that they won't actually tell you when they're injured. They just keep battling away until they fall over."

Cork camogie also has a problem which is gradually and controversially being eradicated out of the men's game - a raft of multi-talented dual stars.

One of those, Briege Corkery, broke a bone in a wrist playing club football a few weeks ago and, so, joined Sarah Hayes (knee) and Catriona Foley (cruciate) in 'sick bay'.

So what of champions Tipperary, whom Cork beat in the league but lost to (by a point) in the Munster final?

Questions were asked about Cork when they were beaten by Wexford in the League semi-finals, but Considine was quick to recall how tough the rising Slaney-siders made it for Tipp in the All-Ireland semi-final.

"Their full-forward line is absolutely exceptional - the best in the game - and Jill Horan, who is new this year, has been a brilliant addition."

"I really don't think people appreciate how good they are. Tipperary have won the All-Ireland four times in five years. Sure, if they were men, there'd be bronze statues of them up in the square in Thurles. They've set the standard and that's what we have to meet if we want to be the best."



Cork camogie player Rena Buckley being cheered on by her Leaving Certificate class pals at St Aloysius School in Cork city before this Sunday's All-Ireland final. Picture: Eddie O'Hare

Rebels unite behind Cork's Rena for the All-Ireland camogie final

A MILESTONE week has been had by a local schoolgirl and Cork camogie player as she prepares for Sunday's All-Ireland senior clash with Tipperary.

In between training sessions, 17-year-old Cork player Rena Buckley from Inniscarra was nominated head-girl of St Aloysius School, Cork.

The popular teenager said the new position has helped take her

mind off Sunday's senior team showdown.

She and her fellow Rebel ladies are hoping to emulate the success of their hurling counterparts at the Croke Park nail-biter.

"I'm very nervous as it is my first time to ever play in Croke Park," said Rena.

"But at the same time, myself and the girls are quietly confident. We hope to do the county proud."

School principal Vivien Fitzgerald-Smith described Rena as a "great role model" and said all the staff and pupils were very proud of her sporting achievements.

"We're having a whole school assembly tomorrow organised as a send-off and we wish her the very best of luck," she said.

● See tomorrow's Evening Echo for more All-Ireland camogie previews.

Paula is ready to do the triple

By PJ AHERNE

Camogie All-Ireland

LAST Sunday, Paula O'Connor sat in the stands of Croke Park roaring her brothers on to success, the roles will be reversed this weekend as she lines out for the Cork.

As we speak her voice is hoarse as she makes her way back to Cork from Dublin to join in the homecoming celebrations.

It is a far cry from the events of last year, when Cork lost to Kilkenny in the hurling final, while also losing to Tipperary in the camogie decider.

It was a devastating week for the O'Connor household.

"It was a horrible feeling. There was so much excitement that the three of us would bring home All-Ireland medals but we didn't," said Paula.

And she admits now that Ben and Jerry have earned their medals, she'd feel a bit left out if she didn't have one in her possession too.

"The pressure is now on me to bring back a medal and hopefully, fingers crossed, I'll get it."

With the whole family, hurling mad and her brothers always knocking a sliotar around, it was the natural progression for her to pick up a camán.

Paula's parents have always been more than willing to help out with all their commitments.

"They have always been good to us. They would both help us to get to our matches, while our mother always kept us going by washing our gear. While our father was always on hand to offer us words of advice and encouragement."

There was double joy in the O'Connor household earlier this year as both Paula and her twin brothers Ben and Jerry lined out for their county on the one day at Fitzgerald Stadium in Killarney.

Paula lined out when Cork overcame Limerick 4-16 to 1-6 in the second round of the Foras na Gaeilge championship, which was played just ahead of the Guinness hurling qualifier between Cork and Tipperary.

When she first broke into the inter-county senior panel in 1998, Paula was one of the youngest but now at the age of 24 she finds herself as one of the elder squad members.

"There are four of us around the age of 24 and then there is a bit of gap back. The age of retirement in camogie now appears to be 26/27, while you had the likes of Linda Mellerick playing until she was 32/33."

Looking ahead to the game against Tipperary, she feels pretty confident that Cork can pull off a victory just as they did in 2002.

"Tipperary are very much the dominant force in camogie. They have won four out of five All-Irelands since 1999 but we are hopeful of victory. It's all about luck on the day."

Work is currently in progress in the home in Newtownshandrum to make enough space on the mantelpiece for Paula's medal to take pride of place alongside Ben and Jerry's medals.



Despite being only 30 years of age Deirdre Hughes (with cup) seems to have been around the Tipperary inter-county scene forever.

Hughes adds class to Tipp

BEFORE 2000 Tipperary were never really a threat to Cork camogie fortunes.



Linda Mellerick

I can't recall losing a championship game to them over the years.

Even when they won the All-Ireland senior title for the first time in 1999, they hadn't beaten Cork along the way and we fully believed that had they met us in the final instead of our semi-final opponents Kilkenny they would not have won that title.

Amazing what you can make yourself believe!

Even in the lean years Tipp had some star quality, just not enough of it. Even when we were destroying them one name was always mentioned, Deirdre Hughes.

Despite being only 30 years of age Deirdre seems to be around the Tipperary inter-county scene forever.

Tipp only made the senior grade in '98 but at intermediate, junior and minor grade Deirdre was always there.

She began playing camogie at 11 years of age and spent years knocking around with neighbours and friends until eventually she joined an organised set up in Toomevara.

Her love and passion for the game was always there.

"I played hockey and soccer for a while and enjoyed them, particularly during the winter months.

But eventually I had to stop. It was a case of knowing your own limits."

The limits Deirdre refers to is a re-

curing back injury which has plagued her for almost 10 years.

"It's basically down to wear and tear. I'm used to it now but you have to look after it.

"I have to stretch a lot and rest when I can."

Numerous underage titles followed once Deirdre joined 'Toom' and their rise to senior status culminated with their first senior county title in 1992.

They won six-in-a-row after that and just recently won their seventh title after a lapse of seven years.

1995 saw them defeat arch rivals Glen Rovers in the Munster club semi-final.

"That was like winning the All-Ireland to us. It was such a huge win.

"We ended up losing the All-Ireland final afterwards to Rathnure of Wexford."

Slowly but surely Tipperary were climbing the ladder at inter-county level. They won the All-Ireland junior title in 1992 but spent five years in intermediate which Deirdre feels held them back.

"We just couldn't seem to get out of that grade. We ended up losing silly games, took teams for granted.

"Finally when we won the title in 1997 it was a huge relief."

The pinnacle was almost reached. Tipp were now playing senior inter-county camogie.

But the final step of the ladder had yet to be climbed. They had to win the title.

Galway defeated Tipperary in the All-Ireland semi final in Tipp's first year.

Deirdre missed the game due to a broken collar bone sustained in a club championship game the previous week.

Many felt that had Deirdre played, Tipperary would have reached the final in their first year playing senior. Cork went on to win the final that year.

1999 saw Deirdre suffer her worst and most humiliating defeat.

In the national league final against Cork at Semple Stadium Cork annihilated Tipperary on a scoreline of 9-19 to 2-7.

It was a nightmare for Tipp and for Deirdre.

Just four months later Tipp were All-Ireland senior champions.

The transformation which occurred was something extraordinary and the Blue and Gold have never looked back.

"It's amazing to think that we are in our sixth final in-a-row.

"I mean, we still look up to Cork. They were always the team we wanted to be. I remember going to All-Irelands and watching them ... and to think now that we are there for the sixth time."

Tipperary always had the players,

what they needed was someone to gel all the parts altogether.

"Michael Cleary came on board along with Colm Bonnar after our horrifying league defeat and knitted us together. They focused on skill a lot more and gave us confidence.

"Since then Raymie Ryan has taken over the reins and kept the momentum going."

Tipperary haven't looked like world beaters this year.

They looked sluggish and tired in games and one wonders if the 'hunger' is gone out of them.

Deirdre feels only time will tell.

"You just never know, do you? If you went through us one by one and asked us if we wanted to win this All-Ireland then yes of course we do.

"But saying it and actually proving it are two different things.

"Hunger is what makes you go that extra yard when you haven't another step in you.

"Hunger is throwing your body in front of a hurley regardless of the consequences.

"Hunger is what gives you that extra body strength when needed and hunger is what drives you to be better than you ever thought you could be."

Next Sunday Deirdre will once again be a huge threat to Cork.

Her trademark, a one-handed pick up while using the other to hold off her opponent will be put to good use. If she is allowed to do so against Cork, it will have dire consequences.

Tipperary can produce that extra class to win fifth title in six years

Reports: Michael Heverin
Pictures: John Kelly

IF TIPPERARY are to win their fifth All Ireland title in six years at Croke Park on Sunday then manager Raymie Ryan believes they will need to produce something extra special.

"I expect the unexpected from this team, someone to display a small piece of extra class. That's what will win the All Ireland" says the Cashel man who has guided the team to its sixth final in as many years.

"Last year we had Eimear McDonnell's brilliant goal, a great goal from Deirdre Hughes, the blocking of Una O'Dwyer and the puck-outs of Jovita Delaney. All these things add up and when you piece them together you have a good performance. That's what I am looking for on Sunday, to piece all these together".

Tipp have been the dominant team in the game over the past six years with wins in 1999, 2000, 2001 and last year. The only defeat was to Cork in 2002 which deprived them of four in a row.

That loss cut deep and provided a huge

motivation to win last year. Cork are now in a similar situation, smarting over last year's defeat to Tipp and as we saw in last Sunday's hurling final, that can be a dangerous situation when Cork are involved.

However Cork will be sore over more than just last year's Croke Park showdown as they have played second fiddle to Tipp in most of their recent encounters, including the Munster finals of the past two years. A new order has developed in camogie since Tipp's breakthrough in 1999 and the Leesiders more than most will want to change that.

Brilliant forward Fiona O'Driscoll has been the side's biggest loss through retirement since last year's decider but the side still contains enough heavy artillery upfront to trouble any side.

The Tipp boss doesn't feel O'Driscoll's departure will make his side's task any easier. "If you lose one top forward the responsibility is spread throughout the rest of the attack so the threat will now be all

over the forward line", says Ryan.

He is fortunate that he hasn't lost any of his big names since last year's win as Tipp continue to make up for lost ground over the first ninety five years of the camogie association. In Deirdre Hughes and Eimear McDonnell he has two of the best forwards in the game - in Hughes' case, in the history of the game - but also added fresh blood in the person of Jill Horan who adds new flair to the attack.

She will fill the corner forward berth and with Julie Kirwan at corner back are the new faces on a team that has remained relatively unchanged in recent years. "This is the natural progression of a team evolving. If you pick two or three newcomers each year then after five years you will have ten or twelve new players. That's how hurling goes", pointed out Ryan.

Horan and Kirwan have fitted in well to a set-up that also includes vital experience with players such as Una O'Dwyer, Ciara Gaynor, Angie McDermott and Noelle

Kennedy.

Somewhat ironically, Ryan believes that continuity gives Cork a slight advantage. "We are set up this year, Cork know exactly what we have but we don't know what they have so we have to approach it in a different manner to last year. They have a new manager and he can tinker with the side as he sees fit while they also have the motivation of revenge that we had last year".

All Ireland titles are not won easily and Tipp have found that en route to this year's decider with the semi-final against Wexford their biggest test - a game they could have lost if the woodwork had not come to their rescue in added time. Those close shaves could prove beneficial in the white heat of Croke Park this Sunday.

Says Ryan - "Challenges like that galvanise a team. If a team is getting it tough they can say they have had enough and give in or else they can stand up to the challenge. Against Wexford we were two

points down without having scored for twenty minutes and then we rattled in 1-3. That's the response to any questions about the team's hunger".

The Cashel man has no problems motivating his side but if he did all he would have to do is remind them of their defeat to Cork in 2002. "All they have to do is think about that game and how they felt after it. That just focuses their minds and makes them fresh".

That loss hurt so much because the team is so close and work so hard for each other. There is now a tremendous bond between them that has not only developed since the senior breakthrough in '99 but for many of the players from minor and junior years.

"This is more of a club team than a county team", says Raymie Ryan. "They all get on so well together and are so friendly that it is almost a burden for them to play each other at club level. Neither are there any egos or prima donnas on the team. Everyone respects everyone else and no

one is bigger than the team. That is their biggest attribute.

"They are also very proud to be representing Tipperary, proud of the way they prepare and proud of the respect they have brought to their sport".

Tipperary have done more than any other county to raise the profile of camogie in recent years and now in the centenary year of the association they want to cap it all with another All Ireland title. It won't be easy but they have the combination of the quality players, the hunger and the motivation to do so.

However the manager is not making predictions because even if Tipp are favourites in the eyes of many pundits, the players never see themselves as favourites against Cork.

In his understated way, he says - "We have the panel of players to do well but how well is up to the girls on the day".



Soccer star Jill Horan now a key member of the Tipp attack.

Soccer star Jill adds new dimension to Tipp attack

Croke Park may not be ready yet to throw open its doors to soccer but an Irish soccer international will grace its green sward in Sunday's All Ireland final. Drangan university student Jill Horan will swap the green of Ireland for the blue and gold of Tipp when she lines out on

Sunday in her first senior final.

Jill was one of the Irish stars in last year's u-19 European championships in Portugal when the Republic of Ireland came through the first round only to lose to Spain in the second series. Now she is one of the stars of the Tipp attack as they bid for

another All Ireland title.

She describes playing with Team of the Century player Deirdre Hughes and last year's Player of the Year Eimear McDonnell in the Tipp full forward line as a "dream come true".

"The quality of ball that they and the other players send in is fantastic, you nearly have to score. Deirdre and Eimear have a wonderful understanding and they know exactly where each other is. My game is a little different but I think I can bring another dimension and form an effective partnership", she says.

mitments curtailed her later involvement.

Like corner back Julie Kirwan, she will be playing in her first All Ireland senior final on Sunday - indeed it will be her first time to play in Croke Park.

Is she nervous? "Not at all, I cannot wait. I am really looking forward to it". She believes that her

soccer career, from St Kevin's in Littleton, to Wilton FC in Cork, to the Munster squad and eventually to the Irish u-19s have provided her with a great learning experience that will prove crucial on big match days with Tipp.

And they don't come much bigger than Sunday when Tipp fans will hope

to see her produce the form she displayed in the Munster final win over Cork and again in the championship semi-final win over Wexford. She was outstanding in both and still thinks she can do better.

"Raymie Ryan and the selectors don't put pressure on me at all but I put

pressure on myself to do better. I have been playing okay but I know I can do better".

And with the entire parish of Drangan travelling to Croke Park for the final, Sunday could be the day to do it.

Jill plays her camogie with Clonoulty but is very much a Drangan woman where her parents, John and Patricia live. Her early camogie involvement was with St Patrick's but the club broke up and she had to move further afield to play. John's career as a civil engineer has seen the family travel extensively and Jill was born in Saudi Arabia and moved to the United States when she was four.

It was while living in Atlanta that her love of soccer developed. Camogie didn't feature on the radar screen at that stage but her grandmother kept her in touch with her roots by regularly posting over Tipperary jerseys.

The family returned to Ireland when Jill was ten and it wasn't too long before she started to earn a Tipp jersey in her own right. Despite starting her camogie career with the wrong grip - she was soon put right on that! - she took to the game as she had to soccer in the United States and progressed to win a Munster title with the Tipp minor team that also included Claire Grogan, Trish O'Halloran and Helen Breen.

Last year she was on the county intermediate team that lost the All Ireland final and also progressed to the senior panel for the league but her soccer com-

TIPPERARY CHASE FIFTH IN SIX YEARS

by John Guillon

TAKING into account matches in league and championship Sunday's All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park will be the sixth meeting of Tipperary and Cork in two years. The fact that both Counties will cross swords in the All-Ireland final for the third successive year adds even greater spice and intrigue to next weekend's showdown at GAA headquarters.

The latest instalment between two great rivals has the makings of a classic. It throws up quite an imponderable. Will Tipp, the dominant force in the grade, capture two-in-a row at the expense of Cork and take their fifth title in an outstanding six year run. Or will durable Cork who crushed Tipp's four in a

row bid in the 2002 final, and have bounced back with vigour following last year's disappointment, reverse the trend in this see-saw struggle. Clearly, there's no shortage of incentives on both sides and with the cream of Ireland's camogie talent ready to parade their vast array of skills it would take a brave pundit to predict the outcome.

Tipperary Manager Raymie Ryan will never forget 2003. After taking over as Manager from a former County hurling team mate Michael Cleary, who had enjoyed huge success with the squad, the Cashel man led Tipp to All-Ireland glory in his first season. It was quite a baptism of fire for Raymie! And he will forever cherish the memories. However, as

he endeavours to guide Tipp to back to back titles neither he nor his charges are dwelling too much on the past. "What the girls have achieved is great, but their focus right now is totally on September 19th and winning the game. We are not giving any real thought to our records or the possibility of two-in-a-row, the girls are never complacent, their ongoing hunger for success is just great" Raymie told the Tipperary Star.

Indeed, while the Tipp outfit has remained fundamentally unchanged in recent years the enthusiasm and will to win in the camp is greater than ever, according to Raymie. The popular Cashel man, who still plies his skills in the King Cormac's jersey, says his side has a spirit and

camraderie one tends to associate more with a close-knit club team. "They can have hard fought battles on the club front and then they die for each other in the Tipperary jerseys" said Raymie.

Such commitment has been a hallmark of their success and Raymie feels they are in "just the right frame of mind" as Sunday's ultimate test beckons. "They know Cork's capabilities just like Cork know theirs, both are well focused and it should be a great game with little in it" said Raymie.

At the time of writing Tipp are reporting a clean bill of health. "It's great to have an injury free panel during preparations. Because we have to think in terms of not just the

starting fifteen, but, the entire panel and who we may need to introduce at a given time" said the pragmatic and very courteous Raymie. He heaps praise on selectors Conor Ryan (Nenagh) and Marion Graham (Moycarkey-Borris) and all concerned with the teams preparations. "We are very grateful to Con Hogan and all concerned with Semple Stadium for making the pitch available to us for training sessions. It's great to avail of the Stadium pitch when we are preparing to play on a similar pitch" he said.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

A much fitter Cork dished out a drubbing to a lethargic Tipp in the National league earlier this year. "That was an eye-opener to us in that it

showed us just how much work we had to do at that stage of the year. It brought us down to earth and we really knuckled down to it after that game" Raymie said. Gradually, Tipp upped their preparations and there was a much more familiar look to them when they pipped Cork in the Munster final. The All-Ireland crusade was gathering momentum. And while they had to fight all the way to shake off Wexford in the semi-final a few weeks ago Raymie feels that the Slaneysiders did not get the recognition they deserved in the run up to the game. "We were not surprised by Wexford, they have good people guiding them and they had their homework done. Tactically, they used an 'extra' defender well for a long

period of the game, but, I was delighted that we held our nerve, we stayed solid and came good at the right time scoring 1-3 in five minutes" the Tipp supremo stated.

Raymie has no doubts about the enormity of the task facing Tipp on Sunday. "They have a very strong well balanced team and will be fierce determined to atone for last year's disappointment. They have a great tradition, the County has won twenty All-Ireland titles. But we're not short of strength and experience either and hunger for success continues to be a real driving force for us" said Raymie who is particularly delighted with the success of young emerging players like Julie Kirwan and Jill Horan to name but two.

A BIG YEAR FOR JULIE

by Liza Roche

A LEAVING Certificate student at Colaiste Phobal Ros Cre, Julie Kirwan is the youngest member of this year's Tipperary Senior Camogie team.

From Moneygall, 17-year-old Julie became a regular on this year's team when she replaced Claire Madden at corner back earlier this year. Not only is Julie facing into one of the highlights of her young career on Sunday next, she is also facing into a tough academic year. "This is a very important year for me. I've just started sixth year and I will be sitting my Leaving Certificate next June. And I suppose I will have to take some time out from Camogie to concentrate on my studies," explained Julie.



Julie Kirwan

Despite her young years, Julie has a wealth of experience behind her and has

played from U-12 right through to minor level for her county.

On top of that Julie has given her all to both her local GAA and Camogie Club.

"I started playing at U-10 for Moneygall in both Camogie and hurling. I played with the boys up until U-16 level. When I got to this level though, I found it was getting tougher and a lot of the boys had grown taller than me. I think though it was a benefit to me to play hurling on a boys team as I feel it has made me tougher," explained Julie.

Asked how she got involved in playing the sport initially, Julie replied that it was through her Primary School and especially one of her teachers there. "Moneygall National

School was where I first began playing Camogie. Seamus Ryan one of my teachers there organised the school team."

It was through her school that Julie was also given the opportunity to take part in the Mini 7's Primary Schools games. I was on the football team. I don't play football anymore though, I prefer Camogie," added Julie.

Unlike her Captain, Julie comes from one of the youngest Clubs in the County, which was founded in 1996. Since then the Club has gone from strength to strength and they have appeared in the last three County Intermediate Finals. "Actually the first year when went Intermediate we got to the Final. We lost to Clonoulty on that occasion. The following

year we met Burgess and this year we lost to Holycross. We are very young team really and while it was disappointing to have lost another County Final this year, it is a very big step up to senior level. I know some of the Clubs that have gone up, have found it difficult," added Julie.

Focusing on next Sunday's game and the challenge ahead, Julie believes they have a good chance. "I think we have a great chance of beating Cork. To be honest about it though we are not even thinking about them. We are only thinking about our own game. Wexford really put the frighteners on us in the semi-final. We know we need to play well, but I suppose we also need a bit of luck," concluded Julie.



Tipperary manager Raymie Ryan looking for second successive All Ireland title with his team.

CAPTAIN JOANNE WARY OF CLEVER CORK

by Liza Roche

"WE like the fact that it is Cork we are meeting in the Final. We really want to win this. At the end of the day though a lot of it depends on luck and we need luck to be with us. It will be harder to beat Cork this time. I think that people are being harsh on Cork when they say that they are not as good as they were last year. Cork are very clever," warned Tipperary Senior Camogie Captain Joanne Ryan.

A 21-year-old Business Studies student at Tipperary Institute Joanne has been a regular on the team for the past four years. On the field this young Drom/Inch lady shows no fear only true determination and passion.

"I would be very wary of Cork; true we beat them in

the Munster Final that was just by a point. They beat us in the first round of the League earlier this year and I have no doubt but they want to beat us again," added Joanne.

Continuing Joanne stated, "We have had a tough campaign. Wexford really put it up to us. They are very strong but we had luck on our side that day. Wexford are definitely the team to watch, they are the up and coming team."

Getting back to their impending rendezvous with Cork Joanne added, "We are trying not to think about Cork's game plan too much just concentrating on our own. We do like playing Cork in the final and I suppose like every Tipp team we like to beat Cork too."

Camogie has been part of

Joanne's life since she was very young. "It all started in Inch National School. Paudie Butler got me started. Unlike some of the other girls on the panel I never played on the boy's teams because I was too small but I was lucky there was a Camogie Club in my parish," explained Joanne.

In fact, Drom/Inch is one of the oldest Camogie Clubs in Tipperary. Unfortunately for Joanne though this has not been their best year. Just last month they lost their County title. "We lost the County Final so we were very disappointed. It was a busy time though and especially for Toomevara. They played three games in a week. I didn't really like that. It is great to play for your Club but maybe the County Championship could be spread out a bit



JOANNE RYAN

more not piled on top of each other. There are good few Toome girls on the panel and it was very unfair

on them," added Joanne.

Outside of Camogie, Joanne has a keen interest in the family farm. "I enjoy farming. In fact the main element of my Business Studies course is Rural Development and sustainability. I am in my final year now of my Degree and I am hoping to seek employment with the Department of Agriculture when I finish," explained Joanne.

KEEN HORSE WOMAN

She also is a keen horse woman. "I have a horse and in the winter season I participate in various hunts. Asked whether she has interest in show jumping, Joanne replied, "I would have only it clashes with the Camogie season and you can only obey one master."

Tipperary and Cork set to bring out the best in each other

By Gerry Slevin

A year ago, a week after Cork's unsuccessful attempt to win the All Ireland hurling title, the county's cailini lined out against Tipp in the camogie decider in the same Croke Park. There was no compensation this time, Tipp relieving their great rivals of the O'Duffy Cup with the same conviction that Cork had exhibited against Tipp the previous year.

There was no joy for Cork's Paula O'Connor and she had to seek the shoulders to cry on which her twin brothers Jerry and Ben had sought eight days earlier.

One year on and what a difference!

Last Sunday, Cork reversed that hurling decision against Kilkenny. The O'Connor twins' mood was transformed from deflation to elation. Next Sunday, the cailini head back for Croke, with the same mission as last year. Atonement or compensation is not the aim this time around. There's the double in mind. The O'Connor household with two precious All Ireland hurling medals from last Sunday's exertions is eager for another, and it is Tipp, once more, that stands in the way of Cork success.

At the same time, it is extremely doubtful if Cork will dwell too much on the 'double' aspect of next Sunday's match. They will surely have learned

from Kilkenny whose search for three-in-a-row hurling titles last Sunday, floundered so miserably in the wake of so much pre-match publicity.

Nor is the fact that the preceding junior final which sees Cork pitted against Down, likely to be a factor in motivating the Rebel girls for a double bid on Sunday.

What motivation is required?

The sight of the blue and gold jersey is motivation in itself.

It is most appropriate that in centenary year, Tipp and Cork should be the counties to preach the camogie message on the greatest day in the game's season. They have been the dominant forces of recent years and since Tipp made it back to senior grade in 1997, they have left a marked impression, taking their very first title in 1999, making it three in a row in 2001 (with the juniors also winning that year, for good measure), failing to add a fourth a year later, but bouncing back in 2003 for their fourth in five years.

Now, but an hour separates them from five in six years and if that isn't something extra special to savour, then what is?

Up to Tipp's emergence, the '90s belonged to Cork. Indeed the '70s did too.

The big question, therefore, is, will Sunday see Cork claim their 21st title, putting them within five of Dublin's top spot on the Roll of Honour, or will it be Tipp again, claiming their 5th in what is the county's 6th successive All Ireland final

appearance?

Tipp bring two newcomers to All Ireland final day in corner back Julie Kirwan and corner forward Jill Horan. Julie steps into the position vacated by Claire Madden, who has a December/January event to occupy her mind as she prepares for the arrival of a young hurler or camogie player!

The young Moneygall girl has proved to be a more than able substitute and thoroughly deserves her big day. Likewise, the dashing forward from Clonoulty who has graced the scene with such distinction this season and who has knitted in so well in a sector from which so much will be expected on Sunday.

Emily Hayden is the one to lose out as All Ireland final day welcomes back team captain Joanne Ryan. Emily, captain of the 2001 victorious side, was one of the stars of last year's decider and it is probably a measure of Tipp's well being that they can call on quite a handful of top class subs.

Has Tipp's appetite waned in the light of the number of titles achieved since 1999? Watching them in training last week, with manager Raymie Ryan sparing neither himself nor his charges, one could only conclude that the desire to win is every bit as passionate and as enthusiastic as it was over the past half decade. Talking to the players, the message that comes across clearly is, that absolutely everything possible is being done and will continue to be done to ensure that the O'Duffy Cup remains in the Premier

County.

The fact that is the association's centenary year is not lost on all concerned, either. However, the over-riding motivation probably rests in the fact that Cork are Tipp's opponents.

There's no love lost between the counties, in hurling or camogie. That, of course, is well known.

Indeed on the night the Toomevara club honoured Deirdre Hughes for her membership of the Team of the Century.

Michael O'Muircheartaigh himself couldn't refrain, when interviewing a Cork player, from asking if it was true that Tipp and Cork hated each other!

He received a diplomatic reply, which probably sums up the Tipp attitude too. 'We don't hate each other. We hate the other's jersey!'

By now the preparations are almost completed. Both managements know all there is to know about the respective opposition and have planned accordingly.

On Sunday, Joanne Ryan and Stephanie Dunlea will lead out their colleagues to a tremendous roar of approval from the fans.

When referee Una Kearney sets the action in motion, history will fade into the background.

The blue and gold clad Tipp girls and their red and white clad opponents from Cork will knuckle down to their task with abandon, no baggage, only the desire and the determination to be the ones in front at that final whistle.

Both are confident of winning and whichever team fate favours will be exemplary champions for Centenary Year.

There is nothing to suggest that this will be anything but a cracker, a game to set the pulses racing.

If it is as good as last year's decider, then the attendance and those looking in on television will have ample cause to rejoice, provided the result is the same as last year!

Incidentally, while Cork now have 29 All Ireland senior hurling titles (four more than Tipp!) and 20th All Ireland senior camogie titles, there have been only three occasions (1941, '70 and '78) when the hurling-camogie double was achieved. By comparison, Tipp with only four All Ireland camogie titles doubled up in 2001 and added the junior camogie title to boot.

Statistics, statistics! They will count for nothing on Sunday.

Let us have a great game with Tipp ahead at the final whistle.



Forwards to Tipp the balance

By Gerry Slevin

There's no greater camogie rivalry than that of Tipp and Cork. They have met in three of the last five All Ireland finals, Tipp victorious twice and Sunday in Croke Park once more sees these great Munster rivals battle it out for the O'Duffy Cup.

Twice this season, they have met, Cork winners in a league encounter down in Pairc Ui Chaoimh (though Tipp came back to win the league) and later in Semple Stadium, when Tipp retained their provincial crown.

Neither game will count for anything when they trot out on Croke Park's sod on Sunday because this is the one to win, the one that matters most in camogie's great year of centenary celebration.

Winning the National League was important to Tipp - they hadn't done it since '77 - and their final victims, Wexford, made a great stab at snatching the spoils at the final hurdle, just as they would later do, when the teams lined out for the All Ireland semi-final down in Nowlan Park.

Between the league final and that second Wexford game, Tipp came through their group with wins over Galway,

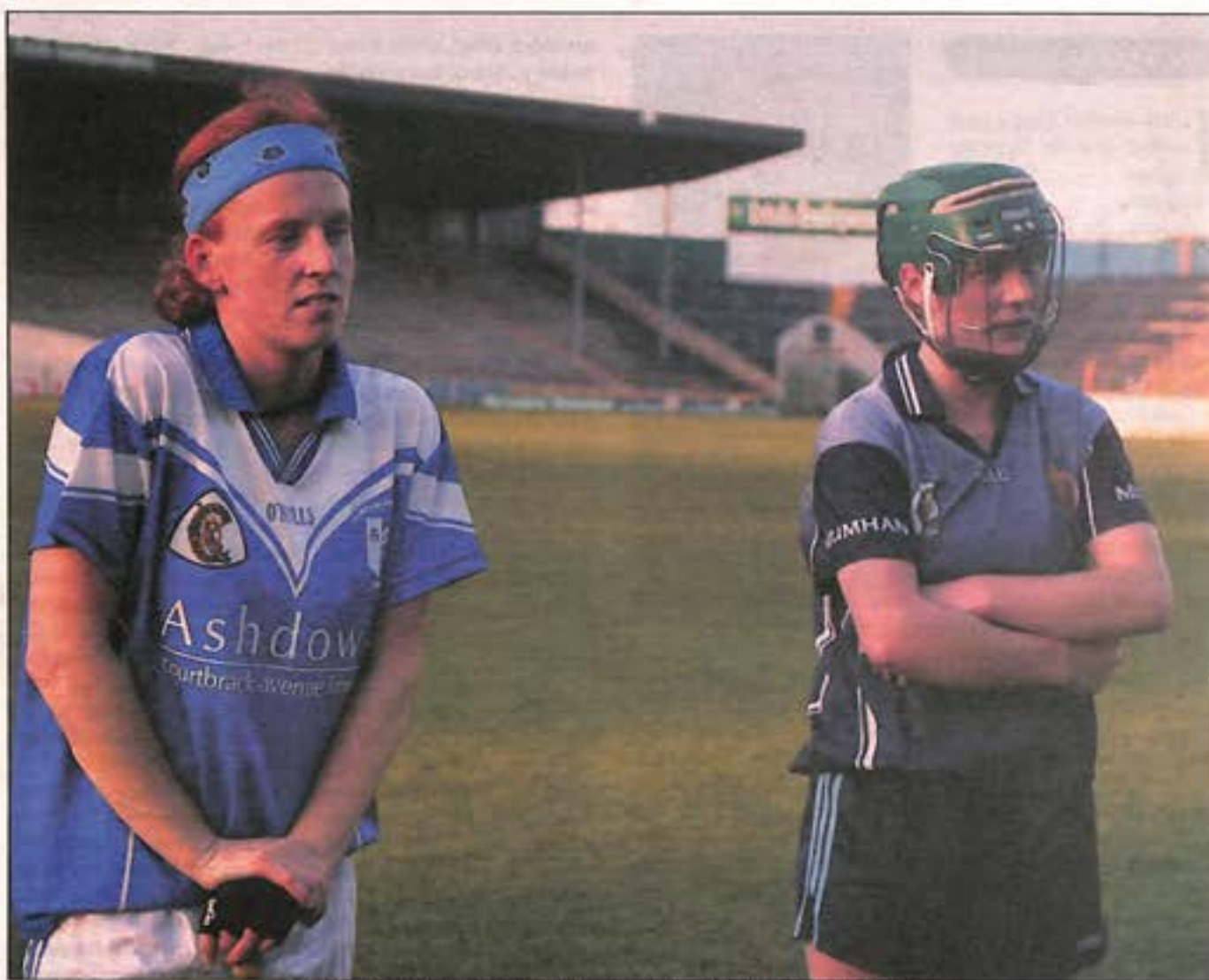
Antrim and Kilkenny. The Kilkenny game was the closest while the Antrim match didn't even turn out to be a training run, so easily and handsomely was victory achieved.

It is probably true to say that we have yet to see the 'real' Tipp in action this season. There have been up and down performances, notwithstanding the fact that both major titles to date have been claimed. In the All Ireland semi final against Wexford, it was but the width of the crossbar that prevented a sensational last minute Wexford win.

Had Tipp lost out that afternoon, sensational though it might have been, it would not have been a defeat they could have moaned over. Wexford played a tight marking game, they were a young but physical side, and somehow managed to throw the Tipp girls off their stride.

There were lessons to be learned, especially in regard to the attack. Not all played up to scratch that day and yet, I feel it is a sector that will come good on Sunday.

The team has not been selected at time of writing, although the first seven places should pose no problems for Raymie Ryan and his co-selectors Conor Ryan and Marian Graham. Both mid fielders



Deirdre Hughes and Eimear McDonnell - two of Tipp's attackers.



Moneygall panelists - Julie Kirwan and Eimear Ryan.

were replaced the last day and the attack failed to click with the same cohesive precision we have come to expect from them.

It is difficult to imagine 2003 Player of the Year Eimear McDonnell being as ineffective as she was against Wexford and one can expect to see the Burgess girl upping her contribution considerably.

A breath of fresh air has come on to the scene this season in the shape of corner forward Jill Horan. Possessing great flair and dash, the Clonoulty girl, who is also an Irish international soccer star, has been a revelation this year. Her Croke Park debut is eagerly awaited.

The same stadium has proved a happy hunting ground in the past for Deirdre Hughes who brings into this final a distinction of being the only current day player to have been selected earlier this year in camogie's Team of the Century. It is an honour that rests lightly on Dee's shoulders and she is the forward on whom most attention will be

showered on Sunday.

Claire Grogan, Noelle Kennedy, Emily Hayden, team captain Joanne Ryan (now fully recovered from injury), Trish O'Halloran and Geraldine Kinane will all be seeking selection in the other forward berths. Mid fielders Angie McDermott and Philly Fogarty will have serious opposition from Louise Young, Paula Bulfin and possibly Joanne Ryan.

The defensive situation is far more clear-cut. Recently married Jovita Delaney continues to inspire between the posts and while 2002 and 2003 captain Una O'Dwyer hadn't the happiest of hours against Wexford, one fancies her to have recovered her old dash to make amends on Sunday.

Just as Jill Horan has been a revelation in attack, another newcomer, Julie Kirwan has laid down a marker for serious consideration as a corner back. She and Sheena Howard have been in contention throughout the year for the position vacated by Claire Madden. The Moneygall girl performed very

well against Wexford and is likely to get the nod once more. Suzanne Kelly, Sinead Nealon, Ciara Gaynor and Therese Brophy, all seasoned and most reliable defenders complete a unit that saved Tipp against Wexford and will be expected to rise to it again on Sunday.

Cork?

Never has the yearning for supremacy been more pronounced than this year. They want to beat Tipp and the whole year has been geared towards that achievement in this most special of seasons.

There's a new management team in place led by All Ireland senior medal winner (1990) John Considine. The terror of defences for so long, Fiona O'Driscoll, has retired but most of the side that faced Tipp in the last two deciders, with mixed fortunes are still there.

The team is led this year by Stephanie Dunlea and they came through their grouping against Derry, Wexford and Limerick with the assuredness one always expects from Cork.

It took them a while to get into their stride and shake off Galway in the semi final but there was never really any doubt about the outcome. With the Tipp mentors looking on, as they waited for the Wexford game that followed, their mission might well have been to do just enough.

But Cork can never be under rated and they will travel on Sunday, fully determined to bring the O'Duffy Cup back to the Rebel County for the 21st time.

Seeking a 5th title in 6 years is indeed a long way back from that. Yet, Tipp are the champions, the team to be knocked, but also the team with the personnel, the class, the commitment and the dedication to endorse what they achieved in last year's outstanding final.

It's Tipp to win, very narrowly, the inspiration of the defence to work wonders further out and an attack that will raise its contribution and its work-rate to a greater and more impressive height than in the semi-final.

There were lessons to be learned in the Wexford game – RAYMIE RYAN

By Gerry Slevin

Since emerging into a managerial role, former Tipp half back Raymie Ryan has built up a relationship with his players that sees them bring the best out of each other.

It was in February 2003 that he first became acquainted with his new charges and the intervening time has seen one All Ireland title, two provincial titles and a National League won.

Raymie and the team now stand but an hour away from a 5th All Ireland title in 6 seasons and he is as anxious and as determined as if it was the first.

To remind Raymie of the closing seconds of the semi final against Wexford is to see a frown appear. He seems, almost, to go into himself, as though what might have been but for the width of the cross-bar, doesn't bear thinking about!

And at the same time, he is realistic enough to concede that having got away so fortunately in that match, there were lessons to learn and,

hopefully, the intervening weeks will have provided a different approach, a different attitude.

Wexford, says Raymie, were spoilers somewhat with their type of play. It was a very tight game and also to be considered was the fact that preparations for that game didn't go as smoothly as they would have wished because of the concluding stages of the county championship being played just prior to it. For a couple of weeks there were only sixteen at training because of club commitments.

"Maybe we will get it right for the final!" he says.

Seriously though, Raymie has nothing but the height of praise for the input of the entire panel in the lead-up to this All Ireland final.

"We have a clear passage now, everybody is back and everybody is fit," says Raymie.

Cork has new management this year, former hurler John Considine now at the helm and there are a few newcomers to the team also.

Raymie sees some consolation in the fact that Fiona O'Driscoll is not there but in



Tipperary management team – Raymie Ryan (manager), Marian Graham and Conor Ryan.

saying that, he well realises that the focus that was placed on seeking to contain this flying forward in the past, will have to be spread more evenly among all of Cork's attackers now.

Looking back again at the Wexford game, Raymie, in response to a query as to

Wexford's total score from play being a mere goal, says the format used by Wexford in that game saw to it that defences would be on top and that scoring would not be as fluent as they might have liked.

"We had six backs to their five forwards and they had

seven backs to our six forwards. When a game is kept as tight as that, it's very winnable at any stage. That was their tactic. The Clare hurlers also used it against Kilkenny and it keeps the scoring down," he says.

The Cashel man sees no problem whatever in motivat-

ing his charges. While it might be a special final because of the centenary aspect, he sees all finals as special and the players see it that way too. Finals are hard to get to and Raymie knows that while the players are there, and while the enthusiasm continues to burn as it has done over the past number of years, then every opportunity has to be availed of.

"We must treat every final as if it was our last. We don't know if we will ever be back in Croke Park again after this final. This run Tipp has had over the past six years cannot keep on forever, so we have to enjoy it and make the best of it while it lasts."

In his relatively short time at the helm, Raymie Ryan has masterminded the Munster and All Ireland titles (two unlinked competitions) in 2003, the retention of the provincial crown along with the winning of the National League for the first time since 1977. As with the players, his own enthusiasm is so keen and come next Sunday evening, hopefully, his cup will be overflowing, as Tipp's supremacy continues to reign.

The Cork link matters not to Therese!

By Gerry Slevin

As one of three Tipp players with Cork parental links - Sinead Nealon and Eimear McDonnell (mothers) are the others - Therese Brophy whose

father Jim hails from the Rebel County has only one focus when it comes to camogie.

The blue and gold jersey is the most important piece of gear in her wardrobe and having been with this Tipp squad right through the glory years and indeed before that,

Therese has become something of a celebrity on the camogie scene.

A player of immense talent, and one who reads a game so well, the Burgess lass was at centre forward when Tipp finally came in from the cold in terms of All Ireland senior

success in 1999.

She says she barely remembers it!

A year later when the title was retained, Therese was at left half back and she admits to being far more at home there than in attack.

She had always been a defender and it was something of a surprise that she should have been considered as a centre forward in Tipp's breakthrough year. She puts it down to the fact that the association of Colm Bonner with the team in '99 probably influenced the thinking in that regard.

She did play the odd time in attack in the Ashbourne Cup competition and Colm would have seen her there.

But a defensive role was one that she feels always suited her best, either the half-back line or indeed midfield.

Therese has been a powerhouse in defence terms over the past five seasons and, as with the others, the appetite hasn't waned one whit. She does concede though, with a smile, that as one gets older, the fear of losing probably supersedes the will to win!

And that fear of losing reared itself appreciably towards the end of the semi final. Therese says they expected Wexford to be good. They had done very well in the league and Tipp hadn't been playing as well as might have been expected of them. They barely got over a Kilkenny team, which in a transition period, they ought to have defeated more comprehensively.

Yes, Wexford's near miss

performance was a real fright but there is nothing wrong with a fright, if you can learn from it. Therese feels it was good for them and for their sense of well being with next Sunday's final the true test of their mettle.

Another final beckons and Therese Brophy is looking forward to it, reasonably confident that the county that is native to her father, while sure to make a battle royal of it, will succumb in the end.



A Burgess quintet – The McDonnell twins, Emer and Deirdre with Burgess and Tipp team-mates Sinead Nealon, Therese Brophy and Sheena Howard.

Una in charge

By Gerry Slevin

Taking charge of her first All Ireland senior camogie final on Sunday will be Una Kearney from Armagh. A former inter-county player with Armagh, Una also refereed the semi final game between Tipp and Wexford on August 21.

Two years ago, she had charge of the All Ireland junior final and recently officiated at the Gael Linn inter-provincial finals.

For those of a superstitious nature, it is probably best not to refer to the fact that in each of Tipp's All Ireland final success since 1999, Aine Derham from Dublin was the referee!

In the 2002 final which Tipp lost - to Cork - in charge was Eileen Lawlor from Westmeath, a former Dublin player, who will, incidentally referee Sunday's junior final.

A taste for Croke Park lifts us

- DEIRDRE HUGHES

By Gerry Slevin

All Ireland final day while special for everyone, will be extra special for Deirdre Hughes this year.

It is the Toomevara girl's distinction to be the only present day player to have been honoured as a member of the Team of the Century.

When she trots out on Croke Park's sod on Sunday in her sixth successive All Ireland senior final, for Deirdre or Dee it will be a renewal of those great occasions since 1999.

"A taste for Croke Park lifts us. Yea, it does get harder each year but when you get within striking distance of Croke Park, everything else fades away. You WANT to be there. You WANT to do well," she says.

Like everyone else involved with the team, Dee had no illusions about what might have been expected from Wexford in the semi final. In the eyes of the public, the Wexford match mightn't have rated highly beforehand. Not so with the players.

"We knew Wexford were going to put it up to us and maybe we weren't going as

well as we might have been. There were a lot of club games going on around the same time and these might have disrupted our training programme. But there can be no excuses for the final. Nothing will be standing in our way of preparing as well as we can and going all out to win it," says Dee.

The fact that Cork again, are Tipp's opponents, will fire them up, she maintains. Players like Fiona O'Driscoll and Denise Cronin may have departed the inter-county scene but there is always a conveyor belt of players coming along and most of those who have been there over the past number of years are still to the good.

Dee points to the fact that both Una O'Donoghue and Briege Corkery weren't selected for the semi final and they were still far too good for Galway.

"No, you can never write off Cork. We know that and they know it too. They are cute and you wouldn't know what they might be at!" quips Deirdre.

With a new back room team, Cork will be fresh and enthusiastic and there is also the fact that this is Centenary year, making the whole exercise that



Camogie's 'Team of the Century' - Deirdre Hughes is seated on the right.

bit extra special for both teams.

Deirdre is convinced it is a game that can go either way. The teams are very evenly matched and she defies anyone to make a solid, logical prediction as to the outcome.

"Two years ago they beat us

in the final and last year we came back and reversed that. So, they will probably feel it is their turn, and it is up to us to make sure the sequence isn't followed through".

Cork and Kilkenny only, have been Tipp's All Ireland final opponents since 1999.

This will be the 4th meeting with Cork and Tipp have a 2-1 lead, one they hope to extend on Sunday.

Deirdre makes the point that two counties hogging the lime-light isn't good for the game and for this reason, she was glad to see Wexford make such

strides this year.

At the same time, her priority is to be a part of yet another Tipp victory. Her scoring prowess has always managed to surface fluently on final day. Hopefully for Tipp, Sunday will be no exception.

The Nealon name again synonymous with Tipperary All-Ireland success

Back in the 1960s the Tipperary senior hurling team usually had a Nealon on the team sheet when it came to the business end of the season.

In a decade when Tipperary's dominance of the game couldn't be challenged, Donie Nealon was one of the star players as he steadily built up his collection of All Ireland medals.

Now forty years on his daughter Sinead is following in his footsteps. She already has four All Ireland medals on the sideboard and on Sunday will hope to make it five.

Boasting one of the most famous names in Tipp GAA, Sinead is certainly

living up to her proud heritage. She made her way up through the ranks in the 90s as Tipp struggled to make an impact on camogie and when the breakthrough finally came at senior level in 1999 she was - and still remains - one of the key players on the side.

Her stylish wingback play has been a feature of the side's glorious era as the Tipp half back line established itself as one of the strongest sectors on the field - with another player with a famous name, Ciara Gaynor, a pillar of strength at centreback.

Sinead is looking forward to the final but is quick to point out that it's the cul-

mination of a long season. "You have to put in the hard work during the early part of the season and hope that it pays off during the summer months".

And that preparation has paid off as Tipp came through a number of tight matches during the campaign. "We had a very tough game against Wexford in the league final and from there we prepared for the championship. We had a tough game against Galway, played Antrim at home and then Wexford again in the semi-final which was extremely tough. There was nothing between us except two points at the end".

Nealon explains one of the reasons for

the Tipp success - "There is a great blend among the players. Everyone gets on so well together, it is like a family. We would do anything for each other and that's important. It doesn't matter what club a player is from as there is no bitterness and when we go out to play we are all one".

Sinead says Cork will be favourites for the final - "They have played better in the championship. We struggled through and they have shown the better form. But it's fifty-fifty if we play to our potential and the mood in our camp is good".

A trip from Tipp to Croke

By Sinead O'Connor

(Sponsorship and Finance Manager Camogie Association)

You all know by now that this is the centenary year of the Camogie Association. It has been a very successful year so far with events at national and club level. While the Centenary Banquet was the highlight of the year so far, many other events have been happening. What has been most heart warming is the amount of activity at club level. The club is the heart of the association and it is vitally important that the sporting and social aspects are intertwined. Some have produced their club history.

Exhibition games, novelty games, Blitz competitions for young players, charity raising events, art competitions and barbecues are among the happenings throughout Ireland.

All Ireland day in Croke Park day takes centre stage and on Sunday, the two best teams in the country contest the final. It

should be a cracker. Both teams have fantastically skilful players. Who will win? I have to be diplomatic and wish for a super exhibition of all that is best in the game. Both Tipperary and Cork have an extra incentive to win in this the centenary year. Raymie Ryan and John Considine will have their players in tiptop shape. I just hope you all come along to see them in action.

Down and Cork play in the junior final. Down always bring a big following. They are so passionate about their camogie and hurling and very loyal to this great game. Cork juniors overcame a very fancied Wexford side in the semi-final and will be all out to make a good start to the day for Cork.

The primary school game team will be extended to 16-a-side to include a child from every county in this special year. Olivia McCarthy from Ballylooby NS represents Tipperary. Primary school children from all over Ireland will gather to take part in the on-field events on the day.

Managing 2000 children is no easy task! Sometimes the

unexpected can add to the day! It is great to have such a response from the schools. Mol an oige agus tiocfaidh siad.

Tipperary will be well represented as many schools and clubs have booked tickets. All school children under twelve years are being admitted free. Tickets are for sale through your County Board but will also be available on Sunday at Gills Corner on the North Circular Road and on the Drumcondra Road across from Quinn's, a place well known to Tipperary people!

Other events to mark centenary year include a Torch Run. Starting in Navan on Saturday, the torch will be carried by young Meath players as far as the Dublin border. This is to commemorate the first game played there one hundred years ago. Minister Noel Dempsey will start the torch run and many sporting celebrities will join him to see the young players on their way. St Brigids in Blanchardstown (adopted club of many Tipp people) take over on Sunday morning and arrive in Croke Park at 2.35pm. Clubs on the north

side of Dublin will come out along the route. The final runner is the Poc Fada winner Stephanie Gannon from Galway.

The Tallaght Youth Band and the Garda Band will provide musical entertainment. Both were a big hit in Tralee. Both engage with their audience. We want everyone to sing out loudly and have fun. Bring your flags and banners. Let us know who you are. Face painting, fun and a great match are all part of the day.

President McAleese and An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern will attend and Seán Kelly President of the GAA will join with Miriam O'Callaghan President of the Camogie Association in addressing the attendance. Seán Kelly is most supportive of the Women's games.

A date to put in your diary, December 4, All Star night in CityWest. Apart from announcing and honouring the best players in the game it will round off centenary year and promises to be a wonderful night. In the meantime enjoy All Ireland day.

Tipp's emergence has broadened camogie's base

By Miriam Uí Cheallachain
Uachtarán Cumann Camogaíochta

This last decade has been a glorious time for camogie in Tipperary – first All Ireland senior title in

1999, three in a row in 2001, junior and senior in 2001. So what can motivate the Tipperary senior team for more?

The honour of a Centenary All Ireland medal is special and should this come to pass on Sunday Tipperary will have raised the O'Duffy cup for the fifth time, all in the last decade. And there is the prospect of another double with the intermediates competing in the All Ireland final on October 3.

The emergence of Tipperary into the winners arena of the senior championship has broadened the base for camogie. They have led the way in so many spheres – acquisition of their own pitch in The Ragg, the inclusion of the only current inter-county player in the Team of the Century, Deirdre Hughes, Eimear McDonnell recipient of a 2004 Texaco award, an award that eluded camogie for over 30 years. The backbone of this senior team have come through the ranks taking All Ireland minor titles and college titles along the way proving the seanfhocal "mol an oige agus tiocfaidh siad".

The camogie finals on Sunday next will be a special day of celebration in Croke Park with an action packed programme involving over 2,000 Primary School pupils from the 32 counties. Centre stage of course will be the Foras na Gaelige senior cham-



Miriam Uí Cheallachain

pionship final where I have no doubt Tipperary and Cork will once again give all camogie and indeed Gaelic games supporters an exciting and skilful game – a game to be remembered. The 2003 camogie final proved to be the Gaelic games final of the year and with the added dimension of Centenary All Ireland honours both teams will be giving of their best.

I would like to extend appreciation to the Nenagh Guardian and in particular to Gerry Slevin for the publication of this camogie final supplement and for their ongoing support and coverage of Tipperary camogie. I look forward with you to the All Ireland Final day and know it will be a memorable occasion.

Joanne proud to captain 'special' team

Joanne Ryan hopes to follow in the footsteps of Meadhbh Stokes, Jovita Delaney, Emily Hayden and Una O'Dwyer and return to Tipperary with the O'Duffy Cup on Monday evening.

The quietly-spoken Drom-Inch girl has the honour of captaining the side in this year's final following her club's victory in last year's county championship, breaking a long sequence of Cashel wins.

"It's a great honour to be captain, especially of this team as they are a special bunch. There is a great bond between everyone on the team and that's what has us where we are", she says.

As a young girl she often thought about playing for Tipperary but never dreamed she would be captain in an All Ireland final. But on Sunday that's exactly what will happen when all her family will be in Croke Park to cheer her on.

A feature of the Tipp set-up this year is the strength in depth which meant that even though she was captain, Joanne was sitting on the bench for the start of the semi-final against Wexford. But when introduced she helped turn the game in Tipp's favour.

"The subs help make the team. They are always ready to come on and keep the pressure on those already on", she says.

She knows that another big performance from the all the players will be needed on Sunday. "We never get anything easy against Cork but we always rise to the occasion when we play them. We still remember losing to them two years ago and that hurt a lot. We don't want it to happen again".

Captaining a team in an All Ireland final is a huge honour for any player and Joanne is looking forward to the occasion. "We have trained well and hopefully everything will go right on the day".



Joanne Ryan hopes to lead Tipp to All Ireland glory on Sunday.

Sunday is final step in Cork's quest for a centenary camogie double

By MARY NEWMAN

CROKE Park again beckons on Sunday next and this time it's the turn of the Cork camogie teams as the quest for a unique centenary double reaches its final step.

For the seniors, it's a renewal of old rivalry as they once again face Tipperary in what is sure to be another mouth-watering final, while the junior side face Down in what will be a first-time meeting of the sides at final stage since 1968.

Cork head the roll of honour with twenty senior titles, but Tipperary have made huge strides in latter years. In fact, they have won four titles since 1999, the first and surely the most memorable coming when they defeated Kilkenny.

Last year, they turned the tables on Cork when regaining the crown after Cork had stopped their quest for a four-in-a-row in 2002 and, given the history between the sides, a result on Sunday is impossible to predict.

Already this year, the sides have met twice. Cork came out on top in the National League clash, while it was Tipp who gained the upper-hand in the Munster final.

Both sides have changed considerably since their first meeting in the final of 2000, while the managements have also seen major changes.

Surprisingly, Michael Cleary, the man who is widely acclaimed as having led the Tipperary camogie revival, retired in 2003, but Raymie Ryan was ready to fill his boots and he immediately proved his worth as his charges regained the crown.

After last year's final, Cork boss, Pa Finn, announced his intention to take a back seat having led the county to glory in 2002 and immediately John Considine agreed to get involved.

Needing no introduction to followers of Gaelic games,



Stephanie Dunlea . . . leads the Cork senior camogie team into battle against Tipperary at Croke Park on Sunday. Photo by Patrick Casey

the All-Ireland medal winning Cork hurler immediately set about his task.

Since last year's decider, Denise Cronin and Fiona O'Driscoll have retired and players of their calibre are certainly not easy to replace, but Considine and his fellow selectors, Mary Kenefick, Mairéad O'Callaghan, Sile O'Brien and Seamus Coffey have blended their panel together and it contains a nice blend of youth and experience, with Emer Watson and Aoife Murray bringing a

fresh look to the side.

Tipperary have retained all but one of their side. Clare Madden is no longer there, but they have been boosted by the inclusion of U.C.C.'s Jill Horan, who has slotted in well.

A look back at the semi-finals gives little indication as to what might happen on Sunday.

Tipperary were put to the pin of their collars to shake off a determined Wexford side and, indeed, it was the width of the crossbar that

saved the champions, with Una Lacey's last-minute shot bringing followers to their seats with just two points between the sides.

Horan looked impressive on the wing and, certainly, her darting runs at goal caused the Wexford defence a lot of trouble.

A cause of concern to Tipp will be that they had to replace their midfield pairing of Angela Mc Dermott and Philly Fogarty, who gave way to Louise Young and team captain Joanne Ryan. Emily

Hayden was also replaced by Paula Bulfin.

Joanne Ryan's introduction had an immediate impact and, without doubt, was one of the reasons Tipp are in the final. The hard-working Drom /Inch star brought new life to a tiring team and will have to be marked closely by Cork.

In the opening clash of the day, Cork had little difficulty in coping with the challenge posed by Galway, but it must be said that there was no comparison between the two games.

At all time, Cork held the upperhand, even when Galway went into an early lead, and if they play with the same determination on Sunday the champions will once again have their hands full.

In the junior clash, Down come to Croke Park with a rich pedigree as eight of their side won All-Ireland Intermediate medals in 1998 when they defeated Cork in the final.

That same year they also captured their first Junior National League crown and, while Sunday is a huge occasion for them, PRO Paul Walsh is confident of victory.

Since taking the Munster crown, the Cork panel has lost four players. Catriona Foley is ruled out with a knee injury, while Rena Buckley, Anna Geary and Sile Burns are part of the senior team's plans and will not be available.

However, Lillian Zincent has prepared the Cork side well and, led by team captain, Val O'Keeffe, they can get the day off to a perfect start for Cork.

Following the massive show of support on Sunday last for the hurlers, it is to be hoped that there will be a strong support of the camogie teams.

They certainly deserve it as they bid to keep the titles rolling in.

Emily now getting used to star treatment

Emily Hayden remembers the unfamiliar hype created when Tipperary won their first All Ireland title in 1999.

"Children would come up to you and ask you to autograph their hurleys. We would look behind us to see who they were talking to".

It was the first taste of stardom for the Tipp camogie team but with another three All Ireland titles in the bag since, they are becoming accustomed to the new role. On Sunday they want to experience it again with a fifth title in six years.

The Cashel girl captained the side to All Ireland glory in 2001 and is now an integral part of the Tipp set up - too young to be called a veteran but a brilliant player who brings vital experience to the Tipp midfield or attack.

Despite the side's pre-eminence over the past six years, she dismisses any suggestion that it might not retain its hunger for success. "Motivation won't be a problem. The camogie association is one hundred years old this year and we have only a handful of titles while Cork and Kilkenny are into their twenties. We want to keep going for as long as we can".

It will be the third final in a row between the great Munster rivals with Tipp gaining revenge last year for the 2002 defeat to the Leesiders. And that's the incentive that Cork will have this year as they seek to retain what they consider their rightful place in the game.

But that doesn't faze Emily or her team mates. "Our minds are right for this game. It just happens to be Cork we are playing but we want to win the All Ireland whether it's Cork, Kilkenny or whoever else we might be playing".

A tough game against Wexford in the semi-final could prove the ideal preparation for Tipp in the final. "We had a lot of club championship games before the semi-final and that interfered with our preparation. We had found it hard to get going against Wexford in the league final and then we had another tough game in the semi-final that really tested our steel.

"The game pointed out areas to us where we needed to improve and we have learned from that and we hope to up our game by at least twenty to thirty per cent. We are

really up for this game".

This team doesn't like losing as its record over the past six years shows. Says Hayden - "Last year when we looked back on our defeat in 2002 it was very hard for us to take as a team. But we came back, we regrouped and we played very well in last year's final".

Now another similar effort is needed on Sunday.



Former All Ireland winning captain Emily Hayden looking for another medal.



Joanne Ryan

STEPHANIE DUNLEA
captain

CLUB: Cloughduv
OCCUPATION: Food Scientist
ACHIEVEMENTS: Captain of the Cork team for the second year in a row. Captained Cork to National League success in 2003. Ashbourne Cup honours with UCC. Captained Cloughduv to win the Cork county senior title in 2002. County and Munster medals with Glen Rovers. She has four All Ireland senior medals with Cork. Inter-provincial honours. Grand niece of Kate Dunlea who captained Cork to their first All Ireland senior title in 1934.
AGE: 29



AOIFE MURRAY

CLUB: Cloughduv
OCCUPATION: Student in LIT studying Property Valuations.
ACHIEVEMENTS: Holder of minor, junior, intermediate and senior medals with Cork. Two Cork county senior championship medals with Cloughduv. Sister of former Cork inter county hurler Kevin Murray.
AGE: 21



JOANNE O'CALLAGHAN
CLUB: Cloughduv
OCCUPATION: Food business student in UCC.
ACHIEVEMENTS: Her fourth season on the senior team, Joanne has minor, intermediate and senior All-Ireland championship medals to her credit. Also holds Ashbourne Cup and inter provincial honours. Two Cork County senior medals with Cloughduv. Has also represented Munster in hockey.
AGE: 21

ROSARIE HOLLAND

CLUB: Barryroe
OCCUPATION: Graduate in Computer science
ACHIEVEMENTS: All Ireland minor, junior and intermediate medals as well as inter provincial honours and Ashbourne cup medals with UCC. Holds senior B and junior championship medals with Barryroe.
AGE: 22



MARY O'CONNOR
CLUB: Killeagh
OCCUPATION: Gaelic Games development Officer with the East Cork GAA board
ACHIEVEMENTS: A well known footballer as well as camogie player, Mary holds three All-Ireland senior titles. Inter provincial honours with Munster and All Ireland senior club medals with her previous club Grenagh Ballingarry where she played during her years working and studying in Limerick.
AGE: 27

LYNDA O'CONNELL

CLUB: St Finbarr's
OCCUPATION: Accountant
ACHIEVEMENTS: Ashbourne cup medals with UCC. All-Ireland Senior, junior and intermediate medals with Cork. This is her third season on the senior panel. Holds senior B championship medals with St. Finbarr's.
AGE: 23

RENA BUCKLEY

CLUB: Inniscarra

Desire and hunger will decide who lifts the title

DESIRE is the ingredient which will bring Cork its 21st title and their second in three years.

Linda Mellerick

On Sunday the two counties which have brought camogie to even greater heights battle it out to decide who really is the master of the game.

It's two to one in Tipp's favour where All-Irelands are concerned. In 2000 it was Tipp, 2002 Cork and 2003, Tipp again.

Forget the leagues, forget the Munster championship, it's the All-Ireland you'll be judged on.

Cork have named their starting line out and it contains one positional change and one change in personnel from the team which defeated Galway in the semi-final.

Captain and experienced campaigner Stephanie Dunlea moves to the full back position from the corner. Rosarie Holland moves to the left.

Obviously the Cork selectors feel that Stephanie's commanding figure is a must in front of goal.

Strong, athletic and a good hurler, Steph will be marking the very dangerous Deirdre Hughes.

On top of that she is now the last block if the speedy Tipp forwards bear down on goal.

Last year Emer McDonnell turned her marker at least 30 yards out. She soloed the entire way through unchallenged and the ball ended up in the back of the net. It was a huge physiological blow for Cork and a motivating factor for the Blue and Gold.

This year Cork have been working on closing down attacking for-

wards. They are facing the most lethal forwards in the country. Each and every one of them potential match winners.

Equally Cork have an excellent defence. Mary O'Connor, Dunlea, Paula O'Connor and Joanne O'Callaghan are experienced performers and well used to the big stage.

Rena Buckley has made the left half back position her own in her first season.

The Cork defence cannot be exposed to continuous pressure. Our forwards have to be our best defenders and stop Tipp's dominant half back line from making long clearances.

Tipp's half back line of Sinead Nealon, Ciara Gaynor and Therese Brophy is their launching pad. Gaynor is the ultimate centre back.

If left dominate and drive the ball 50 or 60 yards she will have a huge bearing on the game.

Emer Dillon and Gaynor have had magical clashes in the past.

Dillon won the battle in 2002, Gaynor in 2003 and it is interesting to note that their respective counties also won the war the same year.

It is an area of huge importance and vital that Cork get the upper hand here.

Long high balls reigning down on top of the half forward line will put Cork at a disadvantage.

Aoife Murray's pucks outs need



Rena Buckley has so consistent at left half back in her first season.

to be intelligent and searching.

It is at centre field where Cork have the upper hand.

Gemma O'Connor and Vivienne Harris are the two best midfielders in the country and must perform on Sunday.

Tipp have a tendency to play two full forwards and a third midfielder.

Their plan is to leave two on two in a wide open space. It has worked before but they may have played it once too often. Cork are aware of it.

Cork need to hold their positions. Harris and O'Connor could almost cope on their own with a third invader but should they not, then one of Cork's inside forwards will move out.

If Tipp try it, it could well go against them. Cork too have speedy forwards and the space inside would suit them too.

The return of Una O'Donoghue in the corner is a major boost.

Elaine Burke is the player to lose out and is extremely unfortunate. Should the Valley Rovers player be called into the action at any stage she is more than capable of doing the job at hand.

O'Donoghue, due to work com-

mitments, has sat out a lot of the championship to date. Now back to her very best, Una has one thing in her mind when she gets possession and that's head down and go for goal.

Jenny O'Leary has been a revelation all season and will once again be a thorn in Tipp's side.

Possessing speed, strength and accuracy she is sure to cause them endless problems.

It's Emer Watson's first senior All-Ireland in at full forward while Collette Desmond who came on as a substitute in last year's decider is in the corner.

Many a time on All-Ireland day it's the players you least expect will turn it on for you.

The unknown at times is a good thing. The big names of Tipp won't worry Watson or Desmond. These two could be Cork's trump card.

It'll go down to the wire. At this stage little or nothing separates the teams.

The pattern over the last couple of years has been whoever wants it the most. Cork are hungry. Last years defeat has left its mark. As we witnessed a few short days ago, a hungry team is a dangerous team.

OCCUPATION: Leaving Cert student at St. Aloysius

ACHIEVEMENTS: Member of the Cork senior football team.

Rena is the holder of All Ireland minor medals as well as junior and intermediate Munster championship medals.

First year on the Cork senior team and already an established defender.
AGE: 17

GEMMA O'CONNOR

CLUB: St. Finbarr's

OCCUPATION: Recent army graduate where she received high commendations.

ACHIEVEMENTS: Holder of All Ireland minor and senior championship honours. Was a recipient of the Examiner 'Young Player of the Year' award in



2002. Represented Cork in the Felle Na Gael skills final in 1998. Uncle Billy captained Cork to All Ireland minor hurling glory.
AGE: 18

PAULA O'CONNOR

CLUB: Newtownshandrum

OCCUPATION: Student in Cork Institute of Technology.

ACHIEVEMENTS: Paula is the holder of Purcell and science cup honours with CIT. Also has 2 All-Ireland senior medals as well as inter provincial honours. Senior B and underage titles with Newtownshandrum. Sister of present Cork hurling Captain Ben and twin Jerry.
AGE: 24

VIVIENNE HARRIS

CLUB: St. Finbarr's

OCCUPATION: Quality controller

ACHIEVEMENTS: Despite her young year's

this is Vivienne's 10th season on the Cork senior panel.

She was All Ireland skills champion in 1991 and has won senior county championship medals with her former club Bishopstown.

Captained Cork to win two National League titles in 1999 and 2000. Holds 4 All Ireland senior titles.

Has also represented Ireland in kick boxing.
AGE: 25

REGINA CURTIN

CLUB: Milford

OCCUPATION: Arts student in UCC.

ACHIEVEMENTS: Her second season on the senior panel Regina holds intermediate Munster and All Ireland medals. She Possess under age, junior and senior B medals





Cork's Emer Dillon, racing away her from Galway's Tracy Laheen, is a potential match winner for the Rebels.

Dillon's choice proves to be right

TALENTED and gifted are just two words to describe Emer Dillon.

Emer is not only a stylish and skillful camogie player, she is also useful with a hockey stick.

She has a long list of accolades to her name which include two minor, one intermediate and one senior All-Ireland camogie medals as well as an All-Ireland medal for Cork in 2002 and an Allstar last year.

This year so far she has added an O'Leary Brothers Builders Senior County medal after Carrigdhoun were victorious in the A senior final.

On top of her success in camogie, she has represented Ireland at underage level in hockey while also being an influential figure at Harlequins Hockey Club.

Over the last number of years

By PJ AHERN

Cork player focus

she has had to combine her commitments to both sports, but the demands became too much and she was forced to make a decision. She chose to concentrate on camogie.

"It was very hard to combine the two, especially as I attend college as well. The seasons overlap each other so I chose camogie."

Emer is entering her second year as a student in UCC where she is studying pharmacy. She is also currently working in The Marian Pharmacy in Ballyphehane. While her focus remains firmly set on doing the business on Sunday, she also casts an eye ahead to the O'Leary Brothers Builders Senior County B Championship final, which her club Ballygarvan is competing in

once again this year.

On October 3, she and her team-mates will be lining out to face Aghabullogue and so no matter what the result on Sunday it is back to basics training with her club next Wednesday.

She is confident Ballygarvan can make the breakthrough this year having lost out to Milford and Kilbrittain in recent years.

She has also praised the club for being so understanding while she takes time out to prepare for Sunday.

She says, "With Cork training I have been unable to train with Ballygarvan and they have been very good to me and very understanding."

Her parent's Pauline and Billy, have played pivotal roles in her life as she pursues further success on the pitch.

"They have always been very

supportive of me. My mother makes me all the stuff I need to eat such as pasta after training. While my dad would be down on the pitch watching me train."

Having won an All-Ireland medal at her first attempt in 2002, she wants to make up for the disappointment of last year.

"The feelings of winning in 2002 and losing last year just don't compare. It makes you appreciate more, making the final again this year."

While possessing one medal, Emer wants another because she says, "there is no feeling like winning an All-Ireland."

Emer has tried to maintain her normal daily routine in the run up with her date with destiny.

She feels the preparations have gone very well and she can't wait to walk on to the hollowed turf of Croke Park.

CORK TEAM

A. Murray, J. O'Callaghan, S. Dunlea, R. Holland, P. O'Connor, M. O'Connor, R. Buckley, G. O'Connor, V. Harris, R. Moloney, E. Dillon, J. O'Leary, U. O'Donoghue, E. Watson, C. Desmond.

Don't miss six pages of analysis and reaction on Sunday's game in Monday's Sports Special

ACHIEVEMENTS: Is the holder of All Ireland minor, intermediate and senior medals. Holder of senior inter provincial honours. Ashbourne cup, senior B and All-Ireland colleges medals.

AGE: 20

EMER DILLON

CLUB: Ballygarvan
OCCUPATION: Pharmacy student in UCC

ACHIEVEMENTS: A very prominent hockey player with Harlequins Emer has represented both Munster and Ireland in hockey. Won a Cork county senior championship title this year with Carrigdhoun. Championship medals with Ballygarvan. All Ireland minor, intermediate and senior medals as well as inter provincial honours.

AGE: 20

EMER WATSON

CLUB: Milford

OCCUPATION: Leaving cert student with St Marys, Charleville

ACHIEVEMENTS: 8 All Ireland colleges medals at both junior and senior level with St. Marys. Under age as well as senior B titles with Milford. Her mother Ann won an All Ireland junior medal with Limerick in 1977.

AGE: 17

UNA O'DONOGHUE

CLUB: Cloughdub

OCCUPATION: Lab Technician

ACHIEVEMENTS: Captained Cork to All Ireland glory in 2002 and also led her club to their first senior county championship title in 2001.

Is the holder of Ashbourne cup and league honours with UCC as well as All Ireland senior and national league medals with Cork. Has also won under age county honours with Cloughdub.

AGE: 23

CIARA HEALY

CLUB: Bishopstown
OCCUPATION: Student in UCC

ACHIEVEMENTS: Minor, junior, intermediate and senior honours with Cork. Also the holder of national league and inter provincial honours as well as Ashbourne cup honours. Represented Cork in the All Ireland Feile Na Gael in 1995.

AGE: 22

COLETTE DESMOND

CLUB: Newcestown

OCCUPATION: Bio Chemical student in UCC

ACHIEVEMENTS: In her third season on the Cork senior Panel. Introduced in last years All Ireland final. Under 16 club championship medal as well as All Ireland honours at Minor, junior and intermediate level.

AGE: 19

GER CASEY

CLUB: Inniscarra

OCCUPATION: Physio-therapist

ACHIEVEMENTS: All Ireland senior and junior medals. Inter provincial and Ashbourne cup medals. Named as the Player of the All Ireland junior final in 1999.

AGE: 23

NORA AHERN

CLUB: Fr. O'Neill's

OCCUPATION: Sports and Recreation.

ACHIEVEMENTS: Captain of the Cork junior team who lost the All Ireland final in 2002. Player of the match award when Cork won their second National junior league title in 2001. Captain of CIT Purcell cup title winners. Inter provincial junior honours. Munster junior and intermediate medals. Senior county championship medal.

AGE: 24



with Milford. Also a member of the Cork senior football team.

AGE: 20

RACHEL MOLONEY

CLUB: Courcy Rovers

OCCUPATION: Student

ACHIEVEMENTS: Ashbourne medals with UCC. Minor, junior, intermediate and senior All-Ireland medals with Cork. In her 5th season on the senior panel. Also has inter provincial medals with Munster.

AGE: 22

BREIGE CORKERY

CLUB: Cloughdub

OCCUPATION: Student

ACHIEVEMENTS: Two Cork County senior championship medals with Cloughdub. Minor and intermediate All Ireland honours with

Cork. Is also a prominent footballer. Has won numerous honours in under age football side.

AGE: 17

SILE BURNS

CLUB: Rockban.

OCCUPATION: Student in UL

ACHIEVEMENTS: Daughter of former inter county hurler Denis. Also a keen football player. Holds All Ireland minor and senior medals as well as inter provincial honours. Under age and junior titles with Rockban.

AGE: 18

ELAINE BURKE

CLUB: Valley Rovers

OCCUPATION: Solicitor

ACHIEVEMENTS: Recently won her first senior county championship medal with Carrigdhoun. Is also the holder of All Ireland junior and senior



Rebel fans eye a hurling treble as camogie sides gear up for Croke showdowns



UP FOR THE MATCH: Paula O'Connor—sister of Cork's All-Ireland hurling heroes Ben and Jerry—with Aoife Murray and Rosarie Holland ahead of this Sunday's big camogie clash. Picture: Neil Danton

SUNDAY promises to be yet another nail-biting day for the O'Connors of Newtownshandrum and the O'Sullivan family from Cloyne.

For Paula O'Connor, the sister of hurling heroes Ben and Jerry, will be lining up for Cork in the All-Ireland senior camogie final against Tipperary.

And Val O'Sullivan, the cousin of Diarmuid 'the Rock' O'Sullivan, will be a member of the Cork team taking on Down in the junior All-Ireland final.

Both teams will be eager to emulate the achievement of the Cork senior and intermediate hurlers by bringing home another pair of All-Ireland trophies to the Rebel County.

If the Cork girls do win on Sunday, it will round off an incredible year for the north Cork village of Newtownshandrum.

Local brothers Ben and Jerry O'Connor were on the senior hurling team that lifted the Liam McCarthy cup last

Let's hear it for the girls!

By **BILL BROWNE**

bill.browne@echo.ie

Sunday, while Michael Bowles, John Paul King, Paul Morrissey and Pat Mulcahy also picked up medals for being on the panel.

The six were also members of the team who beat Dunloy on St Patrick's Day to win the All-Ireland club hurling title.

Paula, a student at Cork Institute of Technology, said she was quietly confident that the Cork senior team would be returning with the O'Duffy Cup.

"Despite the fact that we have lost players such as Linda O'Driscoll and Linda Mellerick,

we still have a very strong squad. Most of us have been together for the past three years and have become a very cohesive unit," said Paula.

"While the game of camogie does not have the huge following that hurling does, the team has still been getting a lot of support from people. We are hoping for a crowd of up to 20,000 people at Croke Park on Sunday," she added.

Another Newtownshandrum girl, Kim Hickey, will also be taking to the pitch at Croke Park on Sunday as the junior camogie team take on Down in their All-Ireland final.

If both sides win, the north

Cork village will have a total of eight All-Ireland medals to celebrate this year.

Not bad for a place with a population of little more than 600 people.

The camogie seniors easily swept aside the challenge of Galway in their semi-final, while the junior side got to the final on the back of a comprehensive eight-point victory over Wexford.

However, to gauge the scale of the task facing the senior side, one only has to look at the record of Tipp, who have appeared in the last six All-Ireland finals. They won four, including three-in-a-row between 1999 and 2001.

Former Cork player Therese O'Callaghan knows all too well the pressures of playing in Croke Park. She is the holder of three All-Ireland inter-county medals and four All-Ireland club medals.

"Given the fact that this is our centenary year, both teams will be eager to win," she said.

"The rivalry between the two sides is similar to that between Cork and Kilkenny in the men's game. Looking at the previous match history between the two teams, it is impossible to predict who will win," she added.

● See tomorrow's *Evening Echo* for the pre-match excitement from camogie hot-spots of Innishannon, Barryroe and Cloughduv.



HOPEFUL: John Considine, coach of Cork's senior camogie side, says there is great strength in depth in the county at the moment.

This could be our best team ever

THE Cork senior camogie team has the potential to become the greatest side the country has ever seen.

That's the view of Cork team manager John Considine, who has been in charge of the side since the start of the year.

John is no stranger to the big occasion, having won an All-Ireland hurling medal with the Rebels back in 1990. An economics lecturer at University College Cork, he successfully coached the college team for a number of years and has also been involved with his home club, Kilbrittain.

He said the fact that there were two Cork camogie teams vying for glory on Sunday reflected the sheer depth of talent in the county. "While Tipperary are arguably the best senior team in Ireland at the moment, we certainly have the players to put Cork right up there," said John.

"In recent years, our under-16 side completed the three-in-a-row and many of these players are now beginning to play regularly with the senior team. As a result, we have a young team full of skilful and highly-motivated players who could well form the nucleus of a very successful side in the future," he added.

He said the game on Sunday was likely to be a very close affair and a lot would depend on how his players reacted to playing at the home of GAA.

"There is no doubt that we are going up against a very strong team who have quality players in all positions," said John.

"Having said that, we too have a tremendous squad of players who are keyed up for this game. Taking on a Tipperary team that has been so successful in recent years will be a huge challenge for the girls. That said, I firmly believe they are more than capable of coming home with the O'Duffy Cup," he added.

The fact that this is the centenary of the camogie association will also act as a spur to both sides. "People will always remember who won the centenary final, as they do with the hurling. This will be a great opportunity for the winning team to become a part of camogie history. That in itself will act as a tremendous incentive to the teams," John added.

● *Great days to be a Rebel: Friday Feeling — Page 19*



GIRLS JUST WANNA WIN TITLES: Three members of the Cork junior camogie team, from left, Lucy Hawkes, Niamh Goulding and Val O'Sullivan — cousin of All-Ireland medal winner Diarmuid — who will be taking on Down in the junior final at Croke Park on Sunday. Picture: Denis Minihane

Stephanie is well used to winning feeling



Stephanie Dunlea, whose family has a proud history of Cork GAA involvement.

CORK native Stephanie Dunlea is on a par with any male GAA figure that the likes of Michael Lyster and Pat Spillane might get into a tizzy about around the time of the naming of the annual All Star teams. This is Dunlea's 11th year being involved with the senior Cork camogie squad. In that period she has picked up five All-Ireland winner's medals and numerous Munster Championships. She's also become well used to that winning feeling with her club side, Cloughduv.

This weekend sees Cork competing at Croke Park once again — this time in the 100th Camogie All-Ireland Final against Tipperary. Dunlea will captain the Cork side hoping to repeat what the county's men achieved last weekend.

Dunlea's family has a proud history of Cork GAA involvement. Both her father and brother have All-Ireland medals at Junior level and her mother and sister both know the feeling of All-Ireland success in camogie. Her grand-aunt — Kate Dunlea — was the captain of the first Cork side to win the camogie All-Ireland in 1934.

Dunlea herself certainly hasn't weakened the family tradition. In her 11 years involved with the county team, Cork has figured in the shake-up (semi-finals or final; with the latter the most common outcome) every year. She now has an impressive collection of five All-Ireland senior camogie medals.

"Cork would be one of camogie's traditionally strong counties. Only Dublin has won more All-Ireland's over the years. But Tipperary have really come to prominence over the past few years and they'd really be top dogs right now," according to Dunlea.

It may sound a touch harsh, but at 29 years of age Dunlea is one of the veterans of the Cork team — the average age of which is 25/26 and the younger elements come in at 18/19.

Training takes up three or four nights a week, the county season runs from the end of February to the beginning of September (the Provincial Championships and the All-Ireland aren't interlinked and run separately) and the club season usually runs longer.

This year's camogie final is also a milestone for Cork-based company Punch Industries. Punch sponsors the current Cork county team through its 'Colour Catcher' brand, but its involvement goes back much further. To the early 1930s, in fact, when it donated a silver cup to the Cork Camogie County Board to be presented to the winners of the annual Cork Senior County Championship. Engraved 'The Science Cup', it was in use for 68 years, right up until 2000. This was only replaced in 2001, with the County Championship being contested for the Punch Trophy.

RTE will be showing Sunday's

Interview: Geoff Percival

Name:
Stephanie Dunlea

Occupation:
Production Supervisor,
GE Healthcare;
Captain of the Cork Senior Camogie team

Age:
29

Education:
Macroom Secondary School;
Science Degree, UCC

Other details:
Dunlea takes time out from the factory floor on Sunday to captain Cork in the centenary senior All-Ireland Camogie Final at Croke Park.

It may sound a touch harsh, but at 29 years of age Dunlea is one of the veterans of the Cork team

camogie final live — a relatively rare occurrence. But there aren't any sour grapes on Dunlea's part at the overall lack of coverage the game gets.

"No, that's understandable. There's not that many counties playing camogie at a high standard, so there wouldn't be too much interest — in spectator terms — before the semi-final stages at least," says Dunlea.

But, to the neutral eye, Camogie would seem to be getting overtaken by women's (Gaelic) football.

"It's the fastest growing sport for women in Ireland; there are new clubs sprouting literally everywhere all the time. That's just down to the fact that football is a more popular sport around the country. Camogie tends to be confined to hurling hotbeds."

Still, five or six of the side that will take to the field on Sunday afternoon are dual players, also representing Cork at football. Dunlea also plays football at club level. "I wouldn't be good enough to play on an inter-county basis," she concedes.

Dunlea's busy sporting schedule of playing and training surrounds her worklife, where she's production supervisor with GE Healthcare (formerly Amersham Health) in Carrigtwohill. She works night and day shifts (alternating between the two on a week-by-week basis) overseeing the production of diagnostic drug products which go on to help diagnose things like brain illness.

"Somehow it works out that I can train and work. If they overlap I have to delegate and one of the other supervisors will help out. It all means that I don't get much time for a social life, though," she laughs. It could be worse; before joining GE, she worked with Wyeth in Newbridge, lived in Naas and actually still played and trained (only once a week, it must be said) for both club and county in Cork. Following a break spent travelling around Australia for a year, she moved back to Cork on her return. "It was tough getting back into the routine of work, training and playing, but the break did me a lot of good and probably renewed my hunger for the sport," she says.

GE Healthcare made its first investment in Cork in 1992 with the opening of a 53,000sq ft plant in Carrigtwohill's IDA Business Park to the tune of €12.7m. It only employed 15 people at the time, but now the operation's risen to become the company's European flagship site for the manufacture of x-ray imaging devices, employing more than 500 people. Dunlea oversees 50 people herself.

The company has now invested over €85m into its Cork plant since its inception. A further €8m is being invested at Cork this year as well as an expected €6m next year for new labs.

Says Dunlea: "Our site is currently leading projects in a number of disciplines (quality assurance, project management, training, supply chain management) in GE Healthcare locations as far away as Shanghai."



Cork camogie queen Joanne O'Callaghan receives the support of pupils at Cloughduv National School.





Cork senior and junior captains Stephanie Dunlea and Valerie O'Keeffe.

Red girl power ready to rule Croker



DESIRE will be the key ingredient for the Cork ladies when both the junior and senior teams bid to win their respective All-Ireland camogie titles on Sunday.

The junior side face Down while the seniors will be hoping to garner their 21st title and second in three years.

The desire and will to win of the ladies will be of the utmost importance as they hope to emulate the senior men's side that won the All-Ireland title last weekend.

On Sunday this hunger could prove the difference between the

By **CONOR GEORGE**

All-Ireland camogie final

sides.

In the day's showpiece, the countries top two counties, Cork and Tipperary go head-to-head in the senior clash.

It's two to one in Tipp's favour where All-Irelands are concerned. In 2000 it was Tipp, 2002 Cork and 2003 Tipp again prevailed and this will rankle with the Cork girls.

This meeting should be the battle to end all battles with the Cork defensive unit facing up to the most lethal set of forwards in the current era.

The Cork team will take heart from their male counterparts' victory last Sunday and with Ben and Jerry O'Connor in the stands cheering on their sister Paula and the Cork team this will certainly be used as a motivating factor for the Cork ladies.

This is a clash of the Titans in the world of camogie and a battle royale is certain to rage for the duration.

Hopefully, when the dust finally settles it will be the Cork ladies who are standing victorious with our 21st senior title and a junior title also in Cork's grasp for good measure.



Paula O'Connor is hoping to emulate her brothers Jerry and Ben and win an All-Ireland medal.

Aoife hopes to have all the answers

by **Therese O'Callaghan**

CORK keeper Aoife Murray was given little choice when it came to where she played: her licence to save being enforced rather than chosen.

"I was about seven or eight in Cloughduv when John Cronin put me into goals; Marie Corkery showed me how to stop the ball and that was it."

She has come a long way since those days, and on Sunday will play a key role as the Red and White bid to snatch back the O'Duffy Cup from Tipperary.

Of course, the Murray household is well used to big sporting occasions.

Brother Kevin has already donned the Rebel hurling jersey with distinction and Paudie coached Cloughduv to their first senior camogie club title in 2002.

Five brothers play with St Finbarrs and her sisters have been known to hit a ball or two.

Being the youngest of 11 children brings little sympathy: Two weeks ago she was nominated as driver for her own 21st birthday dinner. However, she promises all that will change in Quinn's pub on the Drumcondra Road come Sunday evening, where, hopefully the real party will

commence.

Growing up watching Kevin, as a minor, was where it all started for Aoife. She longed for the big day, but never thought in her first year as a senior inter-county player, she'd trod on the hallowed turf of Croke Park.

"Seeing the hype that surrounded Kevin and his friends gave me the appetite to play. I realised how hard he trained and the rewards he reaped.

"I have played outfield, but being keeper is slightly different to other areas, as vacancies do not arise too often," she says.

"When I saw Ger Casey get player of the match in the 1999 junior final for her goalkeeping exploits I thought I would never see the day that I would take over from her. I was 15 then.

"When Cork won the All-Ireland senior final in 2002 she was there again. She played fantastic, and I thought I would never get a chance.

"But, I put in a big effort this year, minding myself off the pitch and I am so delighted that it has paid off."

Originally from Dunmanway, home is Ovens for the 3rd year LIT Property Management Evaluation student.

It is here where she was supported and given the confidence to compete in sport.



Aoife Murray has been receiving tips from former Cork hurling guardian Ger Cunningham.

Picture: Denis Minihane

"I was always encouraged at home to keep going at camogie."

"There are five of us from Cloughduv on the panel this year — Joanne (O'Callaghan), Una (O'Donoghue), Stephanie (Dunlea, capt) and Briege Corkery. It is my third season, and I already have one medal as a sub two

years ago," she said.

"Placing your puck-outs is an important part of the game. People think it is only about keeping the sliotar out of the net.

"I have practised a lot on my own and with my brother Adrian. I suppose you always have a fear that you

will do something stupid like leaving in a soft goal."

She has spent the summer on work experience in Bord Gáis where former Cork hurling guardian Ger Cunningham is employed and admits to having got a few tips from the current county U-21 hurling selector.

Dillon playing in tune as Rebelettes seek plaudits

NINE days before the All-Ireland hurling final, when county midfielder Tom Kenny walked into The Flying Enterprise Bar and Restaurant on Cork's Barracks Street to grab a bite of lunch, every head in the place swivelled.

Elbows were nudged violently, heads nodded in his direction. He was spared a blatant autograph request but no one, staff or punter alike, could resist a glance: a Cork senior hurler is really something to be and commanded huge admiration and respect, even before they'd brought 'Liam' home to that subsequent widespread delirium.

At one table two young men returned to discussing where they'd watch 'the match' next day. The game in question was 'Man U' and Bolton and one of them appeared to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of Louis Saha's contractual obligations and finances.

Sitting at the next table, was another hurler who has already won an All-Ireland senior and minor medal and was chasing another senior title with Cork within a fortnight.

Emer Dillon is not just a star camogie player but has also worn the Munster and Irish jerseys with honour in hockey.

Yet the Saha buff, like everyone else in the building, never even gave her a second



Cliona FOLEY

glance, simply because he hadn't a clue who she was.

It has ever been thus for women in Irish sport even for someone as talented as Dillon and she is not alone amongst her peers.

Team-mate Vivienne Harris represented Ireland at kickboxing. Ciara Healy is a squash international. Joanne O'Callaghan played hockey for Munster and five of their senior camogie stars won Munster medals in Gaelic football this summer.

Yet they all remain relatively unknown, something that still doesn't bother Dillon or affect her enjoyment of her sports.

The only thing she wishes is that more people would go to their games, especially tomorrow's centenary Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland camogie finals.

Playing at HQ is, without doubt, the highlight of her career but sometimes she wishes you were not rattling

around in a quarter-full Croker like a pebble. She even goes as far to suggest that a packed Parnell Park or Páirc Uí Rinn might be a better option.

"We can't go complaining. I suppose it's up to ourselves really," she admits. "Ours (Ballygarvan) was always brilliant, I remember even as a kid someone would arrange a bus to bring us up to see the All-Ireland but something should be done like that to push the game around the country and bring more people to it."

Dillon may only be 20 but she is talented and experienced enough to have earned the right to have an opinion and she is disarmingly honest.

Her cheerful, up-front attitude is certainly a breath of fresh air for journalists increasingly dealing with male hurlers who approach their impending All-Ireland finals as if they are the Third Secret of Fatima.

She's not afraid to admit she was dropped for their championship match against Wexford this year ("I was playing badly") nor to the fact that she has something of a 'firebrand' reputation in hockey circles for being so regularly red-carded.

"The worst was when I got sent off for 'being bold' to an umpire a week before we (Cork Harlequins) played in the European Cup final. I was still in school and absolutely mortified," she



Cork's Emer Dillon is determined to have a big say in tomorrow's Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland camogie final.

reveals candidly. Perhaps it has to do with the technical differences between the games. They are extremely difficult sports to combine, not only in terms of physical and time commitments.

The one-sided form of a hockey stick and the 'obstruction' rule means you must put your right hand below in a hockey grip, the complete opposite to camogie's, and the latter's playing rules are also much less physically restrictive. A niggling 18-month hamstring

problem, picked up playing hockey, will force her to take an extended break this winter.

Her dual involvement has dwindled in the past year because of it and she actually tries to gloss over her double talents, insisting she's pretty hopeless at hockey.

"Honestly, I can't tackle for nuts. They always shout at me 'track back Emer, track back' 'cause I'm absolutely useless at it. Sure I don't bend down properly or anything, I do everything

wrong in hockey!" she says grinning. Yeah. Useless alright. So useless that she played for Ireland at U16 and U18 level and would have played at U21 but for her camogie commitments.

So useless that having joined Cork Harlequins in her early teens, which is just up the road from the family home and with whom she has since won numerous honours, she has won an Irish Senior Cup (2000) and Division 2 European Cup (2001).

Those in the know say her 'late start' in the game means she has technical weaknesses but that her speed and eye for the ball as a right midfielder is exceptional.

And if she was as useless as she says she would hardly have got the call, as she did in the week after losing last year's All-Ireland camogie final to Tipp, to come up to Dublin to try out for the Irish senior hockey development squad.

"It was a bad week for it alright and probably the worst fitness test I ever did," she says, with a wickedly droll glint in her eye.

Decisions had to be made then. Would she go for hockey big-time and see how far she'd get? Camogie was not the only factor.

As bright as she is talented, Dillon got enough points to do Pharmacy two years ago but gambled on sitting out a year as there was talk that UCC would

become only the second college in the South to offer it in 2004.

Instead of heading to Trinity, she spent the year working in the Marian Pharmacy on Friars Walk where she has worked this past summer also and is now one of just 51 students starting Second Year Pharmacy in the Cork university.

Camogie is uniquely in her blood and community.

The father of Liam McCarthy came from Ballygarvan and when the club won the South East divisional hurling title recently the team included her brother Liam. The last time they won it, in 1977, her dad Billy captained it.

Dillon was one of the many Cork minors of 1998-99 who progressed to tomorrow's seniors. Her sister Caoimhe is already a county minor and Ballygarvan provides several players to Cork's junior camogie finalists also.

So can the Rebelettes topple the reigning champions Tipperary again?

"When they got that goal straight after half-time last year, it just seemed to throw us," Dillon says of last year's 1-11 to 2-11 final defeat.

"But we've very even as teams. When we beat them two years ago that was a big thing because we had a bit of a mental block about beating them but now we know we can do it."

Paula aims to keep it in the family

by Eoin English

SHE faces a similar challenge tomorrow to the one faced by her twin brothers last Sunday — tackling the defending All-Ireland champions.

But Cork camogie star Paula O'Connor isn't daunted.

Armed with the hurley her father Bernie crafted for her four years ago, Paula is totally focused on tomorrow's All-Ireland clash with Tipperary.

Paula, a two-time All-Ireland medal winner and younger sister of Cork senior hurling stars Ben and Jerry, said tomorrow's decider is the only thing on her mind.

"It's time now to forget about the hurling. I have my own game to play tomorrow," the 24-year-old wing back said.

It's been a crazy week in the O'Connors' Newtownshandrum home, said Paula.

"It's been hectic. We haven't seen Ben and Jerry much since Sunday. The phone's been ringing all week. It's mad."

"There's always pressure before a big game. But after the lads winning last Sunday, there is just that little bit of added pressure



Paula O'Connor, sister to Cork hurlers Ben and Jerry, who will play for Cork in tomorrow's All-Ireland Camogie final in Croke Park.

Picture: Provision

this time. But I'm not thinking beyond the final whistle," she added.

The O'Connor family will be making their second trip in a week to Croke Park tomorrow to support Paula. Mother Kathleen, father Bernie, twins Ben and Jerry, John,

Eamon, Michelle, Kevin, David, Steve and Marie and her daughter Katie will all be in the Hogan Stand.

If Paula wins her third All-Ireland, it will cap a remarkable week and year for the family.

Ben, Jerry and John

helped Newtown won the All-Ireland Senior Club Hurling Championship last March. That win sparked a week of celebrations, the high point of which was the village's reception for the Tommy O'Moore Cup.

Similar scenes greeted

the Liam McCarthy Cup as it was carried triumphantly into Newtown late last Tuesday night.

Celebrations have waned in the last few days. But if Paula manages to win her third All-Ireland medal

tomorrow, the Newtown party will kick off again to welcome the O'Duffy Cup.

● The Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland Senior Camogie final will be screened live on Network 2 on Sunday with coverage starting at 3pm.

Camogie All-Ireland final

Like father, like daughter



Tom Humphries talks to Ciara Gaynor about the rise and rise of camogie and Tipperary

Ciara Gaynor isn't old, but she has enough years on the clock to allow her to remember the bad times. She jumped to some sort of prominence 11 years ago as a 13-year-old whippersnapper playing minor camogie for Tipp.

She hadn't long finished playing under-12 hurling for Kilruane-McDonagh's and was enjoying life as an under-14 hurler. As the time came to concentrate on camogie, it seemed that if Ciara Gaynor had a future in the game, Tipp camogie probably didn't.

Tomorrow, she plays in her sixth successive All-Ireland final and if her renown is such that she is still introduced in lots of circles as Len Gaynor's daughter, well she doesn't mind. It comes with the territory and that territory has allowed her eclipse her father's total of three All-Irelands. Tomorrow, she goes in search of her fifth winner's medal.

"It's mad really," she says, "coming from nowhere like we did. I know other counties have been in consecutive All-Irelands for a lot longer than six years, but for us coming from Tipp, coming from nowhere, sometimes I think about it and it's unreal."

Tipp's rise has indeed been sensational. They won the national intermediate title in 1997, went senior in 1998 and were unlucky to be beaten in the All-Ireland semi-final of that year. In 1999 it all stepped up a gear again. Michael Cleary and Colm Bonnar came in. The emphasis switched to skills, skills, skills and doing things at speed, speed, speed. They won the first of three All-Irelands in a row. Tipp are there still. Six years on the circuit. Pretty much the same bunch of players, young enough and resilient enough to wait it out at the top of the tree till the wave of kids they have inspired burst through and claim their inheritance.

Gaynor reckons that the arrival of Cleary and Bonnar and the rules changes which made camogie a 15-a-side game were a fortuitous coincidence which gave Tipp a jump on the opposition.

Zealand. I think there's a way there of promoting the game, promoting the fact they can play at the highest level and have that independence and strength.

"The idea of fashion or whether we're good-looking women or not, well who cares? It's the skill that matters. The enjoyment. I'd prefer to see DJ Carey do one of his back-handed flicks into the net than see him wear tight Levis. That's the way to promote the game. Some of the skills are as good as the men. Better sometimes, because it's not so physical you can't walk over the player."

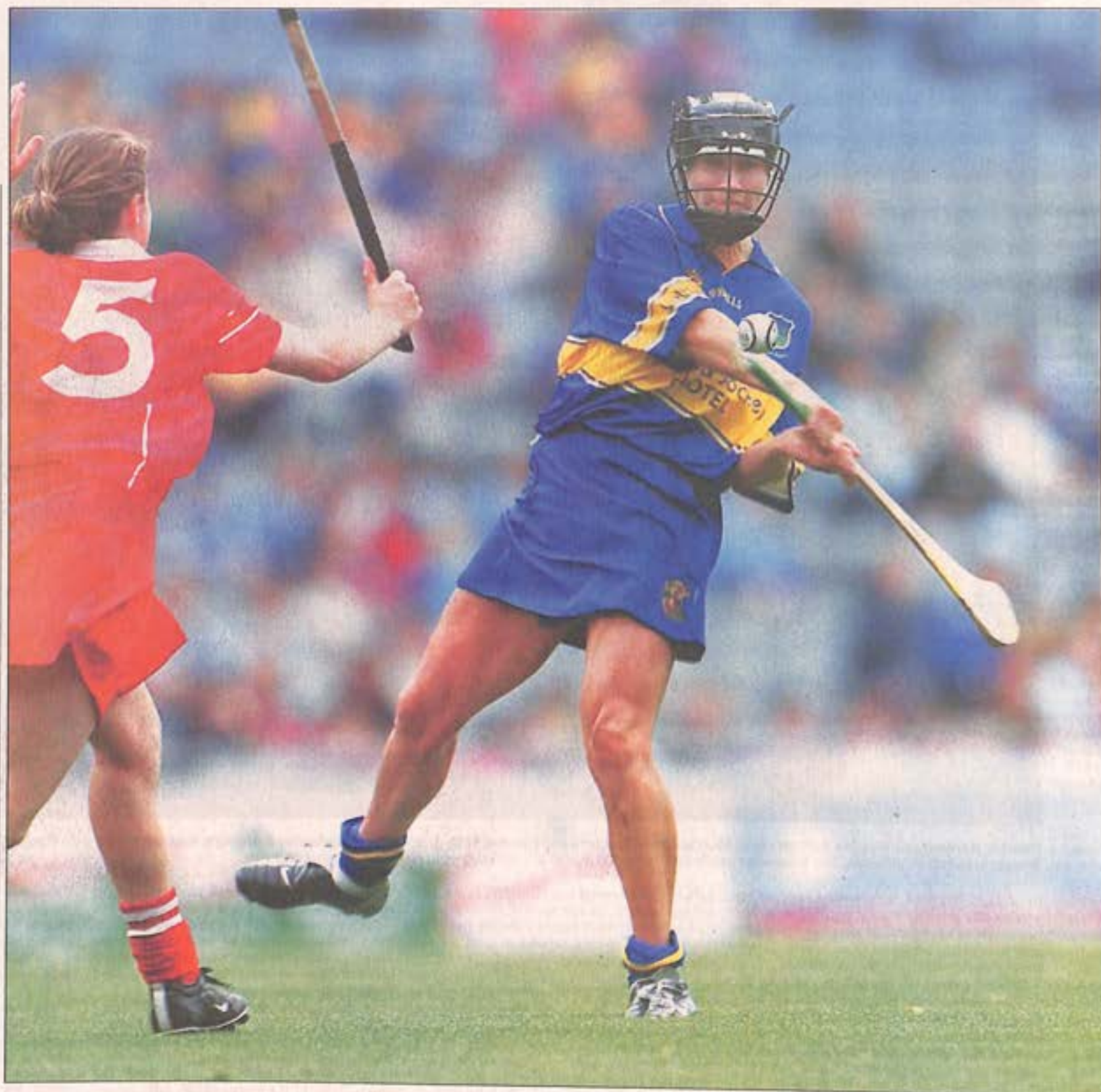
"There's nothing sexy about camogie. Same with hurling. Same with football. It's a serious sport. You train for a year. You fight for every ball. It belittles that if people are wondering what you look like in a cocktail dress or if you think that people will only come and watch if you're good looking or look great in a skirt. They certainly wouldn't be coming to watch me, so."

At this point it would be proper to contradict Ciara Gaynor, but instead you check and wonder if you've ever heard a male sportsperson feel the need to make self-deprecating jokes about their looks. Anyway, she's not finished.

"There might be a chance that they would come and watch if they knew there was a chance that I'd catch nine out of 10 high balls in the air, make some good blocks and all that. I think the game has to be promoted for what it is. It's vastly skilful. One of the fastest, greatest, games in the world."

There are small things amiss in the camogie world that means the game often shoots itself in the foot. Tipp played Limerick last year in the championship in Ballygarra in Co Limerick. The referee went to Ballygarra in Tipperary. There wasn't a programme to be had on the day.

"Locally, they could promote things better. There are some great games to be seen. We played Kilkenny this year and there was a point in it. Who was there? Parents, family and friends and



Tipperary's Ciara Gaynor gets her shot away, despite the efforts of Cork's Paula O'Connor. - (Photograph: Aoife Rice/Sportsfile)

Tipp have the hunger and the edge

Croke Park, Tomorrow

Junior: Cork v Down

(Throw-in - 1 p.m.)

Senior: Cork v Tipperary

(Throw-in - 3.30 p.m.)

On TV: Network 2

TOM HUMPHRIES

The centrepiece of camogie's centenary year has a familiar but welcome look to it. The game's pre-eminent modern rivals have pushed the sport forward and established a pocketful of new stars. When Cork and Tipperary meet tomorrow the game will have as much context as any meeting between those two counties should have.

Cork put an end to Tipp's four-in-a-row quest two years ago and were taken to the cleaners themselves by Tipp in last year's final. Both sides have their motivations.

And their renovations. To a full-forward line which was already so sharp you could cut yourself on it, Tipperary have had the luxury of adding Saudi-born Jill Horan. Horan, operating from the corner, has stitched 3-9 into various teams through the championship.

The Cork full-back line has made what alterations it can for the onslaught, with Spethanie Dunlea shifting from left-corner back to the edge of the square in a swap with Rosalie Holland.

Cork beat Tipp (3-7 to 1-6) in the round-robin section of the league, while Tipp gained revenge when beating the Rebelettes in the Munster final. Somehow this year Cork haven't looked as sharp. They were beaten by an upcoming Wexford side to finish a league campaign which had included a surprisingly easy defeat of a rusty Tipp side. They met Tipp in the Munster final and were beaten by one point.

Apart from a nimble full-forward line which has claimed 10-14 in four championship games to date Tipperary have experience. Since

The way we play, how young we were, I think the 15-a-side game suited us better. At club level it's hard enough. We'd be a small club and putting out 12 strong players was hard. Finding 15 is very hard. With Tipp it suited us and it was the game that Skippy (Cleary) knew. It worked to our advantage."

The belated move to 15-a-side was a belated kiss of life to the sport. Gaynor recognises that standards have improved and the game is beginning to earn some of the respect it deserves. With the shortened pitch and the dinky little goals, camogie often betrayed itself by giving off an air of novelty, sublimely asking spectators not to expect hurling by women to be done well, but to be impressed that it was done at all.

"Playing on the full-length field and using proper goals has made a difference. The game gets a little bit more respect now. It sometimes looked like a bit of a joke playing with the smaller goals."

Gaynor and perhaps half a dozen of her higher-profile team-mates are the nearest thing the sport has had to recognisable stars since the Downey sisters retired. It's taken more than half a decade at the top to achieve the limited level of renown which they have outside the game. Camogie's perennial problem.

"The game does enough and then again it doesn't do enough," she says. "Personally, I don't agree with the chicks with sticks thing at all. I don't know who that's aimed at. Ten, 11, 12-year-old girls or the public in general?"

"Last year, Una O'Dwyer lifted the All-Ireland for us and six weeks later she left for Australia. A few Cork and Limerick girls went with her. They travelled around Australia and New

a handful of supporters. I know they tried playing camogie games before hurling matches. I think they should stay with that."

"It's not going to work the first or second year, but it will work. Ladies football promotes itself very effectively. We have a great game that we have to sell."

Her own history within that game is gentle and pastoral. Reared on a farm with three brothers and three sisters the days were for school and the evenings were for tagging along after

while Len trained Kilruane to the club All-Ireland of 1986, hurled while he worked with Shannon Rovers and Clonoulty Rossmore and Moycarkey through the 1980s and early '90s. Hurled while he laid the foundations in Clare. Kept tipping away when he came home to look after his own county.

Usually half a dozen of them would cram into the car. Almost always Ciara and two of her sisters, Eimear and Sinéad. Hurling training was a

Ciara hurling on the same side as Mark O'Leary, the Tipp hurler.

She can hardly remember a conversation in those days which wasn't about hurling. "To be involved in a team made you feel more important. There was a huge emphasis in the parish on hurling. Everyone talking about it after mass or after school. It suffers a bit perhaps when people move away with jobs and stuff nowadays, but there's plenty there to take their place."

'The idea of fashion or whether we're good-looking women or not, well who cares. It's the skill that matters. The enjoyment. I'd prefer to see DJ Carey do one of his back-handed flicks into the net than see him wear tight Levis' - Ciara Gaynor

their Dad to whatever training session he was giving.

Wherever Len was training teams as his kids grew up there'd always be a duckling line of his children tagging behind. They'd puck balls around on the sideline for the duration of each session.

"With one eye we'd be watching the lads train, looking at what they'd be doing and trying to do the same. We'd listen to what Dad would be saying and try to pick up a few things there too. He'd be talking to a team and we'd all be standing behind nodding our heads, letting on we knew exactly what he was talking about. We'd agree with everything he said at that age. We can disagree with him now!"

They went everywhere. Hurled

baby-sitting service, a few hours of peace for their mother. A respite from the worry over broken windows.

"We grew up on a farm and after dinner most days we'd have a game of hurling in the yard. Other times we'd go up to the fields when the silage was cut, but mostly we hurled in that yard. We grew up in a world where it never mattered whether you were a boy or a girl so long as you had a hurl in your hand."

Success brought encouragement where none was really needed. Ciara played hurling and football for Kilruane National School where the principal was Gilbert Williams, a wing back on that 1986 Kilruane team. In school they won county titles in hurling and football the same year,

This year her form hasn't been perceptibly off, but she feels she's missing a little of the zest she had in better times. In 2001, she reigned supreme and was player of the year. Visibly this summer she hasn't struggled, but feels herself drifting in and out of games a little.

"I know that on Sunday I have to be there for the whole hour. I dread the day when I go out and it's not there for me. You never want that to happen. You don't know. You never know. I'll wrap myself in cotton wool for the week and the first ball, I could either drive it to the clouds or totally miss it. Obviously, I would dread the day too when it falls apart for us as a team."

"This year, though, our panel has been strengthened. Other years, we

might have relied on the first 15 and that was it. This year it's got better."

There were many who rubbed their chins and decided that the dreaded day had come two years ago when Cork ambushed them. Since then, the sides have enjoyed a relationship which has pushed the game to new heights in terms of skill and speed and has left other counties needing to close the gap.

"Two years ago we only played okay on the day. We could have played a lot better. Cork were hungrier on the day, they were fighting for the ball more. Looking back, we were second to every ball. They just seemed hungrier. People ask what happened to us. Cork is what happened to us."

The hunger was always there, but last year it reasserted itself as a sharp and constant pang. Michael Cleary went for his pipe and slippers. Raymie Ryan stepped in. A new voice, but the same emphasis.

Suddenly, players with three All-Irelands were fighting for their place again. Cork kept the appointment in September. This time, Tipp's hunger saw them through.

She wouldn't have been too surprised if the end had come this year. All summer she had the uneasy feeling that either Tipp or Cork would get caught out in the semi-finals. Tipp played a strong Galway team and won. Cork choked off Wexford. They saw enough to know that the pack is closing. Kilkenny and Limerick aren't too much further behind.

"Wexford are in the position we were in seven years ago," she says. "We know from experience it can happen any time for a county which is doing the work. They'll make it. Next year they'll be a huge threat."

In the short term, though, all her

worries wear red jerseys. Tomorrow's All-Ireland, the rubber match, will settle a lot between the sides. "What do I fear about Cork? I fear that they'll end up with more scores on the board than us. That's all."

Sixty vintage minutes would go a long way to ensuring that doesn't happen. And if Tipp win and you'll see a tall, lean man with a hooked nose and a smile on his face leaving Croke Park. That's the guy who's Ciara Gaynor's father.

Apparently, his name is Len.



Cork will be hoping right corner forward Una O'Donoghue can breach the Tipperary full back line on a number of occasions tomorrow at Croke Park

Michael Cleary led the team to the county's first All-Ireland in 1999, the side has scarcely changed. Tomorrow, 11 of that breakthrough side will start.

Cork are considerably overhauled on both sides of the line since last year's final. New manager John Considine has brought in several new faces and the team retains only eight of last year's final line-up. The changes are brought about out of necessity (the team has suffered a raft of injuries) and out of the search for more creativity.

Their strengths are broadly the same with a tough midfield and good hurling half backs. The half-back line of Paula O'Connor (looking to bring even further glory to Newtownshandrum after the success of her brothers Ben and Jerry last week) Regina Curtin, and Rena Buckley is combative and Tipp will be hoping to drop a considerable amount of ball in over their heads. In the event of that not being possible Tipp have restored Joanne Ryan to the centre forward position in place of Emile Hayden and her battle with Mary O'Connor will be a key one.

Narrow wins over Wexford and Kilkenny will have taught Tipp much.

That whetting of their edge and the natural hunger which the red jersey provokes should be enough tomorrow.

TIPPERARY: J Delaney; S Kelly; U O'Dwyer, J Kirwan; S Nealon, C Gaynor, T Brophy; A McDermott, P Fogarty; N Kennedy, J Ryan, C Grogan; E McDonnell, D Hughes, J Moran.

CORK: A Murray; J O'Callaghan, S Dunlea, R Holland; P O'Connor, M O'Connor, R Buckley; V Harris, G O'Connor; R Moloney, E Dillon, J O'Leary; U O'Donoghue, E Dillon, C Desmond.

THE clash of the ash between Cork and Tipperary in the 100th All-Ireland senior camogie final, combined with Cork's battle against Down in the Junior match, will make for an exciting day for sports fans tomorrow.

But for two Cork communities in particular, the day will be a real nail-biter.

Newtownshandrum and Cloyne are at the heart of both matches — Paula O'Connor, of Newtownshandrum, the sister of hurling heroes Ben and Jerry, will be lining up for Cork, captained by

Stephanie Dunlea, in the All-Ireland senior camogie final against Tipperary, who will be chasing a third consecutive All-Ireland senior title.

And Val O'Sullivan from Cloyne, the cousin of well-known hurler Diarmuid

O'Sullivan, will be a member of the Cork team lining out to take on Down in the junior All-Ireland final at GAA headquarters.

Newtownshandrum's Kim Hickey will

also be playing in the junior match.

There's no doubt that both teams are anxious to emulate the achievement of the Cork senior and intermediate hurlers by bringing home another pair of

glittering All-Ireland trophies to the Rebel County.

And there's not a question that the hearts and minds of their local communities will be with them every step of the way as they line out in Croke Park tomorrow to face their rivals.

If both sides win, Newtownshandrum will this year alone have accumulated a total of eight All-Ireland medals!

Pretty hot stuff for a village with a population of about 600!

Best of luck girls — we'll be rooting for you.

WE SAY

The Echo's viewpoint

Heroines head for Croke destiny

O'Donovan out to win respect

By PJ AHERN

All-Ireland junior final

SARAH O'DONOVAN is relishing taking the field against Down, for an opportunity to win respect for the Cork junior team.

Last Friday night, the camogie association held a press night for the media to get to know the two Cork sides representing the county in the camogie finals.

Problem was the media were only interested in the senior squad, with the junior side more or less ignored.

Sarah says, "We got decked out in our kits but all the press was interested in was the senior side. It has given us motivation to succeed on Sunday."

She is one of the more experience members of the side and has been involved since 2000.

Sarah is a full-forward but on Sunday she will be lining out at centre-forward. She is unsure of her role.

"It's a daunting task. I am worried about my role. Centre forward can be an inspirational position but on other occasions the ball can by-pass you."

The last nine months have been draining for Sarah.

Her commitment to the game has meant she hasn't been able to go on summer holidays this year and she admits she cannot wait for the final whistle to blow on October 3rd.

On that day, she will be lining out in her second county final of the year, having been victorious with Carrigdhoun in the senior final this year.

Ballygarvan have two bus loads of people heading to the final on Sunday.

Having got her senior club medal, she now wants to win all round her, and complete a hat-trick of titles.

"Winning breed winning. My dream when I was 12 was to win a senior medal. I already have a minor medal and would love to add a junior one on Sunday," she said.

Of course camogie isn't the only talent she possesses. She has represented as well as captained Ireland at Under-19 level in soccer.

She used to play with Ballincollig alongside Kariena Richards current Under-19 international.

"Kariena will do well she is coming in at the right time and she is an extremely talented player. When I was training with them, it wasn't as aggressive and we missed out on training in Dublin because we were in Cork. Dublin clubs are at the pinnacle in terms of ladies soccer in Ireland."

My soccer suffered because of my commitments to camogie so I had to make a decision."

Sarah is surrounded by inspiration and support, her brother Christopher is a keen sportsman and has represented Cork at Under-15 level.

Her boyfriend, Ger McCarthy has a minor medal and has also represented Cork at under-21 level in hurling.

Although he has been neglected in recent weeks, with Sarah training most nights of the week.

After taking a year out, she will be attending UCC next month where she will be studying arts after which she is hoping to pursue a career as an English teacher.

Focusing on Sunday, she says she has huge respect for Down. "They are very physical and they have a strong support and they will be well up for it. As it is their first team they have the pick of the county. They have been written off by some people but we have a huge amount of respect for them."

A place in the senior panel most surely beckon now for this talented player but Sarah is just keeping her feet firmly on the ground and just hoping her time will come.

"I have tried my heart out to get noticed and raised my level of performances. They will hopefully stand to me. I just need to look at Brieghe Corkery and Colette Desmond, who were involved in the 2002 junior final but now they have come up through the ranks and will be involved in the senior match on Sunday."

Sarah O'Donovan would like to thank all involved with Ballygarvan especially Ollie Halloran. She says: "They have been so helpful and minded me for two years and I have benefited from everyone involved."



LAST Sunday a former Cork hurler led his charges to ultimate glory can another former hurler do the same seven days later?

John Considine, a name very familiar to hurling followers, is at the helm of this year's Cork senior camogie team.

Ultimate glory awaits them next Sunday as they take on Tipperary in the 2004 All-Ireland senior final.

Winner of an All-Ireland senior medal with Cork in 1990, John had a bumpy ride in his own playing career, finding himself on and off the team like a lighthouse beacon.

He played the national league with Cork in 1987.

In 1988 John played the first round of the Munster Championship but was dropped for the Munster final and replaced by Tom Cashman.

Having not figured at all for 1989 John once again got the 'nod' for corner back in 1990 after selectors watched his exploits with Sarsfields in the '89 club championship.

Sars reached the final that year but were defeated by Glen Rovers. He won his one and only All-Ireland medal in 1990 which he greatly cherishes.

Once again John found himself sidelined



John Considine (left) in typically solid defensive form for his club Sarsfields.

at the beginning for the '91 championship as Richard Brown had returned from England.

Denis Walsh got injured in the Munster semi-final against Waterford and John came in. He played the drawn Munster final against Tipp in Páirc Uí Chaoimh but upon Denis's return sat out the replay which Cork lost in extra time in Thurles.

There was no competitive action for John in '92. He played the league in 1993 but Cork were defeated in the first round of the championship by Clare and that was John's final season on the Cork panel.

"I went to York for a year, came home

two stone heavier and that was the end of my inter-county career," laughs John.

"But I was dead lucky. I only played championship in '90, '91 and '93 and I got an All-Ireland medal. The amount of players that played, especially in the 90s that didn't get one..."

John decided to get involved in coaching. He coached the Cork minor hurling team for two seasons, 2000 and 2001.

2001 saw his team crowned All-Ireland Minor Champions.

An economics lecturer in UCC John's coaching ability didn't go unnoticed. He was approached in 2000 and asked if he



would take on the College camogie team.

He did, and in three years won two Ashbourne Cups and lost the third by a single point in a game the college should really have won.

"I finished up then. I feel three years is enough. I know there is a constant turn-around of players in College but you lose the bite yourself.

"There's only so much people will listen to from you and after two or three years they've heard it all before."

It didn't take long for word to filter out that John was free again and on New Year's Day in 2003 representatives from Kilbrittain Camogie Club knocked on his door and asked if he'd consider training them.

John and his wife Val had relocated to Kilbrittain and the opportunity was seized with both hands by the club.

John obliged and in their first season playing senior B Kilbrittain won the county title.

It was only a matter of time that the call came from the Cork board.

"When I got the call for Cork I was hoping that Pa Finn would stay as I feel that this team is his team as such.

"He has more or less brought a lot of these players to this stage of their senior careers.

"When Pa announced he would not be going forward for another term John accepted the position.

Next Sunday is another huge game for the coach who has the respect of his entire panel. Like any other final he feels that it is anyone's game but has every confidence if things go their way they can regain the title they last held in 2002.

"I think if we get an equal break on refereeing decisions, if we don't hit bad luck, we'll be fine. The amount of games that are won or lost on small things is amazing.

"There's a different bite this year probably because of last year's defeat.

"The hunger to win is there."

Camogie senior captains, Stephanie Dunlea, Cork, right, with Joanne Ryan, Tipperary warm up at Croke Park prior to tomorrow's final.

The day of the match

THE journey to bring the O'Duffy cup back to Cork begins today at 1.50pm when the team board the train for Dublin.

Yes, it's all on the day, yes it's all about that one hour on the pitch but the journey begins here and the next 24 hours are as crucial as any.

Players, mentors and county board officials will sit around tables of four in the reserved carriages. Some play cards, some read, others will be restless and mingle throughout the team. The fact that we have two teams heading to the capital adds an extra buzz of activity. But the reason you are on the train is always there.

Once the team arrive in Heuston Station at approximately 5pm a coach will take them to the Red Cow Moran's Hotel. Once settled, both teams will gather for a meal and after this the evening is usually their own. Many a year we visited the Derby and had a great night. Now the girls tend to do their own thing. Some go for a walk, watch TV, etc. At times over the years team meetings have been held on the Saturday night. I was never in agreement with this. The most important thing the night before the game is a good night's sleep, not twist and turn with a stomach full of butterflies.

Sunday morning — God, I always hated the morning of an All-Ireland.

In fact, I wasn't too fond of the entire week leading up to it. When people used to say to me "Good luck, enjoy yourself." I'd think: "What? Are you mad? Enjoy an All-Ireland?"

I suppose some do but I was always too nervous to enjoy it and it got worse as I got older. I often swore that once the game was over I'd never play again but of course I always did. Once that ball is thrown in all the nerves just disappear.

The first thing a player will do is jump out of bed, pull back the curtain and look out the window. The conditions are discussed with your roommate for a few minutes. Players will shower, throw on a tracksuit and head down for breakfast. The right thing to do is have a good breakfast but again it's up to the individual. Some will eat like it's their last supper, others will sit across from them looking green.

If the team didn't have a private mass the night before, many will head off to the nearest church.

Next it's time to meet in the lobby and head out for a puck



Linda Mellerick

at some pre-arranged pitch. That puck around is excellent for ridding yourself of any jitters you may have. A masseur/physiotherapist at this stage is not too far away ready to rub the muscles.

Back to the hotel and a light lunch is available. A team talk normally follows but every manager is different. Some prefer to keep it for the dressing room. Encouragement, friendly words of advice, sometimes tears of emotion are shed. Its back to the room, gather your bits and pieces and you're off.

The bus journey to Croke Park is usually very quiet. Players are deep in their own thoughts, thinking about their own performance and what they have to do.

The players enter the magnificent dressing rooms and take a space. We are creatures of habit as you find that if you've been there before you always head for the same spot.

The hurling alley off the room is a Godsend. You walk in there, hurley in hand and you drive that ball so hard against the wall. You feel at that stage that you're ready for anything. Stretching, jogging, final preparations, everyone's doing their own thing. The experienced players will move throughout the team with an encouraging pat on the back and a few words to say.

Its now time to settle down and John Considine will call his charges to gather round.

Up on your feet, light jogging while he'll issue his final instructions and words of encouragement.

The knock on the door will come approximately 12 minutes past the hour depending on who is out first. The final roar from the players fills the air and out they run.

Straight over for the photograph, into your drills, meet the president, take positions and then the National Anthem.

As a player stands to the National Anthem it is I feel the greatest and proudest moment of your playing career.

That's when it hits you. Here you are on the greatest stage of them all playing an All-Ireland final for your County.

It doesn't get any bigger or better. Well, it does if 60 minutes later you're crowned All-Ireland Champions.



Joanne Ryan and Stephanie Dunlea relax in the grounds of Rochestown Park Hotel as they look ahead to the Centenary final. Photos: Daragh MacSweeney

Putting Cian on hold



To give their full commitment to the cause, writes **Seán Ryan**, camogie players have to leave other interests aside — even plans that involve an Olympic gold medallist

CAMOGIE players are just like all top sports people — they put so much of their life on hold just to achieve the ultimate success.

Take the captains for this afternoon's final. Tipperary's Joanne Ryan has put aside her show-jumping ambitions to concentrate on wearing the blue and gold, while Stephanie Dunlea has turned her back on a promising football ca-

"You have to give the full commitment to one or the other," explained Joanne, "so for the moment I can't concentrate on show-jumping. At least you can be any age for show-jumping."

"I find it very difficult with shift work and with training to give the time I would like to give," said Stephanie, who works as a production supervisor with Amersham pharmaceuticals in Carrigtwohill. "When you play you enjoy it, but

you can't do it at your optimum level with shift work.

"You really have to plan ahead for matches — I had to take two days' holidays before the semi-final. And it takes up a lot of time. I have missed four weddings already this year. We do sacrifice a lot, but obviously there are the rewards and that's why we do it."

One wedding Stephanie didn't miss was her own, to Martin Murphy, who made the ultimate sacrifice for a junior hurler last year when he missed the mid-Cork semi-final in order to lend his support to his fiancée at the camogie final. "He got some stick over that," she remarked.

The Cork captain for a second successive final didn't have much time to brood over last year's defeat because she was straight into the All-Ireland club football quarter-final for Donaghmore. That led to what I reckon is the 14th All-Ireland medal in the Dunlea household when Donaghmore won the final on November 30.

Can Joanne boast of anything in that order? "Not really," Tippi's petite blonde captain acknowledged. "The nearest I can offer is that my father is related to Tommy Dunne's father" — suggesting that there is a strain of captaincy in her family, which is vital on a day like today.

For both captains, this has been a stop-start sort of year. Both missed training and matches through injury, and Stephanie also had the distraction of a three-week honeymoon in South Africa.

"After the honeymoon, the first League game was against Tipp and that was a shock to the system," she conceded. "Then I pulled a calf muscle and missed all of April and May when the hard training is done. I missed the championship game against Wexford and the Munster final and we were knocked out in the first round of the club championship, so not having games behind you, your confidence isn't high. I think I was fitter last year, but it's a big boost being

nominated captain. Fiona O'Driscoll was supposed to be, but she retired. It doesn't guarantee your place, but it makes you more focused."

For Joanne, a bout of tonsillitis cost her valuable time. "I was only out for three weeks but I missed both the Antrim and Kilkenny games and got back as a sub for the semi-final against Wexford. You always worry about your place because with the panel of players we have there is pressure on the first team places. That drives you on."

Tippi have won the Munster final and the League final, so they will be hoping to make it a clean sweep of trophies this afternoon. However, Joanne experienced defeat last month when her club Drom and Inch lost the county final to Toomevara by two points.

So what kind of final are the captains hoping for? "The game has to be let flow," said Stephanie, "there are too many frees being given. At senior (hurling) level the main attraction is that they nearly kill each

other, but the game is let flow. Football is stop-start and camogie is a bit like that. They brought in the advantage rule a few years ago and that has been a big help. It has to be more a spectator sport — like hurling."

"I don't like dirty play, but referees tend to blow for everything," agreed Joanne. "Maybe they could change the rules."

"It's quite a physical game, although not as physical as ladies football," Stephanie pointed out. "Everyone thinks it's the other way round, but it's not."

Last year's final was a thriller, with Tipperary coming out on top, so what are their memories of that game?

"I've only watched the first half on the video," Stephanie admitted. "We never got out of the starting blocks at all. I thought we had weathered the storm in the first half, but Tipp were a lot hungrier and dictated the game. The better team won on the day."

Joanne took a downbeat approach, with no hint of triumphalism: "There wasn't much between us at all. Cork were very good and we had the luck on the day. There is never much between us."

Both teams will include new faces, with Cork having Aoife Murray in goal, and including Rosalie Holland, who was working abroad last year, Riona Buckley, a fifth year student who is also a good footballer, Marie Watson and Collette Desmond.

Tippi appear to have a more settled team, corner-back Julie Kirwan and corner-forward Jill Horan (who has played soccer for Ireland) and Tricia O'Halloran being the newcomers.

Stephanie has been on the Cork panel for eleven years — "they call me Granny" — and has moved from corner-back to full-back. She is conscious that "I mightn't be playing again, so when I do I enjoy it."

Joanne joined the Tipp panel in



'There are too many frees. At senior level the main attraction is that they nearly kill each other, but the game is let flow'

2001 with Claire Grogan, so she has enjoyed a lot of success although still only 21. "It was always my life's ambition to play for Tipperary, and my mother always says in years to come I will appreciate it more." If Stephanie has husband Martin as her No 1 fan, Joanne enjoys similar support from parents Maeve and James. "They go to every match and drove me everywhere to training, but I got my licence this year."

As part of her chores on the family farm, Joanne keeps a few horses and breaks them in herself.

'My dream is to have one good enough for Cian O'Connor, but for that to happen you need luck and money'

When I suggested that dealing with frisky horses must strengthen her wrists for camogie, she soon put me right: "It's not the wrists," she explained, "it's the fingers. The horses can be frisky at first, but in the end they'd do anything for you. My dream is to have one good enough for Cian O'Connor, but for that to happen you need luck and money."

However, at least one graduate from Joanne's tuition has made it to the British circuit and performed creditably, so camogie may not be the only reason to note her name for the future.

First, though, there's some important business to be attended to in Croke Park this afternoon (3.30) — and if the fare on offer is anything like last year's, then the fans at this Centenary final are in for a real treat.



Cork senior camogie players Anna Geary (left) and Elaine Burke ready for the final.

Picture: Denis Minihane

Camogie side will go all-out to make it a Cork double

by Anne Hayden

CORK'S camogie team hope to make it a double on Sunday by adding the camogie title to the hurling one won last Sunday.

They will have to beat another Munster team — three-in-a-row seekers Tipperary — to make the dream come true.

In the 100th year of Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, Tipperary will bid for their fifth title while Cork go for their 21st. Down and Cork will contest the junior final.

Both senior teams said the final would be closely contested.

Tipperary centre-back Ciara Gaynor will be hoping to do her father Len, a former Tipp hurler, proud by holding onto the title.

"If things go well for us, we should be in with a good chance," she said.

"Cork are well up for it, too, though, so it will be a tough game."

She was looking forward to her return visit to Croke Park.

"On the day, there's always the nerves but that's a good thing, too. If you weren't nervous, there would be something wrong," she added.

Cork centre-back Mary O'Connor agreed that it would be a tough game. "We're pretty evenly matched and we know each other's play," she said.

She was not daunted by the fact that Tipperary were champions last year. "I don't think the previ-

ous year will come into it on the day," she said.

To kick off the centenary celebrations, Education Minister Noel Dempsey will begin a torch run on Saturday at 10.30am from Tailteann Park, Navan, the venue for the first competitive camogie game in 1904.

More than 2,500 children from the primary schools of Ireland, wearing their school or club colours, will be part of a formation spelling out C100 on the Croke Park pitch. Marty Morrissey will provide commentary and Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh will introduce the Antrim Jubilee team.

The junior final will take place at 1pm with the Forás na Gaeilge senior final taking place at 3.30pm.



Deirdre Hughes

Cork have the players to record title No 21

MÁIRE UÍ SCOLAÍ

TODAY'S Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland Final between Tipperary and Cork promises to be a clash of the titans, the two teams having dominated the championship since 1999.

Cork will be more than fired up following their hurlers' victory and, given that their Juniors contest the opening game against Down, the dream of a treble in centenary year must loom in their minds.

Cork have had the easier passage. An easy win over Limerick and a walkover from Derry left them accounting for inform Wexford in the third round.

Rachel Moloney and Emer Dillon were introduced in the second half of the Wexford game. Both will start as they did in the semi-final against Galway. Cork looked impressive then, especially Jennifer O'Leary who crashed two goals past the Galway keeper. It's unlikely that Jennifer will be afforded the same space from the Premier county backs.

Cork won't depend on Jennifer as their forwards have impressed. Full-forward Emer Watson has come through the great St Mary's of Charleville school and has done well to

date. She faces her toughest assignment today with Una O'Dwyer marking her. The Tipp full-back and 2003 captain has great blocking and clearing ability.

Bidding for their 21st senior title, Cork have made one positional switch in their backline. Captain Stephanie Dunlea, holder of five senior All-Ireland medals as well as seven National League medals, has been given the job of marking the brilliant Deirdre Hughes who is the only present day player selected on the team of the century. This switch allows regular full-back Rosalie Holland to wear the number four shirt.

However, when both sides line out, expect further positional switches. The only other change in the Cork XV from the semi-final is the introduction of 2002 captain Una O'Donoghue. Una missed some League matches as well as the opening round of the championship due to work commitments in Kildare. However, she has put in huge hours of training and has been selected ahead of Elaine Burke who returned from Australia earlier this year.

The Rebels, who have ten of last year's starting fifteen available, will more than test Tipperary who are contesting their

TIPPERARY

J Delaney
S Kelly
U O'Dwyer
J Kirwan
S Nealon
C Gaynor
T Brophy
A McDermott
P Fogarty
N Kennedy
J Ryan
C Grogan
E McDonnell
D Hughes
J Horan

CORK

A Murray
J O'Callaghan
S Dunlea
R Holland
P O'Connor
M O'Connor
R Buckley
V Harris
G O'Connor
R Moloney
E Dillon
J O'Leary
U O'Donoghue
E Watson
C Desmond

sixth senior All-Ireland final in a row, having won their first in 1999. If Cork can boast ten of last year's team, Tipp go one better as they have eleven of the starting fifteen of their first victory in 1999. There are only two girls on the Tipperary side who do not have senior All-Ireland medals: Julie Kirwan who takes over in the backline from the unavailable Clare Madden, and 20-year-old Jill Horan who makes her Croke Park debut in the forward line.

There is just one change in the Tipperary team from their semi-final victory last month. Captain Joanne Ryan, who was ill earlier in the year, is chosen

ahead of Emily Hayden who captained the Premier girls in 2001. If Joanne has the privilege of lifting the O'Duffy Cup around 5-00pm she will become the first senior Tipperary captain outside of the Cashel Club to achieve this honour.

Tipperary would love to add the All-Ireland to the National League and Munster championship titles, something they have never achieved before. A burning question is: have they the same hunger as in 1999? Cork will want to make it title number 21 and probably have the means of doing it.

The junior final between Down and Cork is a repeat of the first final played in 1968 which Down won. Like their footballers, Down have a very good record at Croke Park. They have visited headquarters on four occasions, taking the New Ireland Assurance Trophy on three occasions, the last being in 1991 when they overcame Tipperary.

Managed by Bernie McNally, Down will be well tutored, but will come up against a Cork team who dealt a harsh defeat to a very fancied Wexford side in the semi-final. Both sides have strong GAA connections. Fionnuala Carr, daughter of former Down player

Ross, lines out in the forwards, while Diarmuid O'Sullivan's cousin Valerie O'Sullivan lines out for Cork.

Dentist and Down captain, Jennifer Braniff, has a good chance to talk about the big match day as her boss is none other than Greg Blaney, the former Down dual player.

Down carry more experience than Cork and, if Cork foul, Máirín McAleenan will knock them over the bar. Máirín is also a very good distributor of the ball, so the Down supporters may be singing the Mountains of Mourne today.

For the first time, the 32 counties will be represented on All-Ireland Day. At half-time in the junior game, a sixteen aside game will take place and between both games a torch will be carried into the pitch by Stephanie Gannon of Galway, the first winner of the Poc Fada competition. This, together with a gold hurl carried by Patricia Jackson of Waterford, the winner of this year's Féile na nGael skills, will be presented to Uachtarán Cumann Camógaíochta na nGael, Miriam O'Callaghan. The torch began its journey yesterday at Páirc Tailteann, Navan, where the first public game took place.

Sóisir An Dúin



Jennifer Braniff
Captain

Camogie Achievements: 12 various Ulster Championship & League medals, 1 All-Ireland Junior Championship, 1 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship, 1 National League, Rest of Ireland selection (All Star) 2000

No. 7 Name: Karen Murray
Age: 27 Club: Portaferry Occupation: Secretary
Camogie Achievements: Winning the U14 All-Ireland Feile title.

No. 8 Name: Jennifer Braniff
Age: 26 Club: Ballycran Occupation: Dentist
Camogie Achievements: 1 National Junior League, 1 Intermediate All-Ireland, 1 Purcell Cup, 4 Combined Universities Camogie Awards, 1 Ulster Junior Championship. Jennifer captains the side today in the hope of bringing the silverware back to Down for the first time since 1991. Jennifer was on the team that contested the 1996 intermediate final against Limerick. Jennifer will be hoping for better luck this time round. Jennifer has had no trouble getting time off work for training from boss Greg Blaney, a former All Star. All three Down All Ireland winning teams have been captained by Ballycran players. Jennifer will be hoping to maintain this record today.

No. 9 Name: Lisa McCrickard
Age: 20 Club: Liatroim Fontenoy Occupation: Student @ UUJ
Camogie Achievements: 1 Purcell Cup, 6 County Leagues and Championships, 2 Ulster Club, 1 Ulster Schools, 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 10 Name: Fiona Duff
Age: 27 Club: Portaferry Occupation: Accountant
Camogie Achievements: Winning the U14 All-Ireland Feile title, 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 11 Name: Mairin McAleenan
Age: 33 Club: Liatroim Fontenoy Occupation: Teacher
Camogie Achievements: 18 Down Senior Championships, 1 Ashbourne Shield, Down & Ulster Centenary Ambassador 2004, 5 Combined University Awards, 1 All Ireland Junior Championship, 1 All Ireland Intermediate Championship, Selection on Rest of Ireland Team 1999, 2 Ulster Junior Championships & 5 Ulster Club Championships

No. 12 Name: Catherine McGourty
Age: 20 Club: Ballycran Occupation: Student @ UUJ
Camogie Achievements: 1 Purcell Cup with UUJ

No. 13 Name: Fionnuala Carr
Age: 20 Club: Clonduff Occupation: Student @ UUJ
Camogie Achievements: 2 U14 Feile All-Ireland, 1 Down Intermediate Championship, 1 Down Intermediate League, 1 Inter-provincial, 1 Purcell Cup (with UUJ), 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 14 Name: Cathy Mulholland
Age: 25 Club: Ballyholland Occupation: Teacher
Camogie Achievements: 1 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship, 1 National League, 1 Inter-provincial, 11 Ulster Medals

No. 15 Name: Karen Gribben
Age: 19 Club: Clonduff

Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: Feile 1999, Feis 7's & Ulster Junior Championship 2004

No. 16 Name: Orla Maginn
Age: 20 Club: Clonduff Occupation: Student @ UUJ
Camogie Achievements: 2 All-Ireland Feile, 1 Ulster Junior Championship 2004, U12, 14 & 16 League and Championships, Down Intermediate League and Championship, 1 Minor Feis 7's

No. 17 Name: Mary McPolin
Age: 17 Club: Clonduff Occupation: Student @ Our Lady's GS, Newry
Camogie Achievements: 1 U14 Championship, 4 Minor Championship, 1 Minor League, 1 Junior League, 1 Junior Championship, 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 18 Name: Ciara McCarthy
Age: 20 Club: Ballycran Occupation: Student @ BIFHE
Camogie Achievements: U12, 14 & 16, Junior & Intermediate League and Championships with Ballycran

No. 19 Name: Brenda Gallagher
Age: 23 Club: Liatroim Fontenoy Occupation: Aeronautical Engineer
Camogie Achievements: 1 Ulster Junior Championship 2004, 1 All-Ireland 7's, 4 Ulster Club Championships, 10 County League and Championships

No. 20 Name: Angeline Fearon
Age: 23 Club: Attical Occupation: Student @ UUJ
Camogie Achievements: 1 All-Ireland Intermediate Championship, 1 National Junior League, 2 Ulster Senior Championships, 2 Maguire Cup, 1 Ulster Minor League, 1 Purcell Cup, 1 Down Intermediate League and Championship, 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 21 Name: Mary Gilmore
Age: 19 Club: Ballycran Occupation: Student @ Bangor College
Camogie Achievements: U12, 14 & 16, Junior League and Championships with Ballycran

No. 22 Name: Katrina Fegan
Age: 34 Club: Warrenpoint Occupation: Nursery Nurse
Camogie Achievements: 2 Junior League and Championship with Warrenpoint and playing for Ulster this year, 1 Ulster Junior Championship

No. 23 Name: Colleen Grant
Age: 18 Club: Kilcoo Occupation: Student @ Newry & Kilkeel Institute
Camogie Achievements: 1 Ulster Junior Championship 2004

No. 24 Name: Pauline Trainor
Age: 19 Club: Longstone Occupation: Student @ St. Malachy's HS Castletwellan
Camogie Achievements: 1 Ulster Minor 'B', 1 Ulster Junior Championship 2004

Cluichí Ceannais na hÉireann sa Chamógaíocht

An Dúin

Dearg agus Dubh

1
Teresa McGowan
Treasa Nig Gabhainn
O'Donovan Rossa

aeilge

2
Clare McGovern
Clár Nig Shamhrain
Liatroim Fontenoy

3
Moya Maginn
Máire Nig Fhionn
Clonduff

4
Anne Morgan
Áine Ní Mhuireagáin
Liatroim Fontenoy

5
Deborah Kelland
Gobnait Ní Cheallainn
Ballyholland

6
Pauline Green
Póilin Ní Uaine
Drumaness

7
Karen Murray
Cearán Ní Mhuiri
Portaferry

8
Jennifer Braniff Captaen
Sinéad Ní Bhранаibh
Ballycran

9
Lisa McCrickard
Laoise Nic Riocaird
Liatroim Fontenoy

10
Fiona Duff
Fiona Ní Dhubh
Portaferry

11
Mairin McAleenan
Máirín Nic Giolla Fhinnéin
Liatroim Fontenoy

12
Catherine McGourty
Cáitríona Nig Rabhartaigh
Ballycran

13
Fionnuala Carr
Fionnuala Ní Cheara
Clonduff

14
Cathy Mulholland
Cáit Ní Mhaolcholmain
Ballyholland

15
Karen Gribben
Karen Ní Ghribín
Clonduff

IONADAITHE:

16 **Orla Maginn**
Orla Nig Fhionn
Clonduff

17 **Mary McPolin**
Máire Ní Phólin
Clonduff

18 **Ciara McCarthy**
Ciara Nic Carthaigh
Ballycran

19 **Brenda Gallagher**
Brenda
Ní Ghallachoir
Liatroim Fontenoy

20 **Angeline Fearon**
Ainghn Ní Fhearáin
Attical

21 **Mary Gilmore**
Máire
Nic Giolla Mhoire
Ballycran

22 **Katrina Fegan**
Cáitríona
Ní Fheagáin
Warrenpoint

23 **Colleen Grant**
Colleen Grant
Kilcoo

24 **Pauline Trainor**
Póilin Ní Tréan Fhír
Longstone

Sóisir Chorcaí



Valerie O'Keefe
Captain

No. 6 Name: Amanda O'Regan (Amanda Ní Riagáin)

Occupation: U.L. Student
Club: Douglas
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Minor Championship, 1 Junior National League, Provincial: 1 Junior National League, 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Under 18 Championship, 1 Munster Minor Championship; Colleges: Ashbourne Cup medal

No. 7 Name: Mairéad Holland (Mairéad Ní Uallacháin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Ballinhassig
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Munster Under 18 Championship; County: Senior Championship, Junior Championship

No. 8 Name: Valerie O'Sullivan (Valerie Ní Shuilleabháin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Fr. O'Neills
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Junior Championship; Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship; County: Senior Championship; Colleges: Purcell Cup

No. 9 Name: Valerie O'Keefe, Captaen (Valerie Ní Chaoimh)

Occupation: Garda
Club: Kilbrittain-Timoleague
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Under 18; County: Senior Championship

No. 10 Name: Marie O'Connell (Máire Ní Chonaill)

Occupation: Engineer
Club: Inniscarra
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Intermediate Championship, 1 Junior Championship, 1 Minor Championship; Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Minor Championship; County: Junior Championship

No. 11 Name: Sarah O'Donovan (Sórcha Ní Dhonnabháin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Ballygarvan
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Intermediate Championship, 1 Junior Championship; Provincial: 1 Munster Minor Championship; County: Senior Championship

No. 12 Name: Elizabeth Bulger (Éilís Bulger)

Occupation: Trainee Garda
Club: Valley Rovers
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Minor Championship, 1 Junior Championship, 1 Munster Championship, 1 Junior National League; Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Under 18 Championship; County: Senior Championship, Under 16 Championship

No. 13 Name: Eimear O'Farrell (Eimear Ní Fhearail)

Occupation: Student
Club: Sarsfields
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: Junior National League; Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Minor Championship; Colleges: Purcell Cup Medal

No. 14 Name: Miriam Deasy (Miriam Ní an Déisigh)

Occupation: Sports Officer
Club: Kilbrittain-Timoleague
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Senior Championship; Provincial: 1 Munster Senior Championship; County: Senior Championship, Under 18 Championship, Junior Championship; Colleges: Coach to CIT Purcell Cup winners

No. 15 Name: Miriam Jagoe (Muireann Iagó)

Occupation: Student
Club: Tracton
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: Gael Linn Championship, 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship; County: Senior Championship

No. 16 Name: Gillian Harrington (Gillian Ní Arrachtáin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Valley Rovers
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Munster Junior Championship; County: Minor Championship; Colleges: Munster Championship

No. 17 Name: Michelle Hegarty (Michelle Ní Éigearthaigh)

Occupation: Student
Club: Glen Rovers
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Minor Championship; Provincial: 1 Under 18 Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship, 1 Munster Minor Championship; Colleges: Munster Championship

No. 18 Name: Janice Duffy (Janice Ní Dhubhthaigh)

Occupation: Student
Club: St. Finbarrs
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Munster Intermediate Championship, 1 Munster Junior Championship; County: Senior Championship; Colleges: All-Ireland Colleges league

No. 19 Name: Kim Hickey (Kim Ní Íci)

Occupation: Radiation Therapist
Club: Newtownshandrum
Comogie Achievements: County: Senior Championship in Cork and Limerick; Colleges: All-Ireland Colleges honours

No. 20 Name: Geraldine Collins (Gearóidín Ní Choileáin)

Occupation: Sports Sales Assistant
Club: Barryroe
Comogie Achievements: Ireland: Minor Championship, Junior National League; Provincial: Munster Junior & Intermediate Championship; County: Senior, Under 16, 18 Championship; Colleges: All-Ireland Colleges honours

No. 21 Name: Mary Coleman (Máire Ní Cholmáin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Ballyhea
Comogie Achievements: Ireland: Minor Championship; Provincial: Munster Intermediate Championship, Munster Junior Championship, Munster Minor Championship; County: Underage Championship

No. 22 Name: Lucy Hawkes (Laoiseach Ní Earcháin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Valley Rovers
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: All-Ireland and Munster Colleges medals; Provincial: Munster Intermediate, Junior and Under 18 Championship; County: Senior Championship in Cork and Limerick

No. 23 Name: Mary Buckley (Máire Ní Bhuachalla)

Occupation: Student
Club: Aghabullogue
Comogie Achievements: Provincial: Munster Under 18 Championship; County: Senior Championship; Colleges: All-Ireland and Munster Colleges honours

No. 24 Name: Hazel O'Regan (Hazel Ní Riagáin)

Occupation: Student
Club: Clonakilty
Comogie Achievements: All-Ireland: Minor Championship, County Under 16 Championship; Colleges: All-Ireland and Munster Colleges honours



Cluichí Ceannais na hÉireann sa Chamógaíocht

Corcaigh

(Dearg agus Bán)

1
Ellen Clifford
Eibhlín Ní Chlúmháin
St. Finbarr's

Foras

2
Gearóidín Kearney
Gearóidín Ní Chearnaigh
Fr. O'Neill's

3
Elaine O'Riordan
Leán Ní Riordáin
Milford

4
Niamh Goulding
Niamh Ní Ghóilín
Glen Rovers

5
Jennifer Browne
Sinéad de Brún
Ballygarvan

6
Amanda O'Regan
Amanda Ní Riagáin
Douglas

7
Mairéad Holland
Mairéad Ní Uallacháin
Ballinhassig

8
Valerie O'Sullivan
Valerie Ní Shuilleabháin
Fr. O'Neill's

9
Valerie O'Keefe Captaen
Valerie Ní Chaoimh
Kilbrittain-Timoleague

10
Marie O'Connell
Máire Ní Chonaill
Inniscarra

11
Sarah O'Donovan
Sórcha Ní Dhonnabháin
Ballygarvan

12
Elizabeth Bugler
Éilís Ní Bholguir
Valley Rovers

13
Eimear O'Farrell
Eimear Ní Fhearail
Sarsfields

14
Miriam Deasy
Miriam Ní an Déisigh
Kilbrittain-Timoleague

15
Marian Jagoe
Muireann Iagó
Tracton

IONADAITHE:

16 Gillian Harrington
Gillian Ní Arrachtáin
Valley Rovers

17 Michelle Hegarty
Michelle Ní Éigearthaigh
Glen Rovers

18 Janice Duffy
Janice Ní Dhubhthaigh
St. Finbarr's

19 Kim Hickey
Kim Ní Íci
Newtownshandrum

20 Geraldine Collins
Gearóidín Ní Choileáin
Barryroe

21 Mary Coleman
Máire Ní Cholmáin
Ballyhea

22 Lucy Hawkes
Laoiseach Ní Eacháin
Valley Rovers

23 Mary Buckley
Máire Ní Bhuachalla
Aghabullogue

24 Hazel O'Regan
Hazel Ní Riagáin
Clonakilty



Cluichi Ceannais na hÉireann sa Chamógaíocht



Corcaigh

(Dearg agus Bán)

1
Aoife Murray
Aoife Ní Mhuirí
Cloughduv

2
Joanne O'Callaghan
Siobhán Ní Cheallacháin
Cloughduv

5
Paula O'Connor
Paula Ní Chonchúir
Newtownshandrum

8
Vivienne Harris
Béibhíonn Ní Earchaí
Bishopstown

10
Rachel Moloney
Rachel Ní Mhaolomhnaigh
Courcey Rovers

13
Úna O'Donoghue
Úna Ní Dhonnchú
Cloughduv

3
Stephanie Dunlea Captaen
Stiofáinín Ní Dhoinnlé
Cloughduv

6
Mary O'Connor
Máire Ní Chonchúir
Killeagh

11
Emer Dillon
Eimear Dhiollún
Ballygarvan

14
Emer Watson
Eimear Nic Uait
Milford

4
Rosarie Holland
Róis Ní Uallacháin
Barryroe

7
Rena Buckley
Riona Ní Bhuachalla
Inniscarra

9
Gemma O'Connor
Gemma Ní Chonchúir
Naomh Fionnbharr

12
Jennifer O'Leary
Sinéad Ní Laoire
Barryroe

15
Colette Desmond
Collette Ní Dheasúnaigh
Newcestown

Forasaeilge

Tiobraid Árann

(Gorm agus Órga)

1
Jovita Delaney
Jovita Ní Dhubhshláine
Cashel

2
Suzanne Kelly
Siobhán Ní Cheallaigh
Toomevara

5
Sinead Nealon
Sinéad Ní Nialláin
Burgess

8
Angie McDermott
Aingeal Nic Diarmada
Annacarty

10
Noelle Kennedy
Noelle Ní Chinnéide
Toomevara

13
Eimear McDonnell
Eimear Nic Domhnaill
Burgess

3
Una O'Dwyer
Úna Ní Dhuibhir
Cashel

6
Ciara Gaynor
Ciara Nig Fhionnbhair
Kilruane McDonagh

9
Philly Fogarty
Filimíne Ní Fhógartaigh
Cashel

11
Joanne Ryan Captaen
Siobhán Ní Riain
Drom-Inch

14
Deirdre Hughes
Deirdre Nic Aodha
Toomevara

4
Julie Kirwan
Sile Ní Chiarubháin
Moneygall

7
Therese Brophy
Treasa Ní Bhróithe
Burgess

9
Philly Fogarty
Filimíne Ní Fhógartaigh
Cashel

12
Claire Grogan
Clár Ní Ghruagáin
Cashel

15
Jill Horan
Jill Ní hÓráin
Clonoulty/Rossmore

IONADAITHE:

16 Meadbh
Corcoran
Meadbh
Ní Chorcóirín
Moycarkey/Borris

17 Louise Young
Laoighse de Siun
Toomevara

18 Tricia O'Halloran
Pádraigin Ní Allóirín
Portroe

19 Paula Bulfin
Paula Bhuihlín
Cashel

20 Geraldine Kinane
Geróidin
Ní Choinneáin
Drom-Inch

21 Emily Hayden
Eimile Ní Eideáin
Cashel

22 Helen Breen
Léan Ní Bhraoín
Cashel

23 Deirdre
McDonnell
Deirdre
Nic Domhnaill
Burgess

24 Joanne Nolan
Siobhán Ní Nualláin
Silvermines

25 Eimear Ryan
Eimear Ní Riain
Moneygall



Sinsir Thiobraid Ára Player Profiles



Number: 1
Name: JOVITA DELANEY
Jovita Ni Dhubhláine
Age: 30
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Teacher
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 2 Club Championship. County: 9 Senior Championship; Under 12, Under 14 & Under 16



Number: 2
Name: SUZANNE KELLY
Siobhán Ni Cheallaigh
Age: 27
Club: Toomevara
Occupation: Teacher
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 1 Minor Championship; 2 Senior Championship; 1 Senior Club. Colleges: 1 Purcell Cup; 1 Ashbourne Shield



Number: 3
Name: UNA O'DWYER
Una Ni Dhuibhir
Age: 22
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Food technologist
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship; 2 Club Championship; 2 Under 18 Championship. Colleges: 2 Ashbourne Championship. County: 5 Senior Championship; Under 12, 14, and 16



Number: 4
Name: JULIE KIRWAN
Síle Ni Chiarbháin
Age: 17
Club: Moneygall
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: Club: 1 Junior Championship; 1 Minor Championship; 3 Underage Championship. Colleges: 3 Munster Championship; 2 County Championships



No. 5
Name:
PAULA O'CONNOR
Age: 22
Club: Newtownshandrum
Occupation: Student in CIT
Camogie Achievements: 1 Senior All Ireland, National League, Gael Linn



No. 6
Name:
MARY O'CONNOR
Age: 27
Club: Killeagh
Occupation: GAA Development Officer
Camogie Achievements: 3 All Ireland Senior; 7 National League; 7 Munster Senior; 1 Munster Junior; 1 Munster Minor; All Ireland Club with Granagh Ballingarry



No. 7
Name:
RENA BUCKLEY
Age: 17
Club: Inniscarra
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: 1 Munster Intermediate; 2 All Ireland Minor; 2 Munster Minor; 2 Senior County Championship



No. 8
Name:
VIVIENNE HARRIS
Age: 25
Club: Bishopstown
Occupation: Quality Assurance Officer
Camogie Achievements: 4 All Ireland Senior; 5 Munster Senior; All Ireland Féile na nGael Skills Winner



Number: 9
Name: PHILLY FOGARTY
Philomena Ni Fhógartaigh
Age: 21
Occupation: Student
Club: Cashel
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship; 1 Junior Championship. County: 6 Senior Championship; Under 12, 14, 16



Number: 10
Name: NOELLE KENNEDY
Nollaig Ni Chinnéide
Age: 29
Occupation: I.T. Technician
Club: Toomevara
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Championship; 1 Munster Club Championship. County: 7 Senior Championship; Under 12, 14, 16



Number: 11
Name: JOANNE RYAN
Captaen
Siobhán Ni Riain
Age: 21
Club: Drom/Inch
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 3 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Championship. County: 1 Senior Championship; Under 10, 12, 14, 16, 18



Number: 12
Name:
CLARA G
Age: 18
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 3 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Minor Championship. County: 1 Championship; Under 10, 12, 14, 16, 18



No. 12
Name:
JENNIFER O'LEARY
Age: 20
Club: Barryroe
Occupation: P.E. Student at U.L.
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland; 2 Munster Senior; 1 All Ireland Intermediate; 1 Munster Junior; 2 All Ireland Minor; 1 Ashbourne; 1 All Ireland Colleges



No. 13
Name:
UNA O'DONOGHUE
Age: 22
Club: Cloughduv
Occupation: Lab technician
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Senior; 1 Munster Intermediate; 1 Munster Minor; Ashbourne Cup and League



No. 14
Name:
EMER WATSON
Age: 18
Club: Milford
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Intermediate; 2 All Ireland Minor; 2 Munster Minor; 8 Munster and 8 All Ireland Colleges



No. 15
Name:
COLETTE DESMOND
Age: 21
Club: Newcestown
Occupation: UCC Student in Biochemistry
Camogie Achievements: 1 Senior All Ireland; 1 National League; 1 All Ireland Intermediate; 1 All Ireland Junior; 1 Munster Junior; 1 All Ireland Minor

Name:
MEADBH CORCORAN
Meabh Ni Chorcórain
Age: 25
Club: Moycarkey-Borris
Occupation: Accountant
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Senior Championship. Provincial: 1 Senior Munster Championship; 1 Junior Munster Championship. County: Under 12, 14; 1 Junior Club Championship

Number: 17
Name: LOUISE YOUNG
Louise de Siún
Age: 20
Club: Toomevara
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Senior Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 1 Junior Championship. County: 1 Senior Championship; Under 14, 16

Number: 18
Name: TRISH O'HALLORAN
Pádraigín Ni Allúráin
Age: 20
Club: Portroe
Occupation: Student of Legal Studies
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Senior Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 1 Senior Championship; 1 Minor Championship. County: 1 Junior Club Championship; Under 12, 14, 16

Number: 19
Name: PAULA BULFIN
Paula Bhuilfin
Age: 29
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Teacher
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 3 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Senior Club Championship; 1 Munster Minor Championship; 1 Under 18 Championship. County: 6 Senior Club Championship; Under 12, 14, 16, 18

Number: 20
Name:
GERALDINE KINANE
Gearóidín Ni Choinneáin
Age: 19
Club: Drom/Inch
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Junior Championship. County: 1 Junior Championship; Under 12, 14

No. 21
Name:
LYNDA O'CONNELL
Age: 23
Club: Naomh Fhionnbharr
Occupation: Accountant
Honours: 1 Junior All Ireland; 1 Intermediate All Ireland; 1 Munster junior; 1 Munster intermediate

No. 22
Name:
REGINA CURTIN
Age: 20
Club: Milford
Occupation: Student
Honours: 1 Intermediate All Ireland

No. 23
Name:
CIARA HEALY
Age: 22
Club: Bishopstown
Occupation: Graduate
Honours: National League; 1 All Ireland intermediate; 1 All Ireland Minor; 1 Munster minor

No. 24
Name:
BREIGE CORKERY
Age: 17
Club: Cloughduv
Occupation: Student
Honours: 2 All Ireland minor; 2 Munster minor

Sinsir Chorcaí -nn - Player Profiles



No. 1
Name:
AOIFE MURRAY
Age: 20
Club: Cloughduv
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: 2 All Ireland Senior, 1 All Ireland Intermediate, 1 All Ireland Junior, 2 All Ireland Minor, 1 Munster Senior, 1 Munster Intermediate, 1 Munster Junior, 2 Munster Minor.



No. 2
Name:
JOANNE O'CALLAGHAN
Age: 21
Club: Cloughduv
Occupation: Student
Honours: 2 All Ireland Senior, 1 Munster Senior, 1 National League, 1 Munster Junior, 1 All Ireland Intermediate, 2 All Ireland Minor, 2 Munster Minor, 2 Ashbourne Cup



No. 3
Name:
STEPHANIE DUNLEA
(Captain)
Age: 29
Club: Cloughduv
Occupation: Production Supervisor
Camogie Achievements: 5 Senior All Irelands, 7 National League, 4 Munster Senior, 3 Munster U18, 1 Ashbourne Cup, 1 Purcell Cup
Stephanie captains the side for the second year in a row. She captained the side to National League honours in 2003 and has also captained her club to championship honours. She comes from a strong Gaelic games background. She is a grandniece of Kate Dunlea, the first captain to take Corn Uí Dhubhthaigh to Cork back in 1934. Her sister Lynn played for the Cork camogie team, her brother Pat lined out for Cork junior footballers, while her mother Nuala and father John also wore the Cork colours.



No. 4
Name:
ROSARIE HOLLAND
Age: 22
Club: Barryroe
Occupation: Graduate in Com Science
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Senior, 2 All Ireland Minor, 2 Munster Minor, 2 Ashbourne Cup and League



Number: 5
Name: **SINEAD NEALON**
Sinead Ní Nialláin
Age: 30
Club: Burgess
Occupation: Project HR Manager
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Minor Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Minor Championship; 1 Munster Junior Championship; 2 Munster Senior Championship
Colleges: 1 Ashbourne Cup - W.I.T.



Number: 6
Name: **CIARA GAYNOR**
Ciara Ní Fhionnbhairr
Age: 25
Occupation: Garda
Club: Kilruane Mac Donaghs
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 2 Minor Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship. County: 1 Junior Championship



Number: 7
Name: **THERESE BROPHY**
Treasa Ní Bhróithe
Age: 27
Occupation: Teacher
Club: Burgess
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Senior Championship; 1 Munster Minor Championship. County: 1 Senior Club League; 1 Intermediate Club Championship. Other: 1 Féile na nGael; 1 Pan Cheilteach



Number: 8
Name: **ANGIE McDERMOTT**
Aingel Ní Dhiarmada
Age: 27
Club: Annacarthy-Donohill
Occupation: Accountant
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship. County: 1 Junior Club Championship; Under 12, 14



No. 9
Name:
GEMMA O'CONNOR
Age: 19
Club: Naomh Fhionnbharr
Occupation: Army trainee
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Senior, 1 National League, 1 Munster Senior, 1 Munster Intermediate, 2 All Ireland Minor, 2 Provincial Minor, 1 Munster Colleges



No. 10
Name:
RACHEL MOLONEY
Age: 22
Club: Courcey Rovers
Occupation: UCC Student of Nutritional Science
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Senior, 1 Munster Senior, 1 All Ireland Intermediate, 1 Munster Intermediate, 1 All Ireland Minor, 2 Munster Minor



No. 11
Name:
EMER DILLON
Age: 20
Club: Ballygarvan
Occupation: UCC Student of Pharmacy
Camogie Achievements: 1 All Ireland Senior, 1 All Ireland Intermediate, 2 All Ireland Minor, 2 Munster Minor



er: 12
Name: **EIMEAR MCDONNELL**
Eimear Ní Dhomhnaill
Age: 23
Club: Burgess
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 3 Senior Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship. Club: Under 12, 14, 16. Colleges: 1 All-Ireland Senior Championship



Number: 14
Name: **DEIRDRE HUGHES**
Deirdre Ní Aodha
Age: 30
Club: Toomevara
Occupation: Sales assistant
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 3 Senior Championship; 3 Junior Championship; 1 Munster Club Championship. County: 8 Senior Club Championship; Under 14, 16, 18



Number: 15
Name: **JILL HORAN**
Jill Ní hOráin
Age: 19
Club: Clonoulty/Rossmore
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: Provincial: 1 Minor Championship. County: 1 Intermediate Club Championship
Number: 16

No. 16
Name:
GERALDINE CASEY
Age: 23
Club: Inniscarra
Honours: 1 Junior championship, 1 senior championship, 1 munster junior, 1 Munster senior, 3 Ashbourne

No. 17
Name:
ELAINE BURKE
Age: 23
Club: Valley Rovers
Occupation: Solicitor
Honours: 1 Junior All Ireland, 1 Senior All Ireland

No. 18
Name:
ANNA GEARY
Age: 17
Club: Millford
Occupation: Student
Honours: 10 All Ireland Colleges

No. 19
Name:
SILE BURNS
Age: 18
Club: Rockban
Occupation: Student
Honours: 1 All Ireland minor, 1 Munster minor, 1 Munster junior, 1 Munster intermediate, U14 Colleges All Ireland

Number: 21
Name: **EMILY HAYDEN**
Eimile Ní Eideáin
Age: 24
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Sports Rehabilitator
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 4 Senior Championship; 1 Intermediate Championship; 1 Minor Championship. Provincial: 2 Senior Championship; 4 Minor Championship; 4 Munster Senior Club Championship. County: 6 Senior Club; Under 12, 14, 16

Number: 22
Name: **HELEN BREEN**
Leán Ní Bhraoin
Age: 19
Club: Cashel
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: 1 Senior Championship; 1 Junior Championship. Provincial: 2 Munster Senior Club Championship; 1 Munster Junior Championship. County: 2 Senior Club Championship Under 12, 14, 16

Number: 23
Name: **DEIRDRE MCDONNELL**
Deirdre Ní Dhomhnaill
Age: 23
Club: Burgess
Occupation: Civil Engineer
Camogie Achievements: All-Ireland: Junior Championship. Provincial: 1 Munster Junior Championship; 1 Munster Minor Championship; 1 Under 18 Championship; 1 Junior Gael Linn. County: 1 Under 16 Club Championship. Colleges: 1 Munster Senior Championship; 1

Number: 24
Name: **JOANNE NOLAN**
Siobhán Ní Nualláin
Age: 17
Club: Silvermines
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: County: Under 12, 14; Over 18. Colleges: 1 Senior All-Ireland Championship; 1 Junior Munster Championship

Number: 25
Name: **EIMEAR RYAN**
Eimear Ní Riain
Age: 17
Club: Moneygall
Occupation: Student
Camogie Achievements: County: 1 Junior; 1 Minor; 1 Underage

Champions build on their legend



Tom Humphries
At Croke Park

Tipperary 2-11
Cork 0-9

A final gilded by the sport's centenary celebrations didn't quite live up to its exalted billing but Tipperary, annexing the O'Duffy Cup for the fifth time in six years, will hardly care. Slowly, steadily, they crushed a game Cork side, establishing themselves in the process as not just the pre-eminent side of the era but one of the greatest the game has seen.

For periods early on it looked as if Cork might contrive a way of winning. Gemma O'Connor's striking from midfield was at once superb and perceptive but Cork foundered again and again on Tipp's full-back line.

The cold statistics tell the story. Cork scored just four times from play, and only one of those points was contributed by the full-forward line. By the end, two-thirds of that line had been replaced.

Tipperary had heroes right across the back but through the hour Una O'Dwyer in the number three shirt glinted like granite.

She pulled down high balls, blocked, hooked and flicked, stuck like velcro to her marker and



gave an exhibition of defensive skills. O'Dwyer alone was enough to break Cork hearts.

Tipp of course had more in their quiver. Their vaunted full-forward line carried sufficient threat for Cork to switch Stephanie Dunlea to duty on the edge of the square. It almost worked but Deirdre Hughes still plundered a goal and Rosalie Holland in the left corner looked uncomfortable throughout.

Cork had the better of the early business with Emer Dillon stealing the first of two scores from Ciara Gaynor but on 10 minutes with Cork leading by the odd point in three Tipp flexed themselves for the first time.

Hughes had the ball in her hand in the square and was moving at pace when a hand on her back from Holland tipped her to the ground. Eimear McDonnell's penalty was saved by Aoife Murray in the Cork goal but already there was a sense that the reprieve would be brief.

Claire Grogan equalised some minutes later with a point from a free, to complement what was a flawless first-half exhibition of free-taking.

Then the game heated up a little. Noelle Kennedy drew another good save from Murray while at the other end Una O'Donoghue had an opportunistic snap shot blocked by Joviate Delaney. Something was going to give.

Dillon enjoyed the last bit of latitude permitted her by Gaynor to put Cork back ahead but then disaster struck. As a high Tipp ball dropped in on Murray in the Cork goal she came out confidently but collided with Holland. On hand was the vulture-like Hughes. A lift, a look and bang!

That Tipp goal established a pattern which would last till the end of the game. Grogan added a couple more frees and McDonnell scored the first of a couple of fine points. Cork had a point in reply.

Tipp led by five points going in for the tea and Cork didn't look to have enough strength to do anything about it.

They tried though. They tried. Two O'Leary frees gave them hope before Grogan swatted them away with perhaps the point of the game from a breaking ball wide on the right.

Tipp's second goal arrived in the 47th minute and ended all arguments as

Tipperary captain Joanne Ryan lifts the O'Duffy Cup.



Tipperary's Angie McDermott tries to block Jennifer O'Leary of Cork in yesterday's All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park. - (Photograph: Bryan O'Brien)

quickly as a judge's gavel. McDonnell contested a ground ball in the square with Holland. McDonnell's pull squirted out into the path of Joanne Ryan, who burst down the right side and drove home low and confidently.

From there on it was processional. Grogan's free-taking radar, momentarily on the blink earlier in the half, was restored to full power and McDonnell gave us a quick reminder of why she was player of the year last year when she scooped her hand down to take a ball flying fast at ankle height and then turned, skinned her marker and popped the point on the run.

For Cork it was a frustrating

afternoon. They won parity in the middle third of the field only to find themselves blunted at one end and cut open by razor slashes at the other.

Tipp roll on. The closing pack will have watched and wondered if this isn't a never-ending story.

TIPPERARY: J. Delaney; S. Kelly; U. O'Dwyer; J. Kiernan; S. Nealon; C. Gaynor; T. Brophy; A. McDonnell; P. Fogarty; N. Kennedy; J. Ryan (1-0); C. Grogan (0-3, 7 frees); E. McDonnell (0-2); D. Hughes (1-0); J. Horan. Subs: P. Burtin for P. Fogarty (55 mins); G. Kinane for J. Horan (59 mins); E. Hayden for D. Hughes (59 mins).

CORK: A. Murray; J. O'Callaghan; S. Dunlea; R. Holland; P. O'Connor; M. O'Connor; R. Buckley; V. Harris; G. O'Connor (0-2, one free); H. Moloney; E. Dillon (0-2); J. O'Leary (0-4 all frees); U. O'Donoghue (0-1); E. Watson; C. Desmond. Subs: E. Burke for E. Watson (36 mins); A. Geary for C. Desmond (41 mins). Referee: U. Ni Chearnail (Armagh).

Cork knuckle down

Cork 4-5
Down 2-4

CIAN Ó RAGHALLAIGH

Those present will hardly have seen a more enthralling first half of camogie this year. Down hassled and harried. Full forward Cathy Mulholland answered Muireann Iago's fourth-minute goal. Mairin McAleenan pierced the Rebels' defence a second time. Cork knuckled down. Eimear O'Farrell and Elizabeth Bugler found the net and Cork

took a 3-3 to 2-4 half-time lead. All to play for.

However, Down failed to score in the next 30 minutes. Even though Cork failed to score a point from play in the entire game, a second Bugler goal and two more Valerie O'Keeffe points from dead ball helped the southern side pull away.

At the other end, fine clearances from centre back Amanda O'Regan thwarted Down's best efforts. Afterwards O'Keeffe admitted there was concern in the camp at half-time when Down looked dangerous. "I suppose midway through the first

half it was a bit worrying because they got two very easy goals.

"Down had a few chances and we managed to clear the ball off our lines."

CORK: E. Clifford; G. Kearney; E. O'Riordan; N. Goulding; J. Browne; A. O'Regan; M. Holland; V. O'Sullivan; V. O'Keeffe (capt, 0-5, three 45s, two frees); M. O'Connell; S. O'Donovan; E. Bugler (2-0); E. O'Farrell (1-0); M. Duddy; M. Iago (1-0). Subs: M. Hegarty for Goulding (26 mins); J. Duffy for Bugler (52 mins); G. Collins for O'Donovan (64 mins).

DOWN: T. McGowan; C. McGovern; M. Maginn; A. Morgan; D. Keilland; P. Green; K. Murray; J. Braniff (capt); L. McCrickard; F. Duff; M. McAleenan (1-1); C. McGourty (0-2, one free); F. Carr; C. Mulholland (1-0); K. Gribben (0-1). Subs: O. Maginn for Morgan (30 mins); B. Gallagher for Duff (49 mins); M. McPolin for Gribben (60 mins); A. Fearon for Mulholland (63 mins). Referee: A. Lawlor (Westmeath).



Tipperary captain Joanne Ryan jumps for joy with Ciara Gaynor and Julie Kirwan at the final whistle in the All-Ireland camogie final at Croke Park.

Picture: Dan Linehan

Centenary joy for Tipp

Tipperary



2-11

Jim O'Sullivan, Croke Park

Cork



0-9

team could have no excuses for their failure on a day of special celebrations by the Camogie Association marking their centenary.

The contest was defined by Hughes' opportunist goal and the game never changed direction after it.

The game had been vigorously contested in the opening quarter, during which scores were level three times.

Tipperary were denied a goal when Emer McDonnell's ninth minute penalty was stopped by Cork 'keeper Aoife Murray and they were grateful for Claire Grogan's accuracy from frees.

It was noteworthy that in close-in play Cork captain Stephanie Dunlea was coping well with the challenge from Hughes, but the Toomevara girl availed of a mix-up in the Cork defence to score into an empty net 11 minutes before the break.

Quickly followed by two pointed frees from Grogan, it gave Tipp an important psychological boost

and, more significantly, valuable breathing space on the scoreboard.

In contrast, Cork were regularly frustrated in their bid to get the ball in the net, despite the best efforts of Emer Dillon at centre-forward and Emer Watson inside.

Dillon faced another mighty challenge from the vastly experienced Ciara Gaynor, who was very influential all through – and probably the strongest challenger for the player-of-the-match award behind Una O'Dwyer. Yet, she still made some good breaks at different stages.

Cork were to benefit strongly from the determined play of Gemma O'Connor at midfield (before Vivienne Harris found her best form later) and both Rena Buckley and Paula O'Connor were prominent at left-half for a while.

But, for all the determined work of the forwards – and the free-taking ability of Jennifer O'Leary in particular – it was a

huge struggle to get on top. Half-time came with Tipp 1-6 to 0-4 in front and nothing had changed.

Nor was the course of the game to be altered appreciably over the course of the second half, even though Cork made a promising start with two quick points from O'Leary on the resumption.

When Joanne Ryan's persistent efforts were rewarded with a goal in the 43rd minute, Tipperary gained even more in confidence.

Effectively, it ensured their victory because while Cork fought bravely all the way to the finish, it was an uphill battle way because of their inability to penetrate in around the square.

They needed at least one goal to resurrect their challenge, but despite making several changes at full-forward – some strong runs by Emer Dillon and the efforts of Una O'Donoghue – they never looked like succeeding. And when Rachel Moloney failed to find the net from a 21 yards free, their fate

was sealed.

Tipp proved themselves worthy champions. Ciara Gaynor was outstanding, while Suzanne Kelly at right corner-back was another to shine. In truth, there wasn't a weak link in the team.

Referee Una Kearney was a bit too fussy at times and gave a couple of poor decisions, but overall handled the game well.

Scorers: Tipperary – C. Grogan 0-9 (0-7 frees); D. Hughes and J. Ryan 1-0 each; E. McDonnell 0-2.

Cork: J. O'Leary 0-5 (0-3 frees, 0-1 45); G. O'Connor 0-2 (0-1 free); E. Dillon and U. O'Donoghue 0-1 each.

TIPPERARY: J. Delaney; S. Kelly, U. O'Dwyer, J. Kirwan; S. Nealon, C. Gaynor, T. Brophy; A. McDermott, P. Fogarty; N. Kennedy, J. Ryan (capt.), C. Grogan; E. McDonnell, D. Hughes, J. Horan.

Subs: P. Bulfin for Fogarty (55th minute); E. Hayden for Hughes and G. Kinane for Horan (61st).

CORK: A. Murray; J. O'Callaghan, S. Dunlea (capt.), R. Holland; P. O'Connor, M. O'Connor, R. Buckley; V. Harris, G. O'Connor; R. Moloney, E. Dillon, J. O'Leary; U. O'Donoghue, E. Watson, C. Desmond.

Subs: E. Burke for Holland (36th minute); A. Geary for Desmond (41st).

Referee: U. Kearney (Armagh).

● Att: 24,567.



The Cork junior camogie players celebrate their All-Ireland title win yesterday in Croke Park.

Picture: Inpho

Deasy inspired junior champs

CORK junior camogie manager Lillian Zinkant today paid tribute to full-forward Miriam Deasy for the influential role she played in yesterday's All-Ireland triumph at Croke Park, writes JOHN HORGAN.

There were emotional scenes in the aftermath of Cork's 4-5 to 2-4 victory over Down at Croke Park.

Zinkant was fulsome in her praise for all the girls but had special mention for Deasy.

"Miriam, in particular, had a great game. She spoke to the players at half-time and there was no way she was coming off that field defeated."

Zinkant has three medals in this grade from her playing

days but ranks this achievement as matching those.

"This is up there with the medals I won playing. We lost to Kilkenny two years ago and that hurt deeply so I went out of my way to impress upon the girls that we did not want to experience that again."

Unfortunately, there was no double for the county with the seniors failing to stop Tipperary in the senior final.

● The teams will arrive home tonight at Kent Station, 7-50pm and will proceed by open top bus to the Metropole Hotel where a victory reception is planned.

SEE: Pages 2,3,4,6,7 in our sport supplement for more.

Bugler's two-goal blast blows Down away

Cork
Down

45
24

by Jim O'Sullivan

A POWERFUL defensive display deservedly earned Cork their seventh All-Ireland junior camogie title in Croke Park yesterday by holding a strong Down side scoreless in the second half.

Elizabeth Bugler's 37th minute goal gave them the perfect psychological boost and enabled them to sustain a strong challenge all the way to the final whistle.

Team captain Valerie O'Keeffe from the Kilbrittain-Timoleague club, admitted to a 'brilliant feeling' after having received the trophy from Association President Miriam O'Callaghan. "The girls never gave up and fair play to them, they kept going. We knew from Down's semi-final game that a quick start was vital for us and we managed that," she commented.

Team manager Lillian Zinkant agreed that their defence played a crucial role in the victory. Cork's seventh in the grade and their first in five years.

"Down were a very tough, physical team and they were running at us. But our half-back line batted down the hatches in the second half and went all out for it," she said.

"We held the line across the half-back line and there wasn't much went in."

"It was all about drive and spirit. There was no way they were coming off the field defeated."



Left: Cork's Sarah O'Donovan finds her way blocked by Down's Clare McGovern and Deborah Kelland during yesterday's All-Ireland junior camogie final at Croke Park. Above: Victorious Cork captain Valerie O'Sullivan lifts the cup.

Pictures: Dan Linehan and INPHO

Cork opened the scoring with a third minute point from a 45 by team captain Valerie O'Keeffe and it was followed soon afterwards by the first of their goals. It came from left corner-forward Marian Jagoe after the Down goalkeeper Teresa McGowan had brought off a good save from full-forward Miriam Deasy.

However, it didn't take Down long to settle. Full-forward Cathy Mulhol-

land came close to goaling in the seventh minute, but was in better luck as she did score three minutes later when she was unmarked to take a pass.

It quickly became apparent that Cork were up against tough opposition - in actuality a senior team - because by the 13th minute Down had forged ahead with another goal, this time from centre-forward Marian McAleenan. And, the manner in

which they were winning possession out around midfield and at half-back indicated their potential. The forwards, too, showed plenty of pace, with Mulholland and McAleenan linking up well.

However, Cork showed maturity in the way they came to terms with their situation, specifically by tightening up in defence. Here, goalkeeper Eileen Clifford's handling of the ball was out-

standing and full-back Elaine O'Riordan settled down to play a fine game after coming under pressure early on. And Cork again began to show promise in attack.

Valerie O'Keeffe, a tireless worker at midfield, put over two frees and they were level by the 16th minute with a goal from Eimear O'Farrell from a move involving Deasy and Jagoe.

Further improvement yielded an-

other goal from Elizabeth Bugler in the 25th minute, after both herself and Sarah O'Donovan had come close to putting the ball in the net just before it. At the break, it was 3-3 to 2-4 for Cork.

Bugler, from the Valley Rovers club, got a second goal in the 37th minute, after gaining possession from a sideline ball from O'Keeffe. When she pointed herself soon afterwards, Cork were two goals in front and looking good.

After that it was largely a question of their half-backs taking over, with Mairead Holland first to dominate on the left flank.

In time, Jennifer Browne took over at right-half and Amanda O'Regan controlled the play in the centre by her astute reading of the play.

Down were a little unfortunate with a few scoring chances and Cathy Mulholland might have had a goal, but with Eileen Clifford inspiring with her dependability in goal, Cork grew steadily in confidence to the stage where they were never going to lose.

Scorers: Cork - E. Bugler 2-0; V. O'Keeffe 0-5 (0-4 frees, 0-1 '45); E. O'Farrell and M. Jagoe 1-0 each.

Down: M. McAleenan 1-1; C. Mulholland 1-0; C. McGourty 0-2 (frees); K. Gribben 0-1.

Cork: E. Clifford; G. Kearney, E. O'Riordan, N. Goulding, J. Browne, A. O'Regan, M. Holland; V. O'Sullivan, V. O'Keeffe (capt.); M. O'Connell, S. O'Donovan, E. Bugler; E. O'Farrell, M. Deasy, M. Jagoe. Subs: M. Hegarty for Goulding (26th minute); J. Duffy for Bugler (51st); G. Collins for O'Donovan (64th).

Down: T. McGowan; C. McGovern, M. Maginn, A. Morgan, D. Kelland, P. Green, K. Murray, J. Braniff (capt.), L. McCrickard, F. Duff, M. McAleenan, C. McGourty; F. Carr, C. Mulholland, K. Gribben. Subs: D. Maginn for Morgan (36th); B. Gallagher for Duffy (49th); M. McPolin for Gribben (62nd); A. Fearon for Mulholland (63rd).

Referee: E. Lawlor (Westmeath).

Cork
dressing
room

Cork camp say Tipp's ability to get goals was the difference

by Jim O'Sullivan

THERE'S one thing you'd have to credit the Cork senior camogie team with in Croke Park yesterday. They were good losers, as gracious in defeat as the Kilkenny hurlers were the previous Sunday.

Manager John Conside readily acknowledged that Tipperary were the better team, conceding that the essential difference was the champions' ability to get goals. So did gallant team captain Stephanie Dunlea. Nobody was more upset by the outcome than the Cork captain.

Her disappointment was compounded by having to undergo a mandatory drugs test immediately after she came off the field.

In all, four girls - two from each side - had to subject themselves to a test that's even considered degrading for men.

Stephanie was understandably upset when she eventually made her way to the dressing-room, more than half-an-hour after the game had finished.

But she sportingly agreed to this interview, even after she was given the option of not talking.

"To be fair, the better team won on the day. But I'm very proud of everybody," she said after composing herself.

"We fought very well, but we just couldn't score. Goals win games and they got goals."

"They took their chances, but we couldn't seem to get past them."

The opening goal proved particularly important, she agreed, coming after a ball rebounded off goalkeeper Aoife Murray when she came off her line to meet it. "There were three or four of us around and she went around the side. Emer

McDonnell was in my way and I couldn't get around fast enough. It was just the way it fell. Deirdre Hughes always gets goals in a game. That was the only one she did get - but it was crucial for Tipperary. They got another in the second half and after that we were chasing the game."

John Conside felt that while his team was "slightly on top" at the start, possession-wise, they just couldn't get the scores.

"We never really played as well as we could play, we never really got going. But we were playing against a very good team."

"We had held out until they got their first goal. You are never going to keep a full-forward line like that scoreless. The second one came after a strange (refereeing) decision, let's say. But, to be honest, we never looked like getting goals and they did. Una O'Dwyer was outstanding at full-back."

"She didn't have one of her better games in the semi-finals but today she was just a colossus."

"We had four different players on her and she saw all of them off. She's an outstanding player."

"I thought we held their full-forward line well, except that we just couldn't seem to convert possession to scores. They had 1-6 by half-time and only one wide, whereas we had four wides."

Conside still felt that his team was still in the game at half-time, and was encouraged when they got the first two scores on the resumption. But after that, progress was minimal.

"We just couldn't go up a gear, up to a different level. There are a lot of young girls involved and that experience will stand to them in the long run."

Triumphant Tipp prove their class as Cork girls sent packing

TIPPERARY 2-11
CORK 0-9
All-Ireland Senior Camogie Final

TIPPERARY'S sensational women's of the moment wrote themselves into the history books yet again yesterday when beating arch-rivals Cork by a surprisingly large margin in the Centenary All-Ireland senior camogie final.

Not only will they be forever remembered for winning in this special anniversary year but equally for taking their fifth title in six consecutive final appearances, prompting goalscoring captain Joanne Ryan to justifiably quip that the O'Duffy Cup was "going home."

Whatever about hurling — and some Tipp fans were still dizzy from their U21 mortification a night earlier — someone should stick up a road-sign pronto to celebrate the fact that the Premier county is certainly the undisputed 'Home of Camogie' right now and all other contenders can only read Tipperary's statistics and weep.

Ten of this side were playing when they won their first senior in 1999. On that exact same day, six years ago, Claire Grogan was in Mosney, winning a Community Games medal with Templemore.

Yesterday the Cashel senior star was out before 24,567 fans in Croke Park, coolly walloping over seven frees from all angles and distances in her massive 0-9 All-Ireland final tally.

As she insisted afterwards that Tipp's backs were the real stars of the show, it was virtually impossible to believe that this composed wing-forward, who has just started



Cliona FOLEY

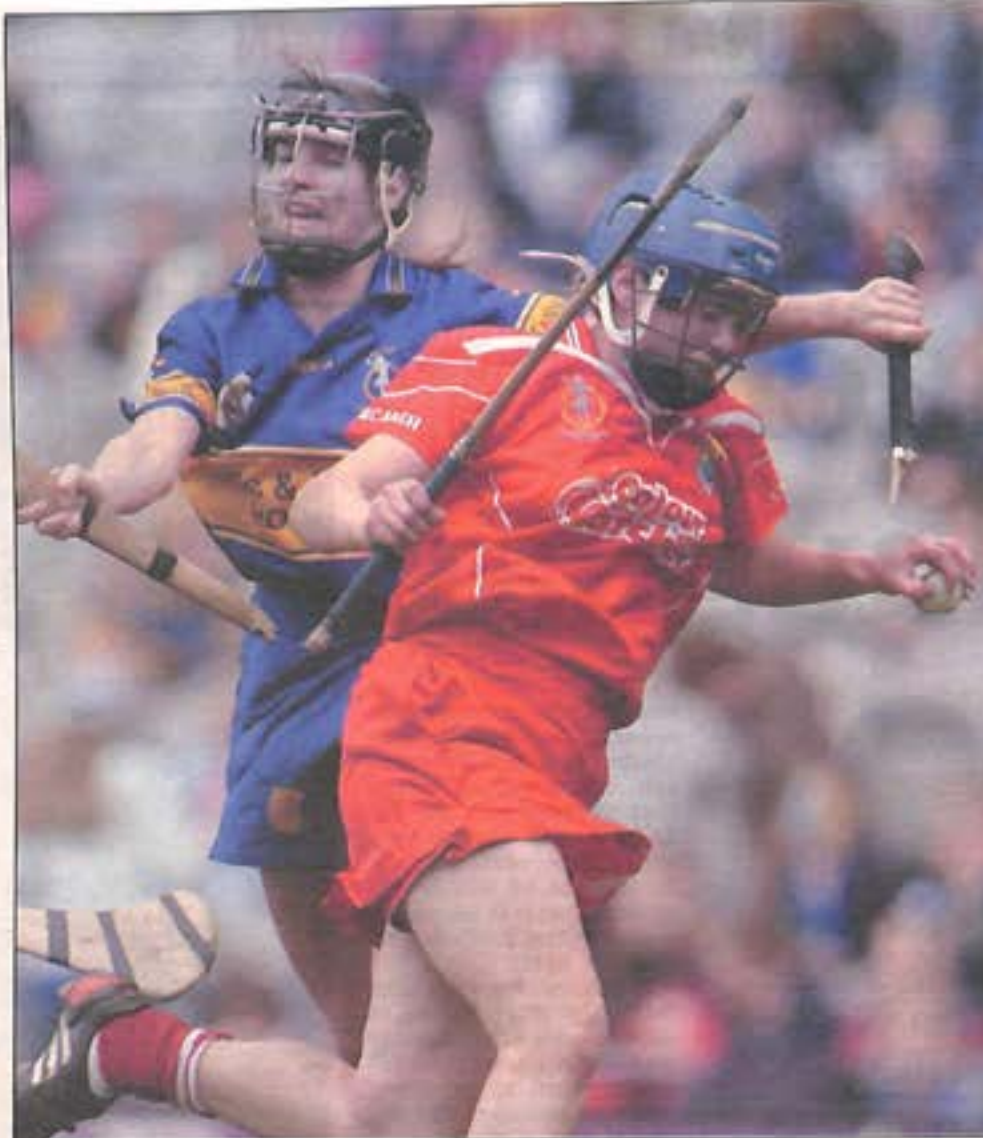
her primary school teaching studies in 'Mary I' in Limerick and wakes up this morning with a fourth All-Ireland senior medal under her belt, is just 18.

The scoreline was perhaps a little flattering because Cork actually pushed them possession-wise for long periods and scored as many points (five, though only one from play) as them in the second half.

The Rebelettes simply didn't have the forwards to penetrate their granite-like defence and at the other end Tipp got on top in the half-forward line and bagged those vital goals — one in each half — and could even afford to miss an early first-half penalty.

Early on it looked like Cork's women might just repeat their 2002 victory, particularly with Gemma O'Connor and Vivienne Harris dominating midfield and centre-forward Emer Dillon scoring 0-2 from play off Clara Gaynor.

When Cork's goalie Aoife Murray saved an Emer McDonnell penalty ten minutes after throw-in, things looked very promising indeed for a Cork double.



Tipperary's Clara Graynor snaps her hurl after colliding with Cork's Emer Dillon during yesterday's All-Ireland Camogie Final. Picture: Pat Murphy/Sportsfile

Ten minutes later the sides were level and Tipp had not yet scored from play. Then quicksilver Deirdre Hughes, the only current player who made the 'Team of the Century', pounced as only she can in a goalmouth and suddenly things looked very different.

On one of the few occasions in the match that Jill Horan got away from marker Joanne O'Callaghan to lay on a long ball to the square, Murray came off her line early to block it and when it spilled loose in a huddle, a hand grabbed it, defenders saw that terrifying flash of Hughes' trademark blue helmet and the net bulged.

Two frees from Grogan and a superb point from play from Emer McDonnell quickly gave Tipp a five-point (1-6 to 0-4) lead at half-time, turning to take the wind advantage.

Cork to their credit rallied again on the re-start and their topscorer Jennifer O'Leary (0-4) and Una

O'Donoghue combined to leave just three points between the sides after 42 minutes and their efforts to break down the implacable Tipp full-back line of Suzanne Kelly, Player of the Match Una O'Dwyer and Julie Kirwan, saw Elaine Burke and Anna Geary drafted in.

Cork's big problem was an inability to score from 40 or 50 yards out to open up the half-backs, something Tipperary did very effectively on the opposite 45m line.

Then came shades of déjà vu and last year's final when Cork were hit with a second goal; this time started by a clever flick from McDonnell to put captain Ryan through to finish after a brilliant solo.

With six points between them Cork had a huge mountain to climb in the final quarter and as Tipp's confidence grew it became insurmountable.

Grogan scored from both play and frees and McDonnell picked off her sec-

ond point to go nine points clear.

When Cork got a 20m free with six minutes left and opted to go low for the goal they needed the sliotar came flying back out at them with such haste and emphasis that they immediately knew their dreams of a 21st title celebration and a men's and women's double were well and truly ended.

PLAYER OF THE MATCH — Una O'Dwyer (Tipperary).
SCORERS — Tipperary: C. Grogan 0-9 (7/5), J. Ryan and D. Hughes 1-0 each, E. McDonnell 0-2. Cork: J. O'Leary 0-4 (3/5), E. Dillon 0-2, G. O'Connor 0-2 (1/1), U. O'Donoghue 0-1.

TIPPERARY — J. Delaney 9; S. Kelly 9, U. O'Dwyer 9, J. Kirwan 7; S. Neilson 7, C. Gaynor 7, T. Brophy 8; A. McDonnell 7, P. Fogarty 6; N. Kennedy 8, J. Ryan (Capt) 8, C. Grogan 8; E. McDonnell 7, D. Hughes 7, J. Horan 6. **Subs:** P. Bullin for Fogarty (57), G. Kinane for Horan (61), E. Hayden for Hughes (61).

CORK — A. Murray 7; J. O'Callaghan 8, S. Dunlea (Capt) 7, R. Holland 6; P. O'Connor 6, M. O'Connor 6, R. Buckley 6; V. Harris 8, G. O'Connor 9; R. Moloney 6, E. Dillon 7, J. O'Leary 7, U. O'Donoghue 7, E. Watson 5, C. Desmond 5. **Subs:** E. Burke for Watson (37 mins), A. Geary for Desmond (41).
REF — U. Kearney (Armagh).

JUNIOR FINAL Defence swings it for Cork

CORK 4-5
DOWN 2-4
Cliona Foley

CORK got some consolation for their senior defeat by winning their seventh All-Ireland junior camogie title in an excellent curtain-raiser in Croke Park yesterday.

Elizabeth Bugler scored two of their four goals, Valerie O'Keeffe's free-taking was excellent but their defence, which held Down scoreless for the entire second half, earned just as many plaudits.

It always looked like a goal-fest from early on, especially as both sides' left corner-backs were replaced by half-time because of the brilliance of Eimear O'Farrell (Cork) and Fionnuala Carr.

Down goalkeeper Teresa McGowan pulled off a great save in the third minute only to be beaten when Marian Jagoe goaled with the rebound.

Cathy Mulholland goaled for Down after seven minutes and Mairin McAlleenan added a second within minutes.

But when their 'keeper McGowan changed her mind about advancing early to clear a ball at the other end she was caught in no-man's land and Miriam Deasy put the excellent Farrell through.

The sides were still level in the 25th minute when, after a huge defensive scramble in the Down goalmouth, Sarah Donovan handpassed to Bugler for Cork's third goal and a two-point (3-3 to 2-4) half-time lead.

In the second half the Munster women shut up shop defensively, with Elaine O'Riordan and centre-back Amanda O'Regan especially outstanding.

Down's full-back line was so rattled by the likes of Miriam Deasy and Farrell that they dropped many of their best forwards back to cover which left them with few options upfront and O'Regan, especially, was allowed to operate as an unmarked sweeper.

PLAYER OF THE MATCH — Eimear O'Farrell (Cork).

SCORERS — Cork: E. Bugler 2-0, V. O'Keeffe 0-5 (2/5, 3/4), E. O'Farrell and M. Jagoe 1-0 each. **Down:** M. McAlleenan 1-1, C. Mulholland 1-0, C. McGourty 0-2 (1/1), K. Gribben 0-1.

CORK — E. Clifford, G. Kearney, E. O'Riordan, N. Goulding, J. Broome, A. O'Regan, M. Holland, V. O'Sullivan, V. O'Keeffe (Capt), M. O'Connell, S. O'Donovan, E. Bugler, E. O'Farrell, M. Deasy, M. Jagoe. **Subs:** M. Hegarty for Goulding (25 mins), J. Duffy for Bugler (52), G. Collins for O'Donovan (64).

DOWN — T. McGowan, C. McGovern, M. Maginn, A. Morgan, D. Kelland, P. Green, K. Murray, J. Blainey (Capt), L. McCracken, F. Duff, M. McAlleenan, C. McGourty, F. Carr, C. Mulholland, K. Gribben. **Subs:** O. Maginn for Morgan (30 mins), B. Gallagher for Duff (49), M. McPolin for Gribben (62), A. Fearon for Mulholland (64).
REF — E. Lawlor (Westmeath).

EYE ON THE BALL: Cork's Marie O'Connell breaks away from Down's Jennifer Braniff during the All-Ireland junior camogie final. Cork won by 4-5 to 2-4. See Monday Sports Special inside for more.



Camogie juniors keep Down under the thumb to take title

CORK was today celebrating yet another All-Ireland title thanks to the heroic efforts of the junior camogie team.

The ladies defeated a gallant Down side by 4-5 to 2-4 in the title decider at Croke Park yesterday.

A superb team effort saw the Rebels keep Down scoreless in the second half.

Up at the business end, a superb double strike by Valley Rovers' Liz Bugler, ensured that the All-Ireland trophy would spend the next 12 months alongside the Liam McCarthy Cup.

Captain Valerie O'Keeffe from the Kilbrittain-Timoleague GAA club, said that

every member of the team played their part in the success.

"We knew that Down would be a tough team to beat. However, we stuck to the task and it is a brilliant feeling to have won," she said.

The senior camogie team failed to make it a famous Cork double, suffering defeat at the hands of defending champions Tipperary in the senior All-Ireland final. Despite a spirited display by the Cork girls, the Tipperary side ran out eventual winners by a margin of 2-11 to 0-9.

● See Monday Sports Special inside for more.

TWO things need to be said.

First of all Tipperary are very worthy All-Ireland champions this evening.

Secondly, in my opinion, the display of referee Una Kearney from Armagh must have been one of the worst displays of refereeing I have seen in years.

Her overfussiness spoiled what should have been a classic between two great teams.

Her interpretation of the advantage rule left a lot to be desired and her decisions hurt Cork on numerous occasions.

It was a very poor showing and did no justice to the great game that is Camogie.

But the referee's performance was not the main reason why Cork lost and more on that later.

For the past nine months the Camogie association have harped on about promoting our game.

They drone on and on about 'our future', what we need to do, our marketing, PR work, our image, etc and they ruin at least two years of good work in a single hour.

24,000 officially attended yesterday's final, and you can easily add another two or three thousand to that number.

Probably two hundred thousand or more watched it on TV.

You can't get a bigger marketing opportunity than that.

And what did we do?

We gave the most important game of our calendar year to, in my mind, an inexperienced referee, who had no concept of the term 'advantage'.

She turned what could have been a spectacle into a complete bore.

It's going to take an awful lot of work to recover from this, if we can at all.

Now here is why Cork lost.

The Rebels lost this final simply because they didn't have the physical power and the first touch on the day needed to win the most coveted title at all.

Cork started well. They did things at speed, opened up the play and had the first score on the board after four minutes.

The first sign that the ref was going to be a nightmare was in the sixth minute when she harshly penalised Mary O'Connor for over carrying.

Clare Grogan tapped over a point.

In the first 14 minutes of play it was eight frees to two in favour of Tipp.

By the 18th minute it was three points apiece, with all of Tipp's scores coming from placed balls.

It was obvious from an early stage that Tipp's defence was dominating. Four weeks ago I said that the one thing Cork can't afford to do is let Una O'Dwyer burst out of full back and drive the ball up the field.

It was exactly what she did. And despite the fact the Cork tried three different players on her, she continued to excel for the entire hour.

While the ref was keeping Tipp in the game with silly frees, they were starting to find their feet in general play.

Their half back line of Nealon, Gaynor and Brophy were beginning to settle and inside Kelly, O'Dwyer and Kirwan lorded it over Una O'Donoghue, Emer Watson and Colette Desmond.

Gemma O'Connor was magnificent for Cork in the first half and was assisted well by Vivienne Harris who ensured their inside forwards got a healthy supply.

But Cork's hearts were broken time and again as the magnificent Tipp defence broke out.

Cork were second to almost every ball inside and even when they got there first their first touch let them down.

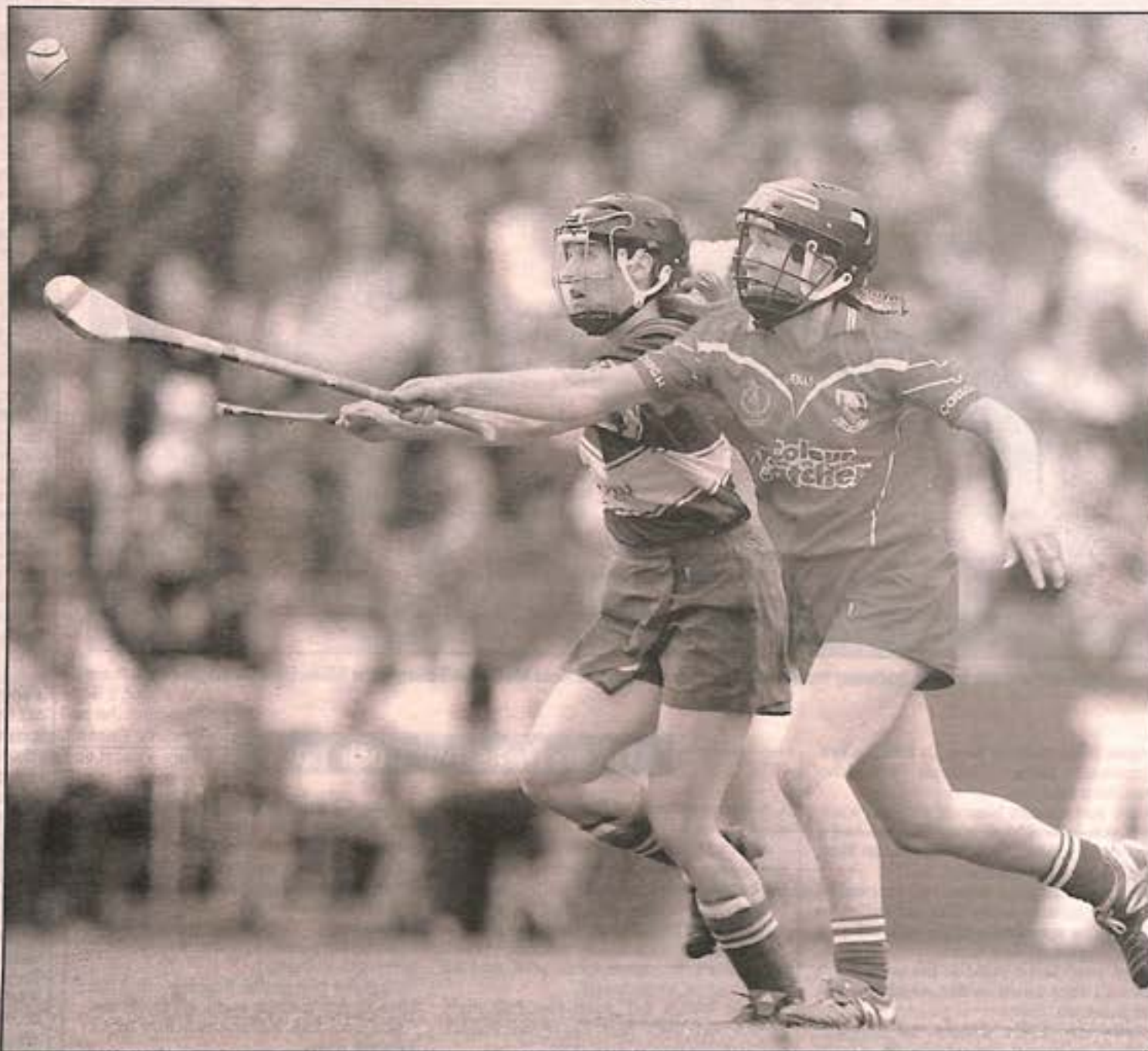
What was most disappointing of all to me was the manner and the ease with which Cork left Tipp clear their lines.

Time and time again they appeared to clear with ease.

One episode in the first half left me half believing it wasn't going to be Cork's day.

Almost on the stroke of half time Jenny O'Leary, whom I consider to be one of the

Tipp worthy but ref ruins game



Sinead Nealon of Tipp and Una O'Donoghue of Cork contest the sliothar in the All-Ireland Camogie final yesterday.

Picture: INPHO/Lorraine



Linda Mellerick

fastest forwards in the game, won possession out on the wing and took off. Clara Gaynor was at least 10 yards away. She chased, caught Jenny, flicked the ball off her hurley and cleared.

It was the ultimate statement from an incredible player.

Tipp were not going to be beaten.

Cork went in five points down at the break but I felt that if they got a good start the game was still there.

They got that start.

Cork had the gap down to three after six minutes but once again the ref intervened.

A head on collision resulted in a free

against Vivienne Harris.

How it was decided that one collided more than the other I don't know. Tipp scored from it.

Again Cork brought it down to three in the 10th but the turning point and the final nail in Cork's coffin came just two minutes later.

Aoife Murray took a quick puck out. The ref wasn't ready and called for it to be taken again. It was.

Tipp won it this time, and an excellent flick from Gill Horan to Joanne Ryan in open space finished off any chance of a Cork revival when she slammed the ball to the back of the net.

Forget cuteness and speed in the game now. If the ref isn't ready for you while she pulls her socks up, you wait!!

From there on in it was a case of just hoping the gap wouldn't be too wide.

Tipp got stronger as the game progressed, Cork's challenge collapsed.

To be fair the Cork defence and midfield did their best but up front we were beaten hands down by a better, stronger unit. The entire Tipp defence were a revelation and credit where it's due.

Before the final many felt that Tipp were tired, that the same hunger wasn't there.

It was there in abundance.

Cork have to regroup.

Yesterday's performance was poor, let's not try to dress it up.

But they have not become a bad team overnight. They lost to the All-Ireland champions. They were better than Cork on the day.

There is no disgrace in that.

Cork's first touch wasn't there, the speed wasn't there, the physical ability wasn't there.

Tipp played to their strengths, Cork did not.

Simple as that.

What They Said

Zinkant thrilled as Cork take title

THE Cork junior dressing room was a jubilant area after the match and a delighted Cork manager, Lillian Zinkant expressed her delight at her side's achievement.

"We are highly relieved it was a tough physical game. We were up against it particularly in the first half as they came at us.

"We were four points up and we drove on in the second half. They ran at us and right through us in the first half but our half-back line were outstanding in the second half as they tightened up considerably.

"We knew Down were a strong, physical team and they are full of running. Nerves got to us in the first half but we made changes and they worked.

"Our girls are full of heart and they showed it today that they are full of spirit and they died out there for each other."

Lillian paid tribute to Miriam Deasy and her influence on the team.

"Miriam Deasy, in particular had a great game. She spoke to the team at half-time and there was no way she was coming off defeated."

At the half-time break, Cork took the time to compose themselves before coming back on the field.

"We were under pressure in the first half but we regrouped at half time and there was no way we were coming off the field defeated. We settled down for the second half and played great stuff. The team spirit in this side will never die.

"They fought to the bitter end inside in the full-forward line. They kept the ball up there, put the pressure on Down and it was all about pressure on the day."

She adds, "This team are die-hards, we were down by four points to Wexford and just before half-time we got a goal and came back into it. It was sheer spirit that got us through that day and it was that spirit that got us through."

Lillian has three Cork junior medals in her possession from her playing days but she feels the achievement of beating Down matches those accolades.

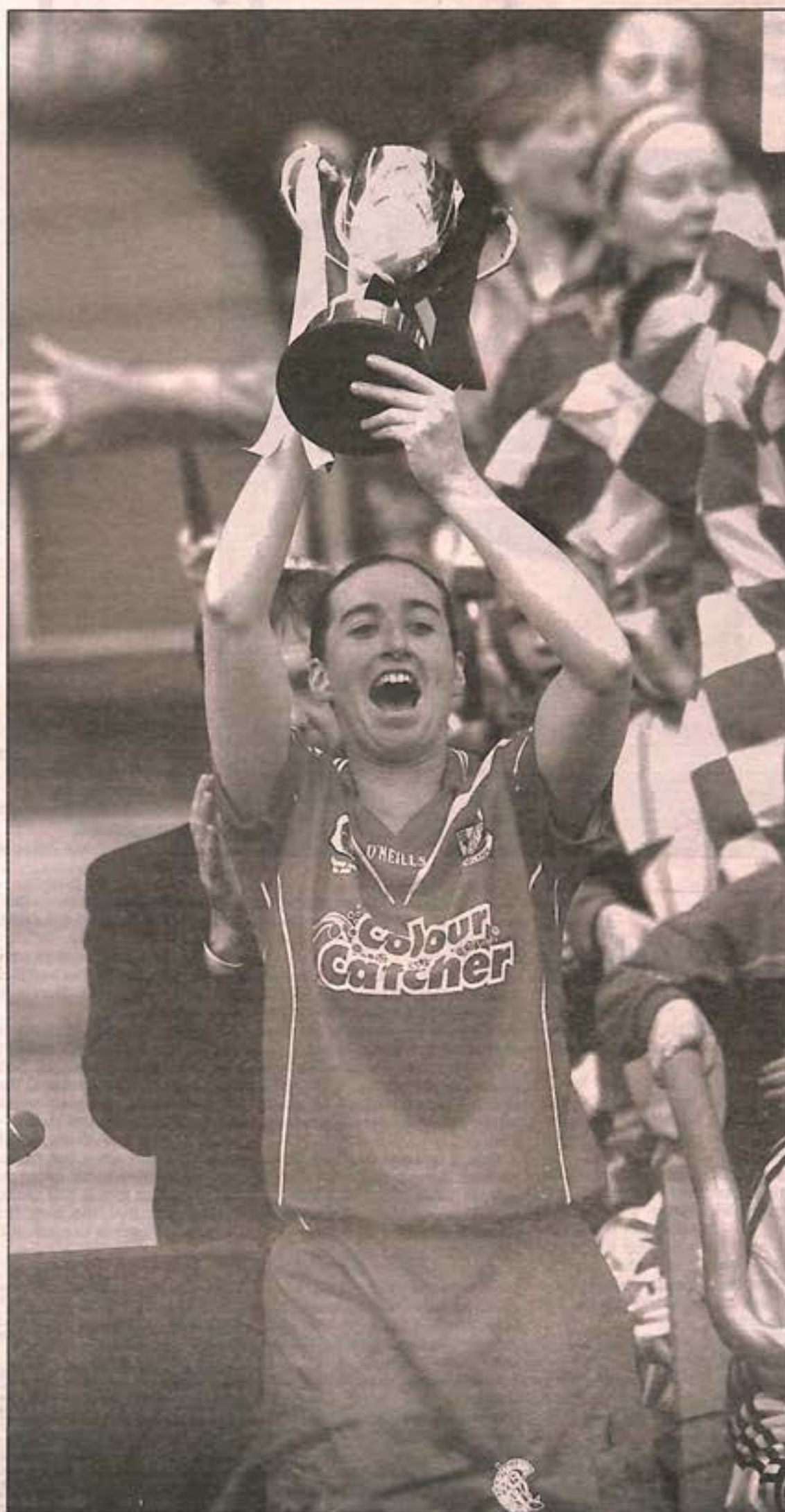
"This is right up there with the medals I have won with Cork, its great to be successful, I was with a defeated team two years ago (when Cork juniors lost to Kilkenny) and it hurt severely. I was trying to hammer that into the players all week, I wasn't going home defeated either.

She expressed her gratitude to the senior panel and selectors.

"We have worked hand in hand with them all year, and I would like to thank the senior selectors for working side by side with me."

Now all Lillian and the Cork team are looking forward to now is to bringing the cup home but she hopes "there will be a big crowd out in Cork tomorrow night to meet us."

Bugler heralds



Cork captain Valerie O'Keeffe lifts the Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland Junior Camogie trophy at Croke Park yesterday.



Cork	4-5
Down	2-4

GOALS on either side of half time from Liz Bugler helped magnificent Cork to claim their first junior camogie title since 1999 at Croke Park yesterday.

The opening 20 minutes were tense and exciting as Cork recovered from a sudden bout of stage fright and survived intense pressure from Down and succeeded in turning the tide in their favour.

Cork made the better start and opened the scoring through a Valerie O'Keeffe point.

Moments later, Miriam Deasy shot was well-saved but Marian Jagoe reacted the fastest to poke the ball home.

Cork had a dream start to the match but Croke Park has seen many a team come undone after a great start.

Cork were one of those sides as they were to be overcome by the occasion and Down clawed their way back into the game.

They piled on their pressure and threatened to run to build up a substantial lead.

Down fired two warning shots before an error in the Cork defence allowed an unmarked Cathy Mulholland to receive a through ball and she made no mistake as she converted to the net.

Catherine McGourty levelled up the match after running through unchallenged.

The Rebel women seemed to panic as they were unable to maintain their good start and soon found themselves behind as a Mairin McAleenan drilled home from 22 yards as she latched onto a poor clearance.

Down were now in control and added a point. Cork were under severe pressure and were forced to do a damage limitation exercise till the side settled again.

The Cork sideline made changes to enhance the Cork challenge while Elaine Riordan, commanding at full-back, recovered from a nervous start.

Down continued to pressure however and Cork needed to alleviate the pressure.

Cork found solace through Eimear O'Farrell who aided by Deasy and Bugler found the net against the run of play.

The timing of the goal was crucial as the defence looked like it would crack wide open.

It was just tonic they needed as Cork came back to life rejuvenated and ready to take on the pressures of being in an All-Ireland final. For the remainder of the match, they were composed and ice-cool in the face of adversity.

Picture: Dan Linehan

the Rebels' victory



Deasy was an inspirational figure as she caused endless problems for Down.

Captain fantastic, Valerie O'Keeffe levelled up proceedings with another well-taken point.

It was turning into a dogfight of a contest between two committed sides.

Cork were looking menacing every time they came forward but the ball was not going in enough on top of a nervy Down defence.

The sides exchanged points and were deadlocked until Cork took the initiative.

After a frantic goalmouth scramble involving a number of Cork forwards, Teresa McGowan appeared to have relieved the pressure with a wonderful save but Bugler was on hand to score her first goal.

Down responded with a beautifully floated point by McAleenan after the Cork back-line failed to mark tightly for a sideline ball.

The Northern girls continued to look shaky but Pauline Green came out of her shell and led by example to keep Cork at bay till the break.

Cork began the brighter in the second half, but for all their dominance they had to wait till the seventh minute for their first score.

Liz Bugler pulled on the ball as it ran on the ground to smash it to the net from considerable distance, past the fully stretched McGowan.

Val O'Keeffe extended the lead with a 45.

Down were battling back but Cork's had a tight stranglehold on the match. Never once in the second half,



did Cork allow Down show their true value.

The pace of the match had slowed dramatically in the second half and this suited Cork as their back-line shut up shop and the game became less open.

Captain O'Keeffe split the posts with a free on 17 minutes to ensure there would be no catching her side.

The feeling was there that if Down did manage to find away back into the game, the Cork girls had enough in reserve to stay in control.

Down had their first effort of the second half soon after but Brenda Kelleher's effort dropped wide.

After the nervy start the Cork defence had in the first half in which they allowed Down to run through

with ease and create openings, they were magnificent in the second half. The performances of the half-back line was a major factor in keeping Down scoreless, while keeper Ellen Clifford was comfortable in dealing with the high balls all afternoon.

At the end of this contest, Cork were the better team and the better team won.

The scenes of joy were well deserved as Cork earned the right to be All-Ireland junior champions and in doing so banish the memory of defeat against Kilkenny two years ago.

Down can have no complaints as they had no answer to Cork's grit and determination in the second half. They have worked hard all year and deserve their piece of glory.

ABOVE: The Cork team who defeated Down in the Foras na Gaelige All-Ireland Junior Camogie final at Croke Park.

Picture: Dan Linehan

LEFT: Cork's Sarah O'Donovan finds her way blocked by Down's Clare McGovern and Debrah Kelland during the All-Ireland Junior Camogie final at Croke Park.

Picture: Dan Linehan

While the senior side were beaten, this at least is consolation for both sides' commitment and passion, which they displayed honourably while performing in the county colours.

Scorers for Cork: E Bugler 2-0, V O'Keeffe 0-5, M Jagoe 1-0, E O'Farrell 1-0.

Down: M McAleenan 1-1, C Mulholland 1-0, C McGourty 0-2, K Gribbin 0-1.

CORK: E Clifford, G Kearney, E O'Riordan, N Goulding, J Browne, A O'Regan, M Holland, V O'Sullivan, V O'Keeffe, M O'Connell, S O'Donovan, E Bugler, E O'Farrell, M Deasy, M Jagoe. **Subs Used:** G Harrington, J Duffy, G Collins, M Hegarty.

DOWN: T McGowan, C McGovern, M Maginn, A Morgan, D Kelland, P Green, K Murray, J Braniff, L McGrickard, F Duff, M McAleenan, C McGourty, F Carr, C Mulholland, K Gribbin. **Subs Used:** A Fearon, M McPolin, S Gallagher, O Maginn.

Referee: E Uí Leathlobhair.

Score of the Match

Down's Mairin McAleenan collected a half clearance by Cork and drilled the sliothar past Ellen Clifford from twenty two yards out.

Entertainment Value

A dogfight of a match with both Cork and Down fighting tooth and nail. The second half failed to live up to the tempo of the first as the game became less open. But plenty thrills and spills in this decider. 7/10

Turning Point

With Down piling on the pressure it looked like Cork were about to crack, but against the run of play, Eimear Farrell found the net to turn the tide back in Cork's favour. The Rebels never lost control of the game after this.

Ref Watch

Eileen Uí Leathlobhair made some bizarre calls during the match but nothing which upset the momentum of the game.

Done a satisfactory job. 6/10

Three Reasons Cork Won

1. MIRIAM DEASY

Probably her last appearance at Croke Park after re-grading from the senior panel but she left her mark on the hollowed turf for many years to come.

She may not have scored but she worked socks off to create openings.

Miriam was involved in everything, including the first goal.

She played intelligent camogie as she looked for a player in a better position.

She was completely unselfish and a constant thorn in Down's side.

2. SCORES WIN MATCHES

Down have a prolific forward line that has scored heavily throughout the championship but Cork cut off the supply in the second half and held Down scoreless.

While in the first half the back-line wasn't working entirely working as a unit, the situation was reversed with Michelle Hegarty being introduced which balanced the back-line.

Elaine O'Riordan and Amanda O'Regan led by example and were superb in breaking up attacks.

3. WORK ETHIC

Every player in a Cork jersey were prepared to die for each other on Croke Park.

Even when the game seemed to be going against they refused to let their heads drop.

What They Said



Joanne Ryan lifts the cup for Tipperary. Picture: INPHO.

Considine doffs cap to colossus of O'Dwyer

IT WAS so difficult to come to terms with.

Two All-Ireland finals lost in two years — there was a morgue-like atmosphere in the Cork dressing room in the aftermath of yesterday's final.

The only consolation was that they had been beaten by a great team; they have to be now, after taking their fifth title in six years.

Team coach John Considine tried to put a brave face on matters, but even he knew there could be no complaints; his girls had been beaten by a far superior unit.

"We just could not get the scores when we needed them and we never really got going at all," he said.

"But you have to say that we were beaten by a very good Tipperary team and we can't complain.

"We were in the game up to half-time, but we just could not go up that extra level. We had good possession at times but we could not translate it into scores.

"We never looked like getting goals and that was a big problem and the difference in the end."

Assessing where it all went wrong, Considine admitted that the Tipp defence had been outstanding, and in particular Una O'Dwyer.

"She was a colossus and we could do nothing with her. I think we tried four players on her but it was to no avail.

"The second goal was a real blow and it killed the game off. Up to that point you would be hoping that we get a break, but that score was a real killer.

"It's a huge disappointment for the girls to lose two on the trot, but this is a very good side that we lost to.

"I thought we did well defensively but we just could not get the goals."

Considine would not criticise the referee, but you could sense he wasn't overly pleased.

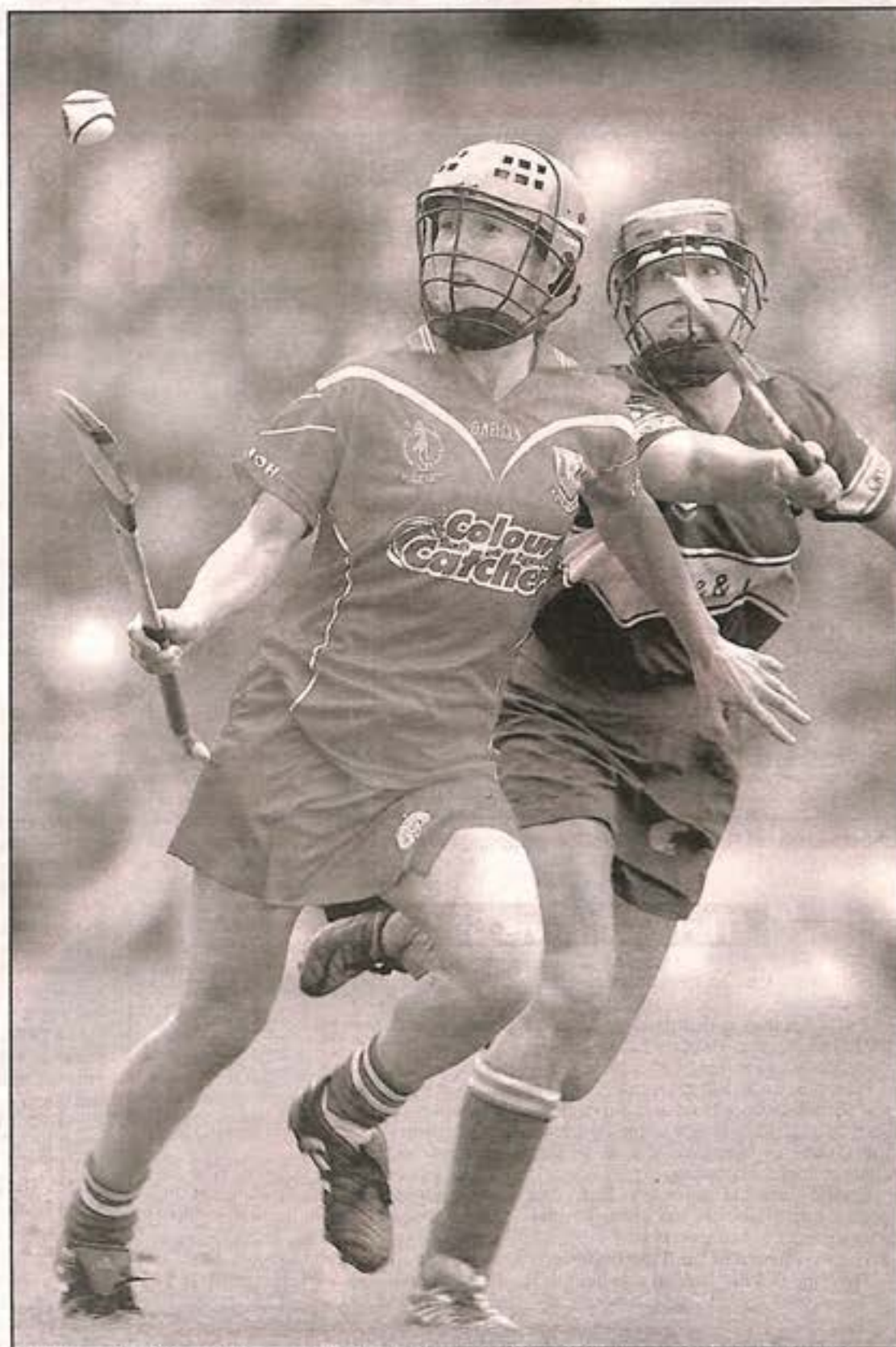
"I think the score count in the first-half was 15 to four for Tipp and they got a lot of frees too in the second-half.

"But you just can't complain at the final outcome, Tipp were the better team and that's it really," he added.

A realistic summing up from one who was once an imperious defender himself.

by John Horgan

Tipp reign



Cork's Jennifer O'Leary takes control of the ball ahead of Tipp's Ciara Gaynor during All-Ireland Camogie Final. Picture: INPHO



John Horgan

Tipperary
Cork

2-11
0-9

UNDISPUTED queens of camogie.

There was no second Sunday of redemption for a Cork team at Croke Park yesterday as Tipperary put back-to-back All-Ireland senior titles together and brought their tally to five in the last six years.

That is a phenomenal achievement in the modern era and one that will brook no argument in any quarter.

Cork arrived in the capital with high hopes of gaining revenge for last year's loss but in the end they departed a well beaten combination that could have absolutely no complaints with the outcome.

The balance of power in the women's game has shifted dramatically in recent times and if Tipperary is no longer the home of hurling it is most definitely the new home of camogie.

It has been a summer of discontent for the menfolk in the Premier County which had the seal put on it at Nowlan Park on Saturday when the U21 team were humiliated by Kilkenny but this latest victory by the all-conquering females will ease some of the recent pain.

Cork were a huge disappointment and long before the climax of a disappointing hour the inevitable was etched in bold capitals.

There was distinct lack of penetration in the Cork attack and Jovita Delaney in the Tipperary goal had one of her easiest assignments at headquarters.

Cork never threatened to breach the Tipp line but much of the credit for the champions dominance lay in an excellent defensive unit.

Full-back Una O'Dwyer was a colossus all through and easily the player of this century final.

Four Cork players were sent to halt her in her tracks but none succeeded in what became an almost impossible task as the game wore on.

In front of her Ciara Gaynor was another commanding figure at centre-back, using her vast experience to repel any Cork challenges which, for the greater part, were few and far between.

She was well supported by wing-backs Sinead Nealon and Therese Brophy.

The old adage that goals decide days like this rang out loud and clear again.

When it was all done and dusted, Tipp's brace was the essential difference and Cork were unable to counteract them.

Deirdre Hughes and team captain Joanne Ryan provided the game's defining moments, one in each half and the second one most definitely sealed the deal.

Cork competed admirably in the opening sequences and more than held their own for the opening 17 minutes.

In that period Emer Dillon and Gemma O'Connor slung over three good points with Tipp depending on the stick of Clare

Top Player

UNA O'DWYER

UNA was a towering figure at full-back for Tipperary. She stood alone at times in repelling Cork challenges and she inspired those around her. A class act.

Entertainment Value

NOT a great final and won't be remembered as such. Cork's lack of power in front of goal was a factor but the best team are again the champions.

Tight and too tense for the greater part. Rating 6

Turning Point

TIPP'S second goal from Joanne Ryan.

Up to that point you hoped for a Cork onslaught but that score sealed the deal for Tipp and put the final nail in Cork's coffin.

Referee Watch

UNA NI CHEARNAIGH did not have a particularly good game and Cork had reason to be aggrieved with her, particularly in the first-half.

Much too fussy. Rating 5.

supreme



Rosaire Holland of Cork tries to get away from the attentions of Tipp's Eimear McDonnell during the All-Ireland Camogie Final. Picture: INPHO

Grogan from frees to keep in touch. Cork centre-back Mary O'Connor was also prominent early on.

Cork had also the bonus of striking a major psychological blow when Hughes had a penalty stopped by Cork keeper Aoife Murray in the eighth minute.

However, the game turned on its head in the 18th minute when Murray failed to deal with a speculative high ball and as a result Hughes drilled home.

Tipp went in 1-6 to 0-4 to the good but it was still very much in the melting pot at that juncture.

However, Cork's failure to threaten Delaney was a disconcerting feature of that opening 30 minutes.

Jennifer O'Leary pointed a brace of Cork frees on the resumption to raise the optimism levels in the Leeside camp but 13 minutes into the half the game's complexion changed completely when Ryan added goal number two after good approach work by Jill Horan.

Cork were now back-peddalling to an alarming degree as the Tipp defence continued to lord matters.

Both Cork midfielders, Viv Harris and Gemma O'Connor, in particular, worked tirelessly but the fragile nature of matters up front continued.

One statistic summed up Cork's display: only four points from play were recorded and on days like this that is unacceptable.

Grogan continued to make matters tell on the board and ended up the game's leading scorer with nine points but basically this was a team performance that had its foundation laid in an imperial defence.

Losing two All-Irelands on the trot is a cruel blow but as coach John Considine pointed out afterwards, they could have no

Three Reasons Cork Lost

1 A distinct lack of firepower in front of goal.

Jovita Delaney had little or nothing to deal with in the Tipperary goal as the Cork attack never seriously threatened.

Cork only scored four points from play and that statistic tells its own sorry story. As a unit the Cork attack never gelled and the failure to create clear goal scoring chances cost them dearly.

Emer Dillon did score two fine early points, but there was too much dependence on frees to bring scores.

2 The excellence of the Tipp defence.

The Tipp defence was an excellent unit in which full-back Una O'Dwyer played an outstanding part.

She was a colossus in the Premier County rearguard and quite rightly was given the Player of the Match.

Ciarra Gaynor was another hugely con-

spicuous figure at centre-back and was well supported in that line by Sinead Nealon and Therese Brophy.

The platform for this Tipp victory was firmly laid in defence and it was the rock that Cork perished on.

3 Goals

Goals win games and that was again the difference yesterday.

Tipp put two on the board at vital junctures in proceedings and a glance at the final scoreline will indicate how important they were.

Deirdre Hughes and Joanne Ryan delivered when the need was greatest and Cork could not counteract those two scores which determined the outcome.

But, in the final analysis, the better team emerged and Tipperary are undisputed queens of camogie in centenary year.

Scorers for Tipperary: C. Grogan 0-9 (0-5f), D. Hughes and J. Ryan 1-0 each, E. McDonnell 0-2.

Cork: J. O'Leary 0-5, E. Dillon 0-2, G. O'Connor 0-2.

TIPPERARY: J. Delaney, S. Kelly, U. O'Dwyer, J. Kirwan, S. Nealon, C. Gaynor, T. Brophy, A. McDermott, P. Fogarty, N. Kennedy, J. Ryan, C. Grogan, E. McDonnell, D. Hughes, J. Horan. **Subs:** G. Kinnane for Horan, E. Hayden for Hughes, P. Bullin for Fogarty.

CORK: A. Murray, J. O'Callaghan, S. Dunlea, R. Holland, P. O'Connor, M. O'Connor, R. Buckley, V. Harris, G. O'Connor, R. Moloney, E. Dillon, J. O'Leary, U. O'Donoghue, E. Watson, C. Desmond. **Subs:** E. Burke for Watson, A. Geary for Desmond.

Referee: Una ni Chearnaigh (Armagh.)

Cork Ratings

AOIFE MURRAY: Should have stayed on her line for Tipp's first goal but before that had made two crucial saves, one from a penalty. Couldn't be faulted for loss.

Rating: 8

JOANNE O'CALLAGHAN: While not standing out, did little wrong. Dependable. Kept the excellent Gill Horan scoreless.

Rating: 8

STEPHANIE DUNLEA: Didn't dominate as much as usual. But kept the lethal Deirdre Hughes to a single goal and couldn't be faulted for that.

Rating: 8

ROSAIRE HOLLAND: Found the going tough in her first senior final. Marking 2003 player of the year Emer McDonnell who scored two crucial points.

Rating: 6

PAULA O'CONNOR: Found Clare Grogan a handful at times. Didn't dominate like she can do.

Rating: 7

MARY O'CONNOR: Cleared a lot of ball. A poor pass at the end of the first half gifted Tipp a point but overall her play while under pressure was good.

Rating: 8

RENA BUCKLEY: Had an excellent game for her first All-Ireland senior final. Did little or nothing wrong.

Rating: 8

VIVIENNE HARRIS: Had a good game particularly in the first half. Ran into trouble a few times but had at least 2 or 3 players around her at all times.

Rating: 8

GEMMA O'CONNOR: A magnificent first half. Died a little in the second but probably due to exhaustion. Moved into full forward but wasn't as involved.

Rating: 8

RACHEL MOLONEY: Never made headway against the tall and strong Therese Brophy.

Rating: 5

EMER DILLON: Although she started promisingly, Dillon faded and Gaynor won the battle. Missed a couple of scores and hung the head when things went against her.

Rating: 6

JENNIFER O'LEARY: The most threatening of the 6 forwards. Tipp had Sinead Nealon coached in how to cope with Cork's best forward.

Rating: 8

UNA O'DONOGHUE: Felt before the game that Una was going to thrive but it wasn't to be. Despite scoring a point after 10 minutes of the second half she figured little throughout the game.

Rating: 5

EMER WATSON: Not physically strong or fast enough to cope with the senior step up. Switched after 25 minutes and substituted after 6 minutes of the second half. Has great future potential.

Rating: 5

COLETTE DESMOND: Never made headway against Suzanne Kelly. Never threatened. Substituted after 10 minutes of the second half.

Rating: 5

ELAINE BURKE: Had little impact on the game when introduced.

Rating: 5

ANNA GEARY: Introduced in the 10 minutes of the second half but failed to break Tipp's defensive dominance.

Rating: 5

by Linda Mellerick



Rebels return: The Cork junior camogie team, who won the All-Ireland by beating Down on Sunday, show off their silverware during their victory parade through the city last night.

Picture: Provision

Croke Park buzzing with glitz and excitement

by Therese O'Callaghan

ALL-IRELAND camogie day was such a revelation. Not just because extra effort went into organising the event in centenary year, it also heralded new beginnings. It was a glitzy, festive and cheerful type of day.

The grounds were bustling with activity at 12 o'clock. Usually at this time everyone is still in snooze mode, but bands were practising and, on the big screen, the voice of Marty Morrissey circled the stadium as the replay of the 2003 final was shown.

For the two-and-a-half thousand children who formed the C100 on the pitch in Croke Park, it will truly be an unforgettable day. Other effects — too numerous to mention — enhanced proceedings.

Fifteen months ago Sinead O'Connor filled the newly created post of

Finance and Sponsorship manager within the Association and her input has been immeasurable.

So, while progress is being made, further development must come from the counties partaking in the senior championship.

Cork and Tipperary are miles ahead of the rest — with the exception of Wexford, who came good this summer. On Sunday the Premier County confirmed their greatness.

Yesterday the O'Duffy Cup journeyed back to Tipp once again, this time the silverware departed at an earlier than usual time. Over the years these Herculean Tipperary ladies have won the hearts of many. Nowadays there are more stops to make.

The Póitín Stíl, owned by Tipperary man Louis Fitzgerald, was the first port of call, around noon, to watch a video of the game. Next to sponsors

Horse and Jockey, and then arriving at the home of captain Joanne Ryan in Drom-Inch around eight o'clock.

County PRO and selector Marion Graham revealed it was thrilling to relive the whole match experience.

"They were brilliant. We never could have anticipated such a faultless all-round performance. It is the first time that the O'Duffy Cup is going to Drom-Inch. Up to now all Tipperary captains have come from Cashel."

Tipp FM joined in the party as all rejoiced in this remarkable triumph.

All the while, Cork languished in the happenings of 24-hours earlier.

But, at least they will be back. With only three players out of the starting 15 over the age of 22, regrouping will not be a problem, and the county can also enjoy the junior win over Down.

Senior selector Mairead

O'Callaghan was realistic in her thoughts as both senior and junior teams travelled home by train.

"We are very disappointed to lose," she said. "But we are more disheartened by the manner of our defeat."

"We did not do ourselves justice."

"We never really got into the game, but at the end of the day we cannot take away from Tipperary's victory. They were superb."

So, what of next year and what hopes do the other counties hold of, causing an upset?

It must be asked what is happening in the likes of Galway, Limerick, Kilkenny, Antrim and Derry. These are the other senior teams in the country. Sadly, camogie will not survive unless the authorities build on the two or three team syndrome.

What of the other traditional hurling counties — Waterford,

Clare, Offaly and Laois? The senior camogie championship (open draw) needs new teams and for the existing ones to be a great deal more active.

The Tipperarys and Corks require healthier competition if the game is to carry on.

No disrespect whatsoever to the aforementioned two teams, but how long more are neutrals going to attend headquarters on All-Ireland day if they keep turning up to see the same opposition? On Sunday a record 25,000 attended.

RTE commentator Micheál Ó Mhuircheartaigh, commenting on the subject recently said, "The biggest problem facing camogie at the moment is the shortage of top class inter-county teams. Is it possible to have 10 counties with serious prospects of winning the All-Ireland title of 2014 by the start of that year?"

Golden Vale girls triumph in camogie clash

Louise Healy

CORK'S hopes of a hurling and camogie double were dashed yesterday when Tipperary walked away from Croke Park as senior cup holders for the second year running.

It wasn't all doom and gloom for Cork, whose junior team secured all-Ireland victory early in the day, beating Down 4-4 to 2-4. But it was to be Tipperary's day, with winning goals from skipper Joanne Ryan and Deirdre Hughes leading the senior team to victory over Cork by 2-11 to 0-9 in the Foras na Gaeilge all-Ireland centenary final.

Wing-forward Claire Grogan proved to be the scoring star for Tipperary, scoring nine points and winning seven frees to bring Tipperary its fifth all-Ireland in six years.

As centenary celebrations got underway dur-



ing the interval between the junior and senior finals, primary school children from all over the country took to the field in Croke Park forming the letters 'C100' on the pitch.

Junior Meath camogie player Aine Sheridan received a rapturous applause from the thousands of fans in the stands, including Presi-

dent Mary McAleese, as she carried a flaming torch around the stadium to represent the first camogie match played in Meath in 1904.

The final was watched by more than 24,000 people as the Team of the Century girls raised the O'Duffy Cup in the sport's centenary year. Match report: Sport 65



Ciara Gaynor with her dad Len after victory in the Senior Camogie All-Ireland Final at Croke Park, and above left, Jovita Delaney celebrates. Picture: Pat Murphy/Sportsfile

Rebels' superior fitness pays dividends in junior decider

Junior camogie

Therese O'Callaghan

CORK DOWN

**4-5
2-4**

AN extremely athletic Cork team took to the field for the All-Ireland junior final at Croke Park on Sunday and when the chips were down in the second half their superior fitness and skill won out on the day.

Vying for the county's seventh title, the Rebels had to work particularly hard to gain the upper hand in this contest, as the teams were level on three occasions in the opening period during which five goals were exchanged in a rip-roaring race for supremacy.

This game was fought out at an alarming pace with only a

pair of points dividing the sides at the interval, but it was in the final 30 minutes that Cork took over the mantle while playing with wind advantage.

In addition to the elements though, they also showed wonderful zeal and enthusiasm. And once Liz Bugler rattled the net for the second time seven minutes upon the resumption, the red and white had immediately placed themselves in pole position.

From the outset, the southerners demonstrated their purpose, and by way of captain Valerie O'Keeffe from Timoleague — a garda based in Dublin — they showed immense leadership qualities.

She opened the scoring when landing a 45 metre free with the game barely three minutes old. Moments later Tracton appeared on the map with Marion Jagoe whipping home.

Cork had the ideal start, leading 1-1 to nil. But the northerners, who took a while to adapt to the surrounds of Croke Park, came thundering back and with a double take of green flags from Cathy Mulholland and Mairin McAleenan, they led by twice as many scores.

However, the Leesiders were dominating in crucial areas — chiefly Elaine O'Riordan who grew in stature at the edge of her own square, in the half-back line Jennifer Browne and



A proud moment for Cork captain, Valerie O'Keeffe, as she lifts the All-Ireland junior camogie cup at Croke Park on Sunday.

Amanda O'Regan were unyielding and around mid-field where O'Keeffe and Val O'Sullivan were controlling matters.

Through an Eimear O'Farrell goal, they were back in the hunt and when Valley

Rovers' performer Bugler smashed in her first major after a titanic struggle in the goalmouth area five minutes from the break, Cork held a vital advantage going to the dressingroom, 3-3 to 2-4. Nobody could have antici-

pated the tension that would prevail in the second half. Bugler's goal and an O'Keeffe 45 metre free provided the Rebels with a clear two-goal advantage.

Alarmingly, the Mourne County could not raise any flag and Cork, while clearly in charge, only registered 1-2 in total. This was more credit though to two sterling defences who gave little away.

As the outcome petered out, the red and white were in no mood to relent and showing a remarkable level of fitness they continued to dominate most areas.

As the game drew to a conclusion, Sarah O'Donovan and Bugler made way for late substitutes Janice Duffy from St Finbarrs and Barryroe's Geraldine Collins.

For manager Lillian Zinkant of Sarsfields who has given a lifetime to camogie, former player Liz O'Mahony of Brian Dillons who also works untiringly and Marie Clancy representing junior county champions St Catherine's, the reward came when O'Keeffe proudly accepted the New Ireland Cup from Camogie President Miriam O'Callaghan.

And what a time to do it? Centenary Year, rightfully they will go down in history.

SCORERS:

CORK — L Bugler 2-0, V O'Keeffe 0-5 (0-3 frees, 0-2 '45s).

E O'Farrell and M Jagoe 1-0 each.

DOWN — M McAleenan 1-2, C Mulholland 1-0, C McGourty 0-2 (0-1 free).

CORK — E Clifford (St Finbarrs); G Kearney (Fr O'Neills); E O'Riordan (Milford); N Goulding (Glen Rovers); J Browne (Ballygarvan); A O'Regan (Douglas); M Holland (Ballinhassig); V O'Sullivan (Fr O'Neills); V O'Keeffe (capt) (Kilbrittain-Timoleague); M O'Connell (Inniscarra); S O'Donovan (Ballygarvan); L Bugler (Valley Rovers); E O'Farrell (Sarsfields); M Deasy (Kilbrittain-Timoleague); M Jagoe (Tracton).

SUBS: M Hegarty (Glen Rovers) for N Goulding (26 mins); J Duffy (St Finbarrs) for L Bugler (51 mins); G Collins (Barryroe) for S O'Donovan (64 mins).

DOWN — T McGowan; A Morgan; M Maglin; C McGovern; K Murray; P Green; D Kelland; J Branniff (capt); L McCrickard; C McGourty; M McAleenan; F Duff; K Gribben; C Mulholland; F Carr.

SUBS: O Maginn for A Morgan (30 mins); B Gallagher for F Duff (49 mins); M McPolin for K Gribben (61 mins); A Fearon for C Mulholland (64 mins).

REFEREE: A Lawlor (Westmeath).

Cork seniors will be back but so will champs Tipperary

BY THERESA O'CALLAGHAN

**TIPPERARY
CORK**

**2-11
0-9**

TIPPERARY reign supreme. There was never a doubt about the result in Croke Park on Sunday in the Foras na Gaeilge All-Ireland senior camogie final as the Premier County collected an unbelievable fifth title after just six final appearances.

Just as their emergence onto the scene in 1999 was dramatic, they turned in one of the finest all-round displays ever and no better season to deliver than Centenary year.

The magnitude of their victory was becoming apparent once captain Joanne Ryan slammed home her side's second goal 12 minutes into the second half. Henceforth, the reigning champions never relented and were running on full when referee Una Kearney blew after 66 minutes of non-stop action.

Cork, on the other hand, started the game very competitively, they were level after the first quarter but were never again to regain that lead.

The titleholders too made a crucial switch before proceedings got underway with Ryan moving out on the wing to mark debutante Rena Buckley from the Inniscarra club and consequently Killeagh marker Mary O'Connor was left to deal with Noelle Kennedy.

The Rebels, who were playing with the breeze in the first half, recorded the opening score of the match through industrious centre-forward Emer Dillon, who all afternoon enjoyed a mighty tussle with Tipp's outstanding number six Clara Gaynor.

Gemma O'Connor, who also had a fine hour, sailed over their second point after just seven minutes and all looked well for the red and white.

But, all the while the titleholders stayed in touch with two Claire Grogan frees — the Cashel attacker finished the game with nine points, each shot over with great precision.

When Aoife Murray stopped a pile-driving penalty from



Mary O'Connor gets in her clearance for Cork as Tipperary's Noelle Kennedy looks on during the All-Ireland senior camogie final at Croke Park on Sunday. Photo by Pat Murphy / Sportfile.

Eimear McDonnell, the Rebel army appeared to be in command.

However, an amazing closing second quarter that yielded 1-3 saw Tipperary secure an authoritative position.

With their defence a model of defiance, full-forward Deirdre Hughes banged home their opening goal with 10 minutes to go to the break. As Grogan pointed at will, mainly from placed balls, Cork's confidence began to fade.

Despite some sterling play from captain Stephanie Dunlea at full-back, Joanne O'Callaghan in the corner and Mary O'Connor in the pivotal role, Cork's higher numbers could not break down a rock-solid Tipp defensive sextet.

They went in at the interval five points behind, but more significantly were turning to play against a strengthening wind.

Not to be deterred, however,

they resumed their positions with a mission in mind. Obviously, the half-time pep talk had registered.

They took the game to Tipperary and their running game seemed to be working in spite of also having to contend with the elements. A brace of pointed frees from Jennifer O'Leary and only a goal separated the sides. Suddenly, the red and white were in real contention.

Elaine Burke came into the fray for 18-year-old Emer Watson and 2002 winning skipper Una O'Donoghue moved around the square where RTE player of the match Una O'Dwyer was majestic.

Grogan and O'Donoghue swapped white flags and still only a mere three-pointer separated the sides.

Cork introduced Milford's Anna Geary soon afterwards into the forward line, but it was the Tipp attack instead

that struck gold.

Angie McDermott gathered a ball around the middle of the park, was hooked but still managed to whip a low searching ball in around the 30-metre line. McDonnell left the sliotar run on and when Ryan picked cleanly she only had one thing on her mind. As she approached netminder Murray, she released an unstoppable shot to the corner of the net.

Ironically this was the green flag that the Leesiders needed if they were to remain on course, but instead a rebellious Ryan injected renewed enthusiasm and fierce passion into the Tipperary outfit.

Hereafter, there was only one team in it. Cork boss John Considine could not rally his selection any further. Even a huge free from Gemma O'Connor landed from all of 60 metres could not spur them on.

It was as if they sensed defeat and all of a sudden they were drained. In contrast, the Premier County accelerated right to the finish. In actual fact, they passed the finish line letting up.

Prompted by a defiant rear-guard, they never gave the Leesiders an inch and finished with aplomb firing over four unanswered points entering the closing five minutes of play.

So, two defeats in succession for Cork and by now they will be only too aware that goals win matches. O'Donoghue came near in the opening half but forced a diving save from Jovita Delaney.

Other than that, they had hardly any more chances of green flags mainly due to the supremacy of the Tipp defence.

Still, the Leesiders brought in new blood in the form of Murray, Buckley, Watson and

Colette Desmond. They will have learned from the Croke Park experience.

Remember, before Kilkenny started their three-in-a-row campaign this year they had also lost twice in GAA headquarters on All-Ireland day. But they returned with a mission.

Afterwards John Considine was unequivocal in his admiration for Tipperary. Although bitterly disappointed by his team's loss, he heralded their efforts and vowed that the Rebel army would return. After all, the average age of the team is 21, so there are many years of hurling ahead of them.

Most definitely Cork will be back. But at least for another while, you can expect Tipperary to be there too.

SCORERS:

TIPPERARY — C Grogan 0-9 (0-7 frees), D Hughes and J Ryan 1-0 each, E McDonnell 0-2.

CORK — J O'Leary 0-4 (0-3 frees, 0-1 '45), E Dillon and G O'Connor (0-1 free) 0-2 each, U O'Donoghue 0-1.

TIPPERARY — J Delaney; S Kelly; U O'Dwyer; J Kirwan; S Nealon; C Gaynor; T Brophy; A McDermott; P Fogarty; J Ryan (capt); N Kennedy; C Grogan; E McDonnell; D Hughes; J Horan.

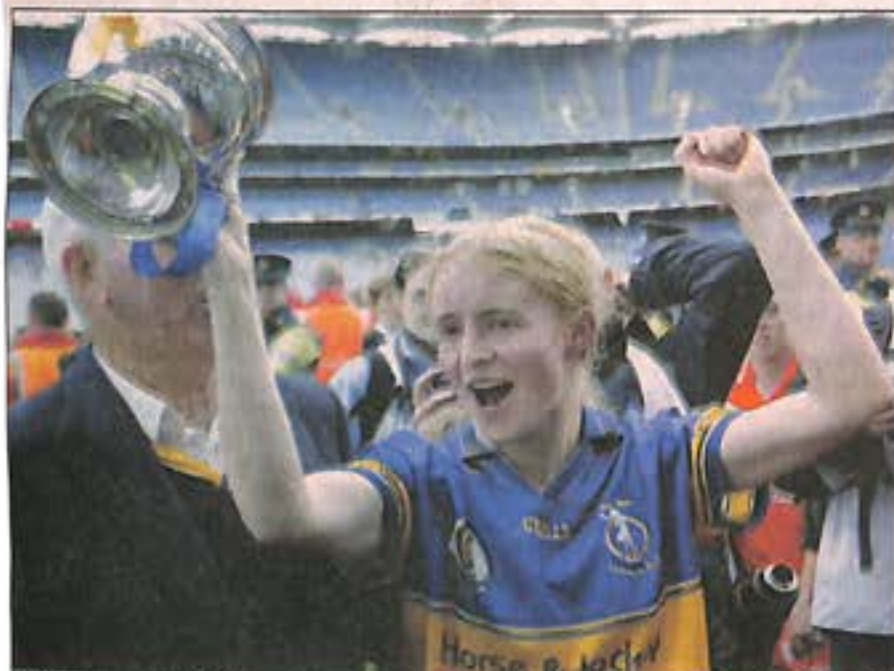
SUBS: P Bulfin for P Fogarty (56 mins); G Kinnane for J Horan (61 mins); E Hayden for D Hughes (62 mins).

CORK — A Murray (Cloughduv); J O'Callaghan (Cloughduv); S Dunlea (Cloughduv) (capt); R Holland (Barryroe); P O'Connor (Newtownshandrum); M O'Connor (Killeagh); R Buckley (Inniscarra); V Harris (St Finbarrs); G O'Connor (St Finbarrs); R Moloney (Courcy Rovers); E Dillon (Ballygarvan); J O'Leary (Barryroe); U O'Donoghue (Cloughduv); E Watson (Milford); C Desmond (Newcestown).

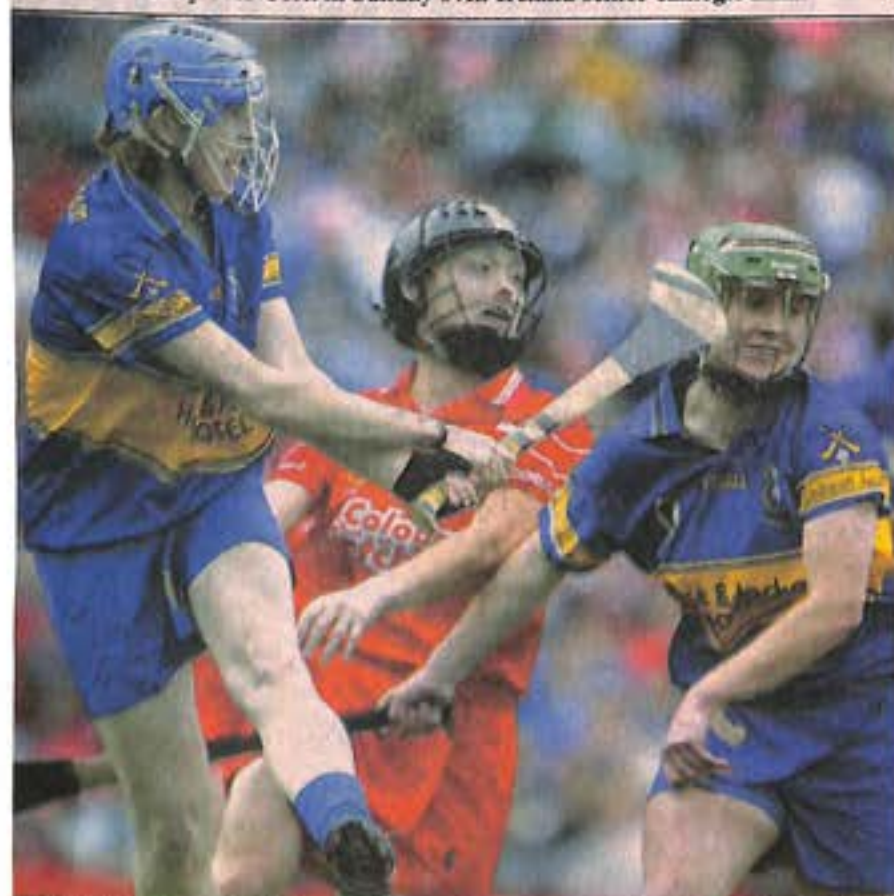
SUBS: E Burke (Valley Rovers) for E Watson (36 mins); A Geary (Milford) for C Desmond (41 mins).

REFEREE: U Kearney (Armagh).

Defence the bedrock for another wonderful Tipperary victory



Tipperary captain Joanne Ryan holds aloft the O'Duffy Cup after leading her side to victory over Cork in Sunday's All Ireland senior camogie final.



Tipp full-forward Deirdre Hughes shoots home the side's first goal as Cork captain and full-back Stephanie Dunlea and Tipp corner forward Eimear McDonnell look on.

TIPPERARY 2-11
CORK 0-9

Not having troubled the statisticians for the first ninety four years of the association, Tipperary camogie is determined to make up for lost time.

Sunday's wonderful win over Cork in the All Ireland senior final was the side's fifth in six years and having waited so long to make a breakthrough in the game, this Tipp team is now destined to win the title in milestone years - they won the last of the old millenium, the first of the new and now the centenary final to establish themselves as the undoubted queenpins of the game.

Counties such as Dublin, Cork and Kilkenny may lead the roll of honour by some distance but the crucial thing for Tipperary is that their five titles have come in the past six years.

So in a year when Tipperary hurling and football has very little to celebrate, culminating in the embarrassing defeat for the u-21 hurlers in Kilkenny a day earlier, it was left to the camogie players again to restore pride in the blue and gold. They are accustomed to this role now and fill it with style and grace.

All Ireland finals are never easily won but, in truth, Tipperary got through Sunday's encounter with some degree of comfort. As you would expect from a Cork side trying to atone for last year's defeat to Tipp, they pushed the champions all the way but once Deirdre Hughes scored one of her trademark goals, Tipp set-

the superiority of the Tipp line.

The Tipp half back line has long been one of the side's most dominant sectors and Sinead Nealon, Ciara Gaynor and Therese Brophy tackled like seldom before with a performance that totally disrupted a younger, and on paper, potentially lethal Cork attack.

One cameo late in the first half highlighted the role of Gaynor when her perseverance saw her thwart a Cork attack, execute a cheeky steal of the sliothar and clear upfield with the move eventually ending in a Tipp score.

At midfield Philly Fogarty had run herself into the ground by the time she was eventually replaced by Cashel club-mate Paula Bulfin. Another Cashel player Claire Grogan was the star of the attack with nine of Tipperary's eleven points, seven from frees.

Still only eighteen, Grogan now boasts four All Ireland senior medals and her display in this final was one of her most convincing, her accurate free-taking a huge bonus for Tipp as they made the Cork defence pay a heavy price for persistent fouling, especially in the first half.

The Tipperary inside line didn't get the chances they might have hoped for but still made a huge contribution to the win. Team of the Century member Deirdre Hughes getting another vital goal after

O'Dwyer inspires champions to fifth title in six year

from play and all Tipp's from Grogan frees. Dillon had given the Rebels a 4th minute lead but Grogan cancelled it out a minute later when an over-fussy referee penalised a Cork back for over-carrying.

O'Connor restored the Cork lead in the 7th minute before Tipp had the chance of a major breakthrough when Hughes was bundled over in the square. McDonnell's penalty was saved and cleared but Grogan tied it up again following a foul on the hard-working Joanne Ryan.

Veteran forward Noelle Kennedy was now heavily involved in the action and in the space of two minutes the Toomevara player forced a good save from Cork keeper Aoife Murray, hit Tipp's first wide of the game and won a free which Grogan pointed to put Tipp ahead for the first time. Emer Dillon equalised but Tipp were beginning to look the better side.

And that was confirmed in the 18th minute with the game's decisive score. In her first real action of the game, Jill Horan won possession on the Hogan Stand side and sent in a tempting high ball to Deirdre Hughes. Murray came off her line but a mix up with her captain Stephanie Dunlea left Hughes unmarked and one of the game's top forwards was left free to shoot to an empty net.

From the puckout Joanne Ryan was fouled and Grogan tapped over the

thing special to forge clear again and they got it from inspirational captain Joanne Ryan. Thirteen minutes into the half the Drom-Inch player raced clear of the Cork defence to swoop on a pass from McDonnell and placed the shot just wide of Murray's despairing dive to put Tipperary two goals clear, 2-7 to 0-7.

It was a big lead to take into the final quarter and the margin remained the same after O'Connor and Grogan swapped frees in the 16th and 17th minutes. However the momentum was now very much with Tipperary and they raced away for a convincing win.

McDonnell showed the skill that won her nearly every award in the game last year when she gathered just inches off the ground to shoot a point and then Deirdre Hughes was fouled after taking a Kennedy pass and Grogan pointed the free.

Tipp were now eight points clear with just eight minutes left and such was the dominance of the champions' defence that there was no way Cork could get through for the goals they needed. All the hurling was still coming from Tipp and Grogan capped a wonderful display with a great point from play under pressure with five minutes to go. A late point from an O'Leary free was of no consequence.

So Tipp remain the dominant force in the game for another year - not only the

Report: Michael Heverin
Photos: John Kelly

best team of this era but quickly establishing themselves as one of the best of any era in the past one hundred years. With the nucleus of the side that won the first title in 1999, they have bonded into a cohesive unit that few other teams can match. They play as a team, their workrate is immense and also possess that extra portion of class that distinguishes good teams from great ones.

On Sunday the real class acts were the incomparable Una O'Dwyer who gave one of the great full back displays that Croke Park has seen; Suzanne Kelly at corner back; Sinead Nealon and Ciara Gaynor in the half line; the industrious Philly Fogarty at midfield and Claire Grogan, Joanne Ryan and Eimear McDonnell upfront.

But everyone was a heroine in this historic win - from goalkeeper Jovita Delaney who dealt with everything thrown at her on the few occasions she was left exposed by her defence; Croke Park debutant Julie Kirwan who was a key member of the side's strongest line; the hard tackling Therese Brophy; dual star Angie McDermott who was vital cog at midfield; Toome 'veterans' Noelle Kennedy and Deirdre Hughes who have formed such a great understanding over the years;

and another headquarters first timer Jill Horan who looks one of the stars of the future. Paula Bulfin played her part when she came on but the other subs didn't get long enough on the park to make an impact.

They all continue to make an indelible mark on the game and to create their own niche in the folklore of Tipperary GAA. The county and the country salutes them.

Tipperary - Jovita Delaney, Suzanne Kelly, Una O'Dwyer, Julie Kirwan, Sinead Nealon, Ciara Gaynor, Therese Brophy, Angie McDermott, Philly Fogarty, Joanne Ryan 1-0; Noelle Kennedy, Claire Grogan 0-9; Eimear McDonnell 0-2; Deirdre Hughes 1-0; Jill Horan. Subs: Paula Bulfin for Fogarty; Geraldine Kinane for Horan; Emily Hayden for Hughes.

Cork - Aoife Murray, Joanne O'Callaghan, Stephanie Dunlea, Rosarie Holland, Paula O'Connor, Mary O'Connor, Rena Buckley, Vivienne Harris, Gemma O'Connor 0-2; Rachel Moloney, Emer Dillon 0-2; Jennifer O'Leary 0-4; Una O'Donoghue 0-1; Emer Watson, Colette Desmond. Subs - Elaine Burke for Watson; Anna Geary for Desmond.

Referee - Una Kearney (Armagh).



Tipperary midfielder Angie McDermott in a race for possession in Sunday's final.



Outstanding Tipperary centreback Clara Gaynor celebrates with her mother Eileen following Sunday's wonderful win in Croke Park.

led into a rhythm that they maintained to the end.

A second Tipperary goal from captain Joanne Ryan copperfastened the win and heralded wild scenes of celebration among the enthusiastic and vocal Tipp support at Croke Park.

Manager Raymie Ryan has said that this team doesn't like losing and they certainly showed that in this game. They may have hurled with more cohesion and fluency in the past but seldom with more conviction or determination as they set about establishing their own game plan and disrupting Cork's.

The holders played as a unit from numbers one to fifteen but the defence must take a huge amount of credit for this marvellous win. Fullback Una O'Dwyer improves with every game and every year and her fielding, blocking and clearances throughout were a joy to watch and one of the bedrocks for this Tipperary win.

The Cashel girl has been one of the top defenders in the game for a number of years and her selection as RTE's Player of the Match was hardly in any doubt such was her dominance of the Tipp square. Her display was quite awesome as she regularly broke Cork hearts.

On either side of her Suzanne Kelly and rookie Julie Kirwan were equally impressive with Kirwan picking up an All Ireland medal at the tender age of seventeen. Cork had withdrawn two of their starting full forward line before the end, a further indication of

great approach work from corner forward Jill Horan who showed her immense talent on the few occasions she was able to run at the Cork defence.

The closely marked Eimear McDonnell didn't get the chance to repeat her heroics of last year's final but was always a threat and scored one trademark point when she stooped to grab a ball just inches off the ground and shrugged off a tackle before shooting.

Cork were as wounded after last year's final defeat as the county's hurlers had been but unlike the hurlers, the camogie girls couldn't bounce back, primarily because of the huge will to win of this Tipperary side which has brought the game to new levels in the past six years and has played no small part in pushing camogie to the forefront of Irish sport.

Cork had star performers in Gemma O'Connor, Emer Dillon and Jenny O'Leary but they just weren't able to make any impact on the game as the Tipp defence in particular forced them into blind alleys. The Cork attack promised a lot but were not allowed to settle and were hassled and harried at every opportunity by the Tipp defence. Whenever a Cork player managed to get the ball into her hand she was immediately surrounded by two or three Tipp backs, a tactic that prevented Cork getting into any fluid rhythm.

Cork's best spell was in the first quarter and with the sides tied at 0-3 each after seventeen minutes, all the Cork scores had been

free to put the side four clear, 1-4 to 0-3. Cork threatened to retaliate immediately but a superb Una O'Dwyer interception broke up a dangerous attack. Tipp were now playing with the style of champions and when the under-pressure Dunleavy was forced to foul Hughes, Grogan extended the Tipp lead to five after twenty five minutes.

Jenny O'Leary from a 45 reduced the arrears but Tipp finished in a flourish with Clara Gaynor executing that wonderful steal that turned defence in attack and ended with Eimear McDonnell pointing to put the champions 1-6 to 0-4 ahead at the break.

Cork put on strong pressure in the early stages of the second half and Armagh referee Una Kearney penalised Suzanne Kelly, Therese Brophy and Sinead Nealon in the first five minutes with O'Leary pointing two of the frees to reduce the lead to three points. Claire Grogan had her first point from play after collecting a Gaynor free in the 8th minute but Cork stayed in touch with Una O'Donoghue finishing a great run with a point.

The game was now finely balanced and while Tipp retained the initiative, Grogan untypically missed two frees that would have extended the lead, the first following a foul on Horan after a forceful run from the Drangan girl and the second following a foul on Angie McDermott after a wonderful clearance from Sinead Nealon began the move.

Tipperary needed some-



BELOW: Members of the Tipp camogie team who received a wonderful welcome home to the Ragg on Monday night.



Elaine O'Riordan, Millford, a member of the victorious Cork junior camogie team who defeated Down at the All-Ireland Final in Croke Park pictured at Mallow Railway Station on Monday evening. (see page 5 also)